# What to expect in the Early Years Foundation Stage:

## *a guide for parents*

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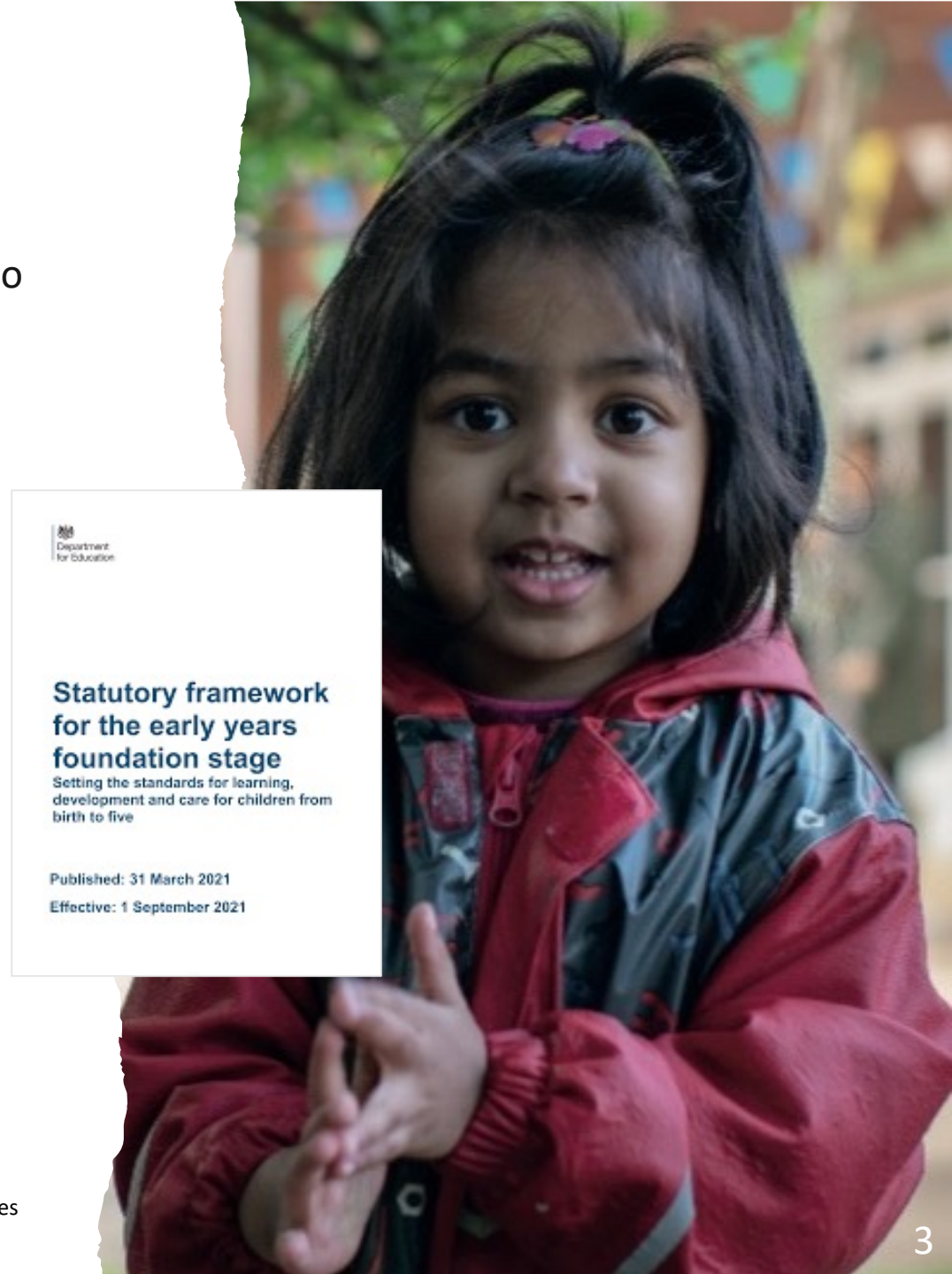
# What to expect in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) outlines what adults must do to help children learn and develop and to be healthy and safe.
- This guide is for parents* of children from birth to five years old. It will help you find out more about your child's learning and development in the EYFS.
- The EYFS includes seven areas of learning and development. In this guide the seven areas are split into three age bands**:
  - *Birth to three*
  - *3-4*
  - *4-5 (the reception year in school)*
- In each band, there are suggestions about what your child may be doing, and how you can help them. It's important to remember that children develop in different ways and at different rates.
- After each age band you will find top tips for fun, playful experiences that you and your child can do together at home.




*'Parent' is used to mean parents, carers and guardians. **The age bands follow Development Matters, which is the Government's non-statutory guide for all early years practitioners,* childminders, staff in nurseries, nursery schools, and nursery and reception classes in school.

# Seven areas of learning and development in the EYFS

*The **three prime areas** are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.*

Communication and Language

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Physical Development

*The three prime areas are strengthened and applied through the **four specific areas**.*

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

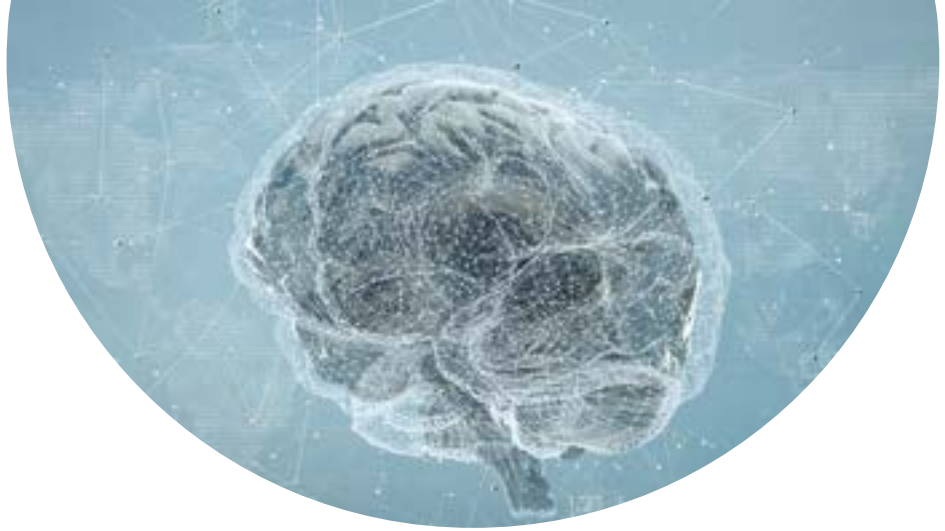
# Understanding your child's development

- Children develop and learn at different rates and in different ways. Their development is not neat and orderly!
- That's why the Department for Education's guidance document, *Development Matters*, sets out children's learning in broad ages. It shows how lots of different experiences in the first three years of life will help your child to learn.
- In this guide, '*When I'm a baby'* broadly tells you about your child's development in the first year of life. *'When I am a bit older'* tells you about their development as a toddler and two-year old.

# Understanding your child's development

- *Development Matters* includes some ***checkpoints***. They can help you and your childminder or early years setting have a conversation, if you're worried about anything. Then you can decide together what to do next.
- The 'checkpoints' are not a 'ticklist' to use for every child.
- Sometimes children have some early difficulties in their development. With the right help, they can quickly grow out of these difficulties.
- For example, 70% of children with delayed communication in the early years won't have problems later in school. Those 'late talkers' need lots of opportunities to *chat, play and read*.
- Some children will have long-term difficulties, so it's important to identify what their needs are and make sure they get the support they need.
- Every child can make good progress, with the right support.

# What happens early, matters for a lifetime



***Did you know?***

- The first three years are the most sensitive time for brain development. Your baby's early interactions are incredibly important for building a healthy brain.
- Your baby is born ready to learn. When you interact with your baby, their brain forms more than a million new brain connections every single second!
- These early moments (known as 'serve and return'). shape your child's brain in ways that help their learning, health, and behaviour both now and in the future.
  - *Over 80% of your baby's brain is formed by age three.*
  - *Up to 75% of each meal goes to building your baby's brain.*
  - *Playing and talking with your baby sparks millions of new brain connections.*

# What happens early, matters for a lifetime

**Loving, responsive care**

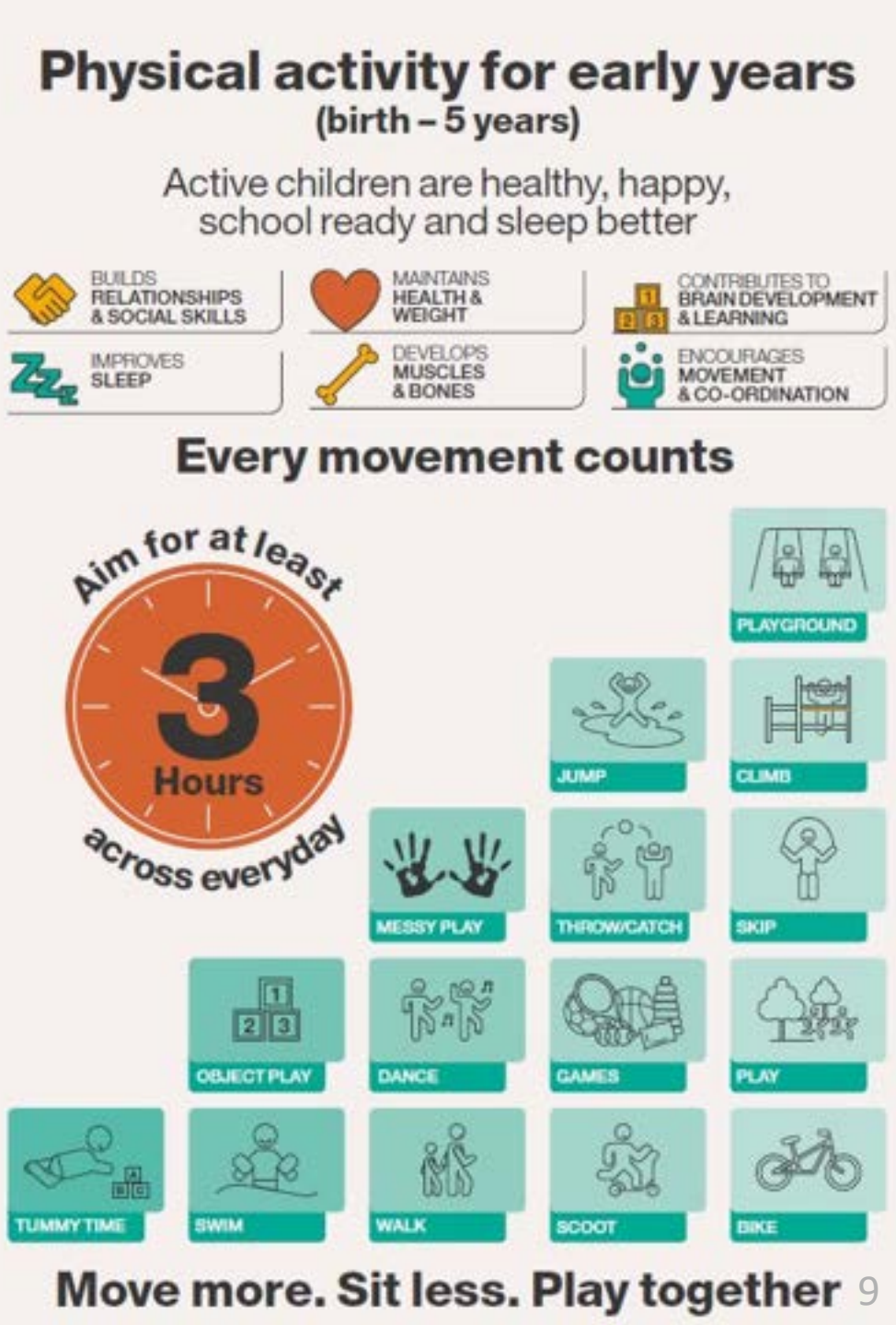
- Research shows that the most important thing you can give your child is love and responsive care.
- Noticing what your baby needs and the signals they give helps you to build feelings of trust and safety.
- The comfort and care you offer your baby makes them feel safe to explore the world around them.

When your baby cries and you respond sensitively, your baby learns that they matter and that they can rely on you.

# Physical development – every movement counts

- It is important for your child to be physically active and to eat well. Children learn through their bodies. Every time they move, their brains build connections.
- Young children need lots of physical activity to develop their balance, posture and coordination. These are the foundations that will help your child to be physically ready to sit still and concentrate.
- Physical activity encourages the development of hand eye coordination for reading and writing.
- When your child is active, they are learning about their bodies and what they can do. They are also learning about social rules and managing their feelings.

[Physical activity for the early years]



# What happens early, matters for a lifetime

- Research tells us that what happens at home makes the biggest difference to your child's early learning and development.
- Playing together, singing, enjoying books, visiting the library, painting, drawing and finding out through play about letters, numbers and shapes are important activities to do at home. These activities are learning opportunities.
- These learning activities will make a difference to your child's learning right up to secondary school.

# What happens early, matters for a lifetime

## Chat, Play, Read

*Giving your child the best start in life.*

- Children love to talk about all sorts of things. Make time to have back and forth conversations.
- Don’t feel embarrassed talking to your baby – it’s never too soon to start communicating with them!
- Go with what your child is interested in. This will help them learn lot of new words.

# Chat

**The benefits to your child learning more than one language are huge.**

- Talk and play with your child in the language that you feel most comfortable and confident using.
- Sing, read and tell stories in your home language – rhyme and repetition help your child to remember words.
- Home languages give your child a connection to their culture and heritage. Encourage your child to use all their languages – they will feel closer to people and part of their community.

# Play

- Play helps children learn about the world and themselves. Children need time and space to play freely. Sometimes it is helpful if you sensitively join in with your child's play, too.
- Children need outdoor play.
- Play is essential for your child's wellbeing and development. It is part of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).
- There are many everyday moments like bath time and dinner that you can make playful. Help your child to learn in a fun and relaxed way.

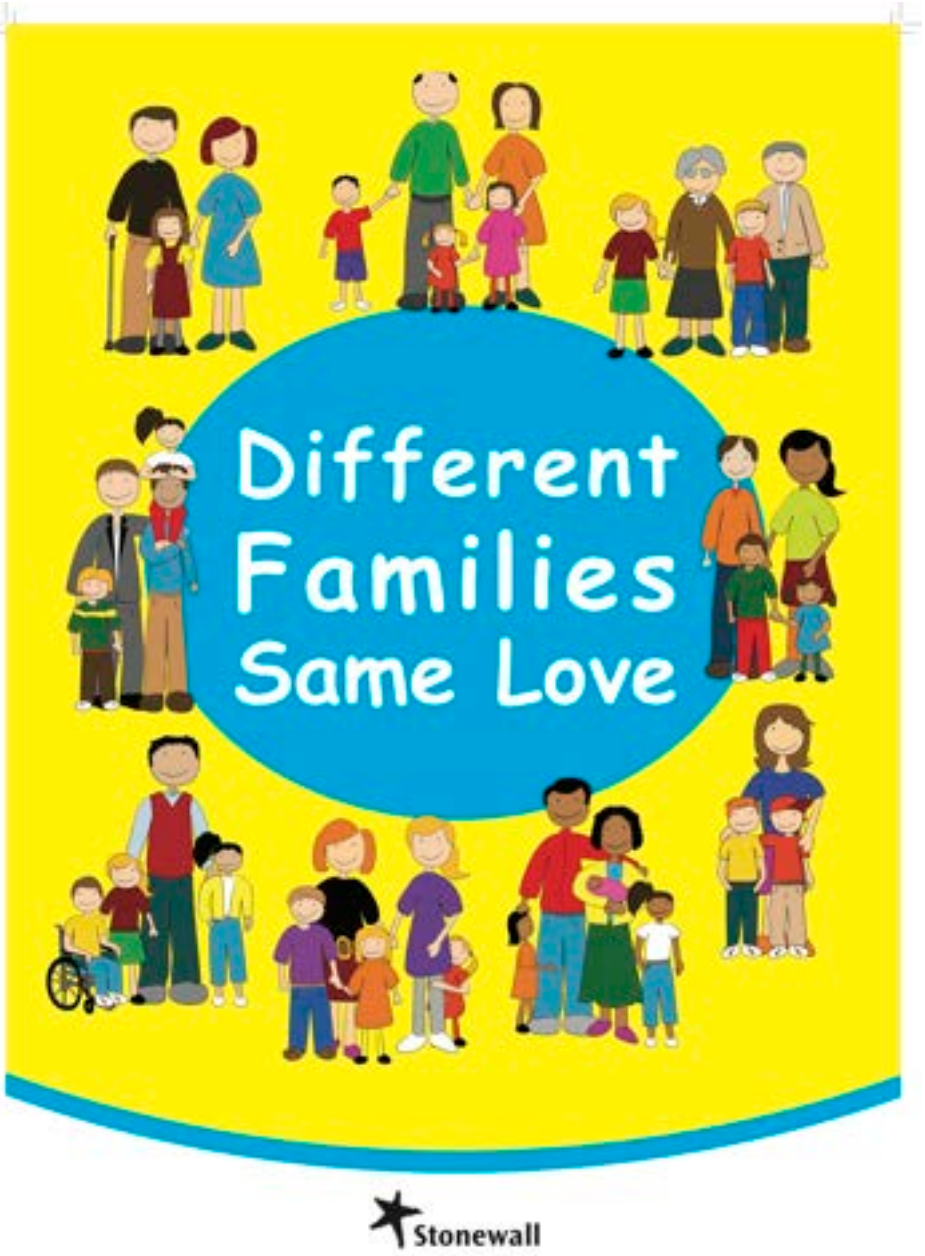
# Read

- Sharing books and telling stories is a lovely way to build closeness and encourage conversations.
- Sharing books with your child at a young age will help them to develop a love of reading.
- Read and share stories with your baby.
- Talk to your child about what is happening in the pictures.
- Young children love to hear and read their favourite books and stories again and again.

# What happens early, matters for a lifetime

**Building a brighter, fairer future for all**

- The early years are vital for shaping children's views and attitudes. You can make a difference to how your child sees the world.
- It is important for you to think about your own views and be open to exploring your thinking.
- Boys and girls can do everything! But they are often treated differently, from an early age. Limitations can start early and hold children back.


Different
Families
Same Love
Stonewall

# What happens early, matters for a lifetime

- Parents of all races, ethnicities and cultures need to work together to understand how harmful racism is to everyone. Talking about race is the first step in challenging racism.
- Helping your child to develop anti-racist attitudes is so important: every child and family should have a sense of belonging irrespective of their race, ethnicity or culture.
- From three months, babies are aware of other races. Children are inquisitive. Your child might notice differences in skin colour or ask questions that make you feel uncomfortable. It is important that your response is calm, positive and well-informed.

# What happens early, matters for a lifetime

**How you can help your child to talk about race:**

- Between the ages of birth to three, children are naturally curious about the world around them. Giving your child books and toys that show people from a range of ethnicities positively is so important.
- From the age of three, children start to notice if things aren't shared fairly. They start to show us they don't like this.
- From around the age of five children can talk about unfairness. You can start to have conversations about how unfair things can happen because of the colour of somebody's skin.
- Children of this age love to engage in role play and pretend play. This will help your child to learn about other peoples' ideas, feelings and actions.

# Partnership with parents

The adults who work with your child know a lot about children – but not as much about *your child*. It's important to tell them what they need to know. Then they can understand your child and help them.

- It's important for parents and early years settings to have a strong and respectful partnership.
- A strong, trusting partnership will support two-way communication between you and your child's key person or childminder.
- Throughout the EYFS, settings must share information about your child's progress.

# Sharing information

**Two-year-old progress check**

- All children who attend a setting or go to a childminder will have a developmental check between their second and third birthday. It will happen jointly with you and sometimes your health visitor.
- The check helps your key person to focus on your child's progress. It will also help you with ideas to keep chatting, playing and reading with your child at home.
- You will receive a written summary about how your child is learning and developing.

**Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)**

- In the final term of the Reception year, teachers complete an assessment known as the EYFS Profile for each child.
- The Profile is a quick check of your child's learning, which will be shared with you.

# What to do if you are concerned

- As a parent, you know your child best.
- Health visitors and early years practitioners have expert knowledge of child development.
- By working together, you can identify any difficulties your child has with their health, learning or development.
- If your child is struggling with learning, their setting can offer extra support to meet their needs.

# The three Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

When we see a baby in their cot, we're looking at 'the greatest mind that has ever existed, the most powerful learning machine in the universe.'

We can help children become even more powerful learners through three **Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:**

- ***playing and exploring*** - I investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- ***active learning*** – I concentrate and keep on trying even when I encounter difficulties. I enjoy achieving.
- ***creating and thinking critically*** – I am learning to develop my own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

# Playing and Exploring

- I understand that my actions have an effect on the world, so I want to keep on exploring.
- I am learning to plan and think ahead about how I will explore or play with objects.
- I might talk to myself or use visual aids such as pictures while I am playing to help my thinking. For example, when doing a jigsaw, I might whisper under my breath: “Where does that one go? – I need to find the big horse next.”
- I can make independent choices.
- I bring my own interests and fascinations from home into my setting. This helps me to develop my learning.
- I respond to new experiences that you introduce.

# Active Learning

- I join in with routines without needing to be told, like going to my cot when I want to sleep.
- I am learning to predict what might happen because I understand a familiar routine, e.g. I may get my coat when adults open the door to go outside.
- I show goal-directed behaviour, e.g. as a baby I may pull myself up by using the edges of a low table to reach for a toy on top of the table. As a toddler, I might turn a storage box upside down so I can stand on it and reach up for an object.
- I am learning to correct my mistakes myself, e.g. instead of using increasing force to push a puzzle piece into the slot, I try another piece to see if it will fit.
- I keep on trying when things are difficult.

# Creating and Thinking Critically

- I take part in simple pretend play, e.g. I might use an object like a brush to pretend to brush my hair, or ‘drink’ from a pretend cup.
- I can sort materials, e.g. at tidy-up time, I know how to put different construction materials in separate baskets.
- I can talk about my learning. I think about my progress as I try to achieve a goal. I check how well I am doing.
- I am learning to solve real problems, e.g. to share nine strawberries between three friends, a strategy I might use is to put one in front of each, then a second, then a third. Finally, I might check at the end that everyone has the same number of strawberries.

# Creating and Thinking Critically

- I like to ‘pretend’ in my play. By pretending to be someone else I can imagine other points of view, e.g. when I am playing ‘The Three Billy Goats Gruff’ I might suggest that “Maybe the troll is lonely and hungry? That’s why he is fierce.”
- As I learn more things, I become more confident to come up with my own ideas and explanations. When I know about different types of dinosaurs, I can say which ones are meat-eaters by seeing if they have big sharp teeth.
- I can concentrate hard to achieve something that’s important to me. I can focus my attention and ignore any distractions around me.

# Birth to three: Communication and Language

*When I am a baby…*

- I turn towards familiar sounds. I am startled by loud noises. I can accurately locate the source of a familiar person's voice, like my mum's or my dad's.
- I like to gaze at faces. I copy facial expressions and movements. If you stick out your tongue, I'll stick out mine. I make eye contact for longer periods as I get older.
- I watch people's faces as they talk.

# Birth to three: Communication and Language

*When I am a baby…*

- I like to copy what you do and take 'turns' in joining in with conversations by babbling.
- I try to copy the lip movements that you make.
- I enjoy singing, music and toys that make sounds.
- I can recognise your voice and it makes me feel calm when I hear it.
- I can listen and respond to a simple instruction.
- I make sounds to get your attention. I do this in different ways such as crying when I'm hungry or unhappy and making gurgling sounds, laughing, cooing or babbling.

# Birth to three: Communication and Language

*When I am a baby…*

- I like to babble. I use sounds like ‘baba and ‘mamama’.
- I use gestures like waving and pointing to communicate.
- When I want something, I reach or point while making sounds.
- I like to copy your gestures and words.
- I babble all the time and use single words when I am playing.
- When I am ‘talking’ I change my intonation, pitch and volume.
- Wait for me to communicate with a sound, a look or with words. This helps me to lead the conversation.

# Birth to three: Communication and Language

*When I am a bit older…*

- I can understand single words such as ‘cup’, ‘milk’, ‘daddy’ when they are used in meaningful situations.
- I can understand frequently used words such as ‘all gone’, ‘no’ and ‘bye-bye’.
- I can understand simple instructions like: “Give to nanny” or “Stop”.
- I can recognise and point to objects when you ask me about them.
- I like to focus on an activity that I have chosen. I can find it hard it when you move me away from something I find fun.
- I like to listen to you when you talk, but I can find it hard to pay attention when I see something interesting.

# Birth to three: Communication and Language

*When I am a bit older…*

- I can feel really frustrated when I can't make myself understood.
- I am learning to use words and actions to let you know how I am feeling.
- I am learning to have conversations but I often jump from topic to topic.
- I like to join in with pretend play like 'putting the baby to sleep'.
- I can use the speech sounds p,b,m.
- I can pronounce: l/r/w/y f/th s/sh/ch/dz/j.
- I can pronounce words that have more than one syllable such as 'banana' and 'computer'.
- I might pronounce some words incorrectly. It helps me if you reply to what I say using the right words and sounds. I learn from your positive model, without losing confidence to speak.

# Birth to three: Communication and Language

*When I am a bit older…*

- I like to to listen to simple stories. I can understand what is happening, with the help of the pictures.
- I can identify familiar objects when you describe them. I can point to the big boat in a book we're sharing. I can get an apple when you ask me to.
- I can understand longer sentences. I can "Make teddy jump." When you say that as we're playing. When you say: "Find your coat." I can do that.
- I can understand simple questions about 'who', 'what' and 'where' (but generally not 'why').

# Birth to three: Personal, Social and Emotional Development

*When I am a baby…*

- I learn and develop best when you consistently give me loving, warm and responsive care.
- When you comfort me, I feel calm.
- I am beginning to develop my sense of self by interacting with you and other important people.
- I can show you what I like and don't like.
- I can show you I need something by using eye contact, gesture and words. I can point to or look at my cup to tell you that I want a drink.
- I am learning to cope with feeling sad when you leave me. I might need a special object or lots of cuddles to feel safe and happy.
- I am becoming more confident around a wider group of people.

# Birth to three: Personal, Social and Emotional Development

*When I am a baby…*

- I will look back at you when I crawl or walk away to check you are still there.
- I like to see you smile to encourage me.
- I am learning to feel more confident to play on my own and with other children.
- I am learning to feel confident when I am exploring new places with my key person.
- I feel safe and secure with my key person to show my emotions.
- I am becoming more and more independent. This means I can sometimes get frustrated when I want to do something by myself.

# Birth to three: Personal, Social and Emotional Development

*When I am a bit older…*

- I am beginning to understand how to wait for my turn and learning to control my feelings when I want something.
- I am learning how to talk about how I am feeling. This helps me to manage my feelings.
- I am interested in other people. I notice and ask questions about differences such as skin colour, types of hair, gender, special needs and disabilities and religion.
- I am learning how to make friends with other children.
- I am learning about other feelings through stories and play.
- I am learning to talk about how I feel and using more words to do this: “I’m sad because….” or “I love it when…”
- I am beginning to show you that I am ready to use the potty.

# Birth to three: Physical Development

*When I am a baby…*

- When I am on my tummy, I can lift my head up.
- I can push my chest up with straight arms.
- I can roll over from my tummy to my back and from my back to my tummy.
- I enjoy moving when I am outdoors and inside.
- I can sit without support.
- I  am beginning to crawl in different ways and directions.
- I can pull myself upright and bounce. This is helping me get ready to walk.
- My coordination is developing and I can reach out for different objects.

# Birth to three: Physical Development

*When I am a baby…*

- I can pass things from one hand to another and give things to you.
- I like to drop things.
- Through lots of practice of waving, kicking, rolling, crawling and walking, I can control my whole body.

*When I am a bit older…*

- I can clap and stamp to music.
- I like to explore and move around in spaces I can fit into such as large boxes, dens and tunnels.
- I enjoy learning how to kick, throw and catch balls.

# Birth to three: Physical Development

*When I am a bit older…*

- I am learning to walk by myself.
- I find different ways to support myself.
- I can walk, run, jump and climb and I am learning to use the stairs independently.
- I can spin and roll. I can use ropes independently, like tyre swings.
- I can sit on a push-along wheeled toy.
- I can use a scooter or ride a tricycle.

# Birth to three: Literacy

- I love listening to songs and rhymes.
- I enjoy joining in with songs and rhymes. I copy sounds, rhythms, tunes and tempo.
- I can say some of the words in songs and rhymes.
- I copy finger movements and other gestures.
- I sing songs and say rhymes independently.
- I like to sing when I am playing.
- I love to share books with you.
- I like to look at and respond to the pictures and words in the book.

# Birth to three: Literacy

- I have favourite books. I like to share my favourite books with you and my friends. I also like to look at books on my own.
- I like to repeat words and phrases from my favourite stories.
- I like to talk about books.
- I share my ideas and ask questions.
- I like to use props to act out familiar stories.
- I am interested in familiar print. I notice the first letter of my name, bus or door numbers and logos.
- I love to draw and give meaning to marks I make.
- I make marks on my picture for my name.

# Birth to three: Mathematics

- I like to play with stacking blocks and cups. I put objects inside others and take them out again.
- I enjoy taking part in finger rhymes with numbers.
- I react to changes of amount in a group of up to three items – if you build a tower with three blocks and take one away, I'll notice.
- I can compare amounts, saying 'lots', 'more' or 'same'.
- I am starting to show an interest in counting by making sounds, pointing and saying some numbers in order.

# Birth to three: Mathematics

- I like to count in everyday routines and play. I sometimes skip numbers – ‘1-2-3-5.’I like to climb and squeeze myself into different types of spaces.
- I enjoy building with lots of different resources such as blocks and boxes.
- I can do inset puzzles.
- I use words and gestures to compare size and weight: ‘bigger/little/smaller’, ‘high/low’, ‘tall’, ‘heavy’.
- I notice patterns and arrange things in patterns.

# Birth to three: Understanding the World

*When I am a baby…*

- I enjoy kicking and waving. I repeat actions that have an effect.
- I like to explore objects with different textures, sounds, smells and tastes.
- I like to explore natural materials, indoors and outdoors. Such as wet and dry sand, water and paint.

*When I am a bit older…*

- I enjoy exploring the natural world such as splashing in puddles, looking for worms and minibeasts.
- I am learning to make connections between the features of my family and other families.
- I notice differences between people.

# Birth to three: Expressive Arts and Design

*When I am a baby…*

- I am aware of sounds and music.
- I enjoy music and respond emotionally and physically when it changes.
- I move and dance to music.
- I anticipate phrases and actions in rhymes and songs, like ‘Peepo’.
- I enjoy making sounds and exploring my voice.
- I join in with songs and rhymes, making some sounds.
- I can make make rhythmical and repetitive sounds.
- I enjoy exploring a range of sound-makers and instruments and playing them in different ways.
- I notice patterns with strong contrasts and I am attracted by patterns resembling the human face

# Birth to three: Expressive Arts and Design

*When I am a bit older…*

- I enjoy mark making. I am starting to make marks intentionally.
- I enjoy exploring paint, using my fingers and other parts of my body as well as brushes and other tools.
- I express ideas and feelings through mark making. I sometimes give meaning to my marks.
- I enjoy taking part in action songs, such as ‘Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.’

# Birth to three: Expressive Arts and Design

*When I am a bit older…*

- I am beginning to take part in pretend play. I pretend one object represents another, e.g. holding a wooden block to my ear and pretending it's phone.
- I like to explore different materials, using all of my senses to investigate them. I manipulate different play materials like play-dough.
- I use my imagination when I think about what I can do with different materials.
- I can express my ideas through making simple models.

# Birth to three: how you can help me with my learning

**Personal, Social & Emotional Development**

- I need loving, responsive, playful interactions with you.
- Find out what makes me feel calm - rocking, cuddling or singing.
- Offer me manageable choices between two things.

**Communication & Language**

- Use  a sing-song voice, this helps me tune in to language.
- Respond to my babble.
- Talk about what you are doing *"I'm pouring out your milk into the cup."*
- Have back and forth 'conversations' – play 'peekaboo' and copy-cat games.
- Talk to me in our home language.

**Physical Development**

- Put me on my tummy or back, on a soft mat or blanket so I can kick my legs and roll.
- Let me sit on you, climb over you, and rock, bounce or sway with you.
- Give me lots of opportunities to be active outdoors in all weathers!

# Birth to three: how you can help me with my learning

**Communication & Language**

- Sing songs and rhymes during everyday activities like nappy changes.
- Tell me the names of things as I pick them up to explore. I need to hear a variety of words.
- Listen and wait for me to speak or communicate with a sound or a look first. Repeat and build on what I say by adding one or two words.
- When you talk to me, give me time – 10 seconds helps me understand and think of a reply.

**Personal, Social & Emotional Development**

- Let me help get snack or lunch ready and learn to pour my own drink.
- Help me understand my feelings by using words to label my feelings like 'sad', 'upset,' 'angry'
- Model turn taking – "Can I have a turn?" "My turn next."

**Physical Development**

- Give me lots of different things to grasp, hold, squeeze and explore, like finger paint, playdough, spoons, brushes, shells.
- Let me try to put my shoes on.
- Play ball games with me.

# Birth to three: how you can help me with my learning.

**Mathematics**

- Give me stacking cups and blocks (or cardboard boxes!) Use words like ‘in’, ‘on’, ‘more’, ‘lots’.
- Count with me as you put my clothes on, e.g. “One sock, two socks.”
- Sing finger rhymes with numbers e.g. Two Little Dicky Birds
- Let me explore ‘full’ and ‘empty’ with containers in the bath.

**Understanding the World**

- Introduce me to new grown-ups so I can start to make relationships.
- Make me a treasure basket with objects like vegetables, wooden pegs, spoons, pans, corks, cones, balls.
- Let me explore the natural world. Stand in the rain with wellies and an umbrella, splash in puddles, look for worms and minibeasts.

-

**Literacy**

- Snuggle up and share board & cloth books with me. Point to and name things to help build my vocabulary.
- Share books that let me see people of different races, cultures and gender.
- Give me chunky pencils/crayons/chalks to explore.

**Expressive Arts & Design**

- Give me a big piece of paper on the floor to see what marks I can make with my hands, feet, a paintbrush. Let me make a mess!
- Sing to me. Let me hear different types of singing, sounds and music from other cultures and languages.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Communication and Language

- I like listening to longer stories and I can remember a lot of what happens.
- If I am really busy in my play, I can find it difficult to switch my attention and listen to what you say to me. It helps me if you use my name and say: “Please stop and listen.”
- I can use lots of  different words. I like to learn new words.
- It helps me if you explain what new words mean.
- I can understand questions and instructions that are more complicated and have two parts, like: “Please get your coat and wait at the door.”
- When you ask me questions about why something happened, I understand, e.g. “Why do you think the caterpillar got so big?”

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Communication and Language

- I know lots of songs and enjoy singing them.
- I can tell you a long story and talk about my favourite books. I know lots of nursery rhymes.
- I am still learning how to use word endings. I might still make mistakes such as ‘runned’ for ‘ran’. Instead of correcting me, please reply and use the right ending, e.g. “Yes, I saw how fast you ran!”
- I am still learning to pronounce some words. These are sounds that I might still find tricky, e.g. j, th, ch, and sh.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Communication and Language

- I can use long sentences of four to six words.
- I can use words and actions to explain my thoughts and ideas. I can give my point of view and disagree.
- I like having long conversations with you and my friends.
- When I am playing I talk to pretend: “Let’s go on a bus... you sit there... I’ll be the driver.”

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- I am becoming more and more independent and enjoy being given resources and activities that I can use by myself.
- I like to be given responsibility and to help with jobs like fetching the fruit for everyone or washing up my plate after snack.
- I am becoming more confident interacting with new people.
- I am confident to go out on short walks and trips.
- I like to play with other children and I can build on the ideas in our play.
- When playing with my friends, I can find ways to solve conflicts, e.g. I know that we can't all be Spider-Man in the game, and I can suggest other ideas.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Personal, Social and Emotional Development

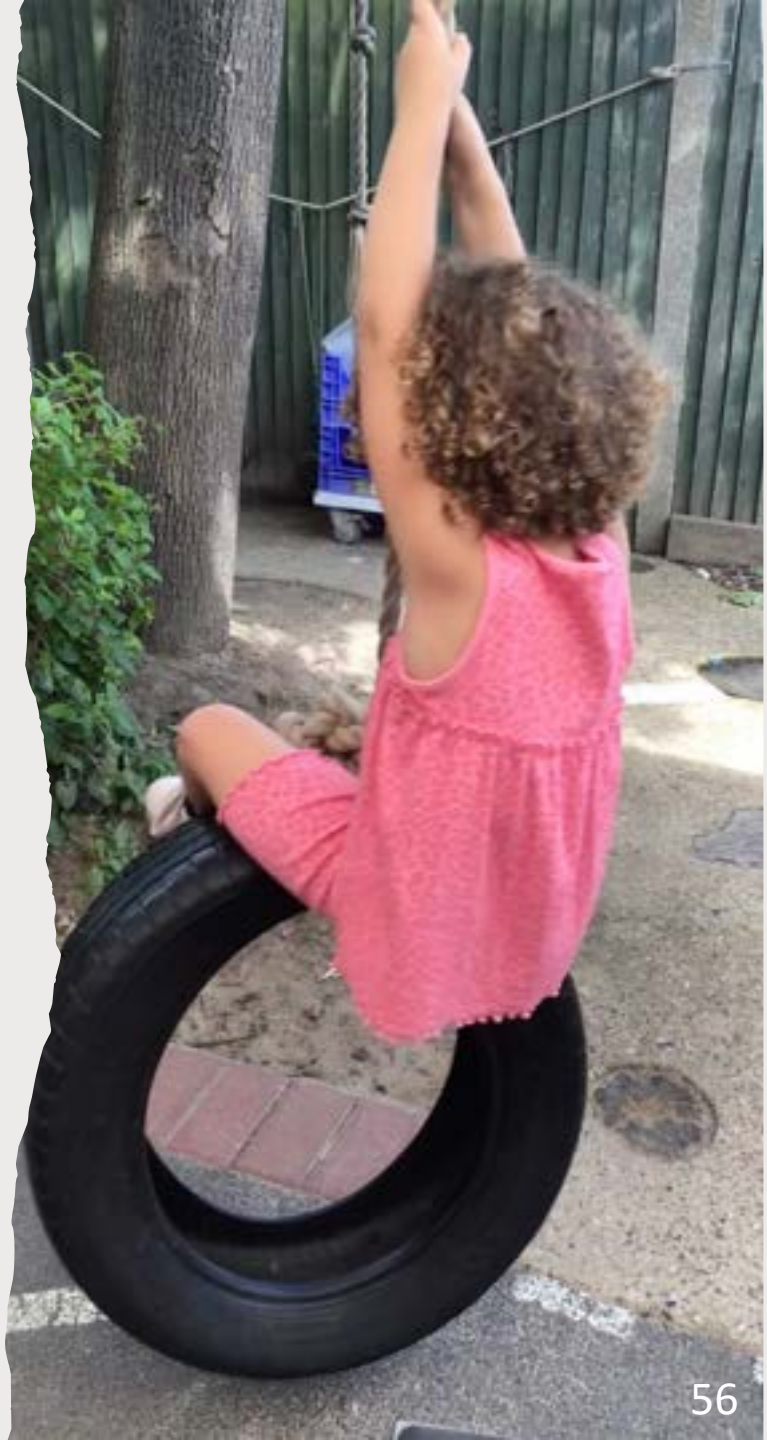
- I am learning about why rules are important and can follow rules most of the time.
- I can remember the rules and I don’t need an adult to remind me.
- I am learning about how to assert myself in appropriate ways.
- I talk to my friends to solve problems that might happen when we are playing.
- I can use different words to explain how I am feeling.
- I am developing an understanding of how other people might be feeling.
- I can use my fine motor skills to do up buttons, zips and to pour myself a drink.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- I am keen to be independent. Especially around dressing and feeding myself.
- I am beginning to eat independently, and I am learning to use a knife and fork.
- I am becoming more and more independent in getting dressed and undressed. I can put my coat on and do up my zip.
- I am becoming more and more independent in looking after myself. I can brush my teeth and wash and dry my hands thoroughly.
- I understand about how important it is to brush my teeth. I can make healthy choices about food drink and exercise.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Physical Development

- I am continuing to develop a range of physical skills - balancing, riding and ball skills.
- I can walk up steps and stairs and climbing equipment using alternate feet.
- I can skip, hop, stand on one leg and hold a pose for a game like musical statues.
- I can wave flags and streamers using large muscle movements and paint and make marks on a big scale.
- I like to join in with group and team activities. Sometimes I like to make these up with my friends.



# 3 & 4-year-olds: Physical Development

- I am learning to use and remember sequences and patterns of movements which are related to music and rhythm.
- I can think carefully about which movement I need to make, for example whether to crawl, walk or run across a plank, depending on its length and width.
- I can choose the right tools for what I need to do.
- I can work with my friends to move and carry large objects such as big wooden blocks.
- I can use one handed tools such as scissors.
- When holding pens and pencils I have a comfortable grip and good control.
- I am showing whether I am left or right-handed.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Literacy

I understand five important things about print:

- *print has meaning;*
- *print can have different purposes;*
- *we read English text from left to right and from top to bottom;*
- *the names of the different parts of a book;*
- *we read pages in story books one at a time.*

I am learning to tune into the different sounds in English. I am developing my phonological awareness, so that I can:

- *spot and suggest rhymes;*
- *count or clap syllables in a word;*
- *recognise words with the same initial sound, such as money and mother.*

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Literacy

- I enjoy having long conversations about stories and learning new words.
- In my play, I am learning to use my knowledge of sounds and letters in my early writing.
- I can write some or all of my name.
- I can write some letters accurately.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Mathematics

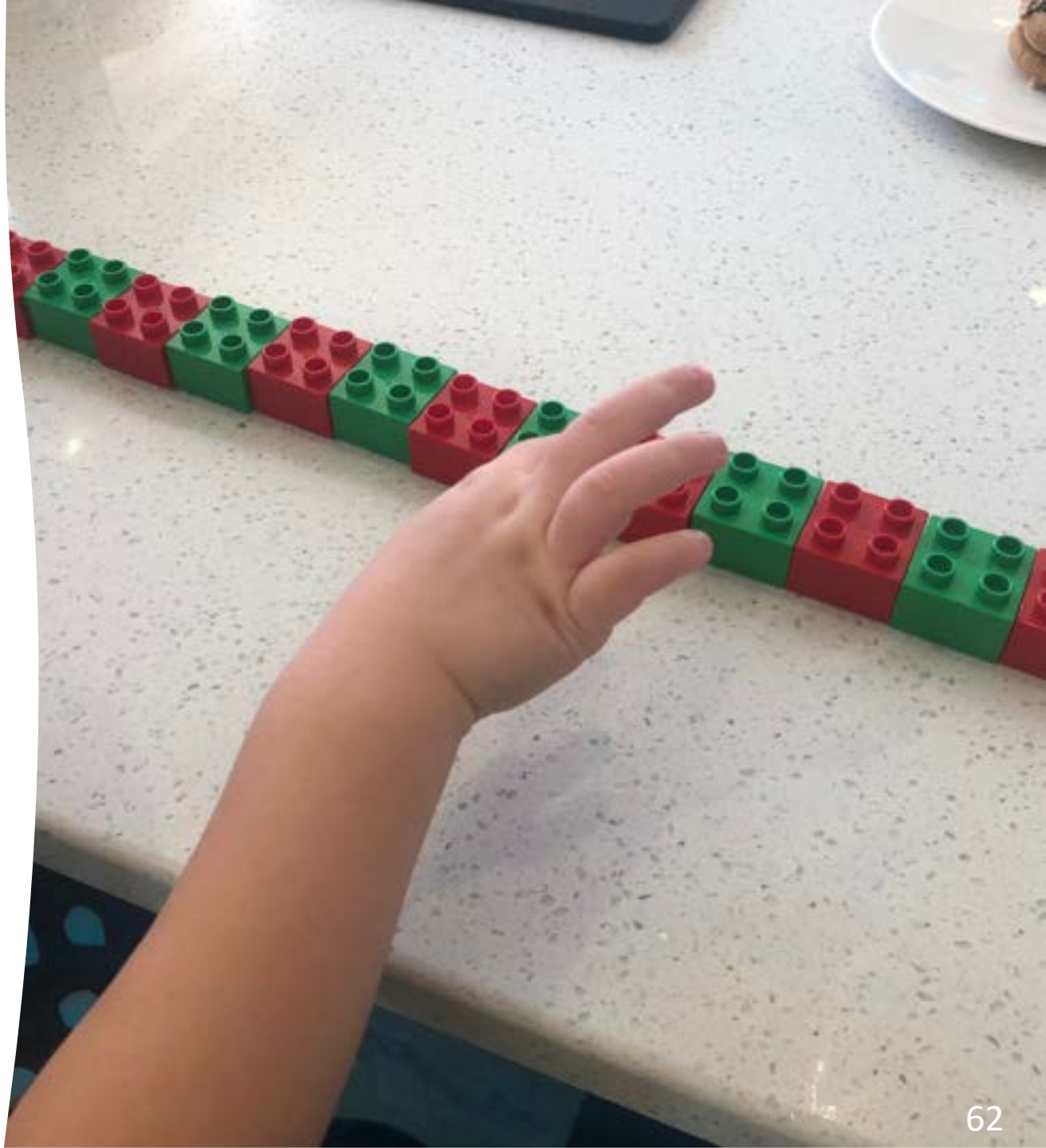
- I can quickly recognise groups of up to 3 objects, without having to count them individually *(this is called 'subitising').*
- I can say numbers in order past five.
- I can say one number for each item in order: 1,2,3,4,5.
- I know that the last number I reach when counting a small set of objects tells me how many there are in total (*this is called the 'cardinal principle').*
- I can show 'finger numbers' up to 5.
- I can match the correct numeral (number symbol) to the right amount, up to 5, e.g. point to the number 3 when I count 3 snails.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Mathematics

- I like to experiment with making my own marks and symbols as well as numerals.
- I can use mathematical words to compare amounts ‘more than’, ‘fewer than’.
- I like to explore 2D (flat) and 3D (solid) shapes. I can talk about shapes using everyday words like ‘pointy’. I can use mathematical words like: ‘sides’, ‘corners’, ‘straight’, ‘flat’, ‘round’.
- I can understand position through words alone, e.g. “The bag is under the table.” – with no pointing.
- I can describe a familiar route.
- I can talk about routes and locations, using words like ‘in front of’ and ‘behind’.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Mathematics

- I can make comparisons between objects relating to size, length, weight and capacity.
- I can choose the right shape when building, e.g. triangular prism for a roof.
- I can combine shapes to make new ones - an arch, a bigger triangle etc.
- I can talk about and identify patterns that I see around me, e.g. stripes on clothes, designs on wallpaper. I use everyday language like ‘pointy’, ‘spotty’, ‘blobs’ etc.
- I can make and extend ABAB  patterns – stick, leaf, stick, leaf.
- I can spot an error in a repeating pattern and correct it.
- I am learning to use words such as ‘first’, ‘then’ ‘after’ to describe a pattern of events.



# 3 & 4-year-olds: Understanding the World

- I enjoy exploring natural materials using all of my senses.
- I explore and investigate collections of natural materials with similar and/or different properties.
- I can talk about what I explore and investigate using a wide range of words.
- I am learning about my own life-story and my family's history.
- I am interested in the different jobs people do.
- I am interested in exploring how things work.
- I enjoy planting seeds and caring for growing plants.
- I can understand the important parts of life cycles of both plants and animals, e.g. a bean, a caterpillar or a chick.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Understanding the World

- I am learning that it is important to respect and care for the natural environment and all living things.
- I am learning about different forces I can feel, e.g. how the water pushes up when I try to push a plastic boat under it.
- I can talk about the differences between materials and changes I notice, e.g. when cooking.
- I am learning to develop positive attitudes about the differences between people.
- I know that there are different countries in the world. I can talk about differences I have experienced or seen in photos.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Expressive Arts and Design

- I take part in simple pretend play, using an object to represent something else even though they are not similar.
- I am beginning to make up complex ‘small worlds’ using animal sets, dolls and dolls houses etc.
- I enjoy making detailed, imaginative ‘small worlds’ with blocks and construction kits, such as a city with different buildings and a park.
- I enjoy exploring different materials freely. I am learning to develop my ideas about how to use them and what to make.
- I can join different materials together. I explore the textures of different materials.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Expressive Arts and Design

- I can create closed shapes with continuous lines.
- I am learning to use these shapes to represent objects.
- I can draw with increasing complexity and detail, such as representing a face with a circle including details.
- I can use drawings to show ideas like movement or loud noises.
- I can show different emotions in my drawings and paintings, like happiness, sadness, fear etc.
- I enjoy exploring colour and colour mixing.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: Expressive Arts and Design

- I can listen to sounds with increased attention.
- I respond to what I hear and express my thoughts and feelings.
- I can remember and sing entire songs.
- I can sing the pitch of a tone sung by another person (‘pitch match’).
- I can sing the melodic shape (moving melody, such as up and down, down and up) of familiar songs.
- I enjoy creating my own songs. I can make up a song around one that I already know.
- I can play instruments with increasing control to express my feelings and ideas.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: how you can help me with my learning?

**Communication & Language**

- Have conversations with me about things that I am interested in. Encourage me to keep talking by nodding, smiling and making comments.
- Introduce new words when we are playing, eating or when we are out and about. Explain what new words mean to me.
- Talk to me about things that have already happened and what might happen soon.
- Play listening games with me such as 'Simon Says'.

**Personal, Social & Emotional Development**

- Give me tasks to carry out, e.g. washing my plate after snack.
- Model how you manage your own feelings, e.g. *"I'm feeling a bit angry so I am going to take a deep breath."* Help me to understand why I am feeling sad or frustrated.
- Make a 'calm down jar.'

**Physical Development**

- Help me with dressing but let me do the last steps, e.g. pulling up my zip after you have started it off.
- Give me lots of opportunities to be active and practise running, jumping, balancing, climbing and swinging.
- Encourage me to walk, scoot or bike to my nursery or childminder.

# 3 & 4-year-olds: how you can help me with my learning?

## Mathematics

- Point out the number of things rather than just the names, e.g. "We have **two** apples!"
- Give me lots of opportunities to count for a real reason and always emphasise the last number – *"There are **3** cookies."*
- Cut out a large shape from a cereal box (circle, triangle), then cut that shape into 2-4 smaller pieces to make a simple puzzle.
- When we're at the park, use words like 'up', 'under', and 'between' to talk about what we see.
- Make playdough with me.

## Understanding the World

- Help me make collections of interesting natural materials, e.g. pebbles, shells.
- Let me explore ice, once it has melted a bit (so I don't get frostbite)
- Plant seeds and bulbs with me.
- Take me to different places such as the library.

## Literacy

- Talk about stories with me, what is happening in the pictures? Give me time to think and share my ideas**.**
- Play around with words. Make up fun rhyming sentences with me.
- Let me help you write birthday cards and shopping lists.

## Expressive Arts & Design

- Make home-made paintbrushes using clothes pegs and items from around the house and outdoors.
- Join in pretend play with me.
- Give me a cardboard box and some fabric to build a den with.

# 4 & 5-year-olds: Communication and Language

- I understand how to listen carefully, e.g. I make sure I can see the person who is talking.
- I know why listening is important.
- I am learning lots of new words.
- I am using new words that I have learned. I can ask questions to find out more about something I am interested in.
- I can use clear, well-formed sentences to talk about my ideas.
- I can talk about an idea and make a connection to another idea by using words like: ‘and’, ‘or’, ‘but’, ‘because.’

# 4 & 5-year-olds: Communication and Language

- I can talk about things that I have experienced in detail.
- I can talk about how to solve problems and give explanations about how things work and might happen.
- I can use and respond to social phrases such as when somebody says: “Good morning, how are you?”
- I can retell familiar stories, remember and repeat phrases from these. I can talk about stories in my own words.
- I am using new words that I have learned in lots of different ways.

# 4 & 5-year-olds: Communication and Language

- I enjoy listening carefully to rhymes and songs and pay attention to the different sounds.
- I enjoy learning rhymes, poems and songs.
- I am interested in using books that give me information, like a book about caring for pets.
- I listen to information books and can talk about what I have learned.
- I enjoy listening and responding to stories at storytime.
- I enjoy listening to stories. I can talk about my favourite and familiar stories.

# 4 & 5-year-olds: Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- I am proud of myself and I know I am important as an individual person.
- I can play fairly and cooperate with my friends.
- I know how to listen to others and be kind and caring.
- I can express my feelings. I am aware of other peoples' feelings.
- I can keep on going with something even when I find it challenging.
- I can recognise and talk about how I am feeling. I know ways to help myself feel calm.
- I can think about how other people are feeling in different situations.
- I can manage my own personal hygiene.

# 4 & 5-year-olds: Personal, Social and Emotional Development

I know and can talk about the importance of:

- regular physical activity;
- healthy eating;
- toothbrushing;
- sensible amounts of ‘screen time;’
- having a good sleep routine;
- being a safe pedestrian.

# 4 & 5-year-olds: Physical Development

I am learning to improve my:

- *rolling*
- *crawling*
- *walking*
- *jumping*
- *running*
- *skipping*
- *hopping*
- *climbing*

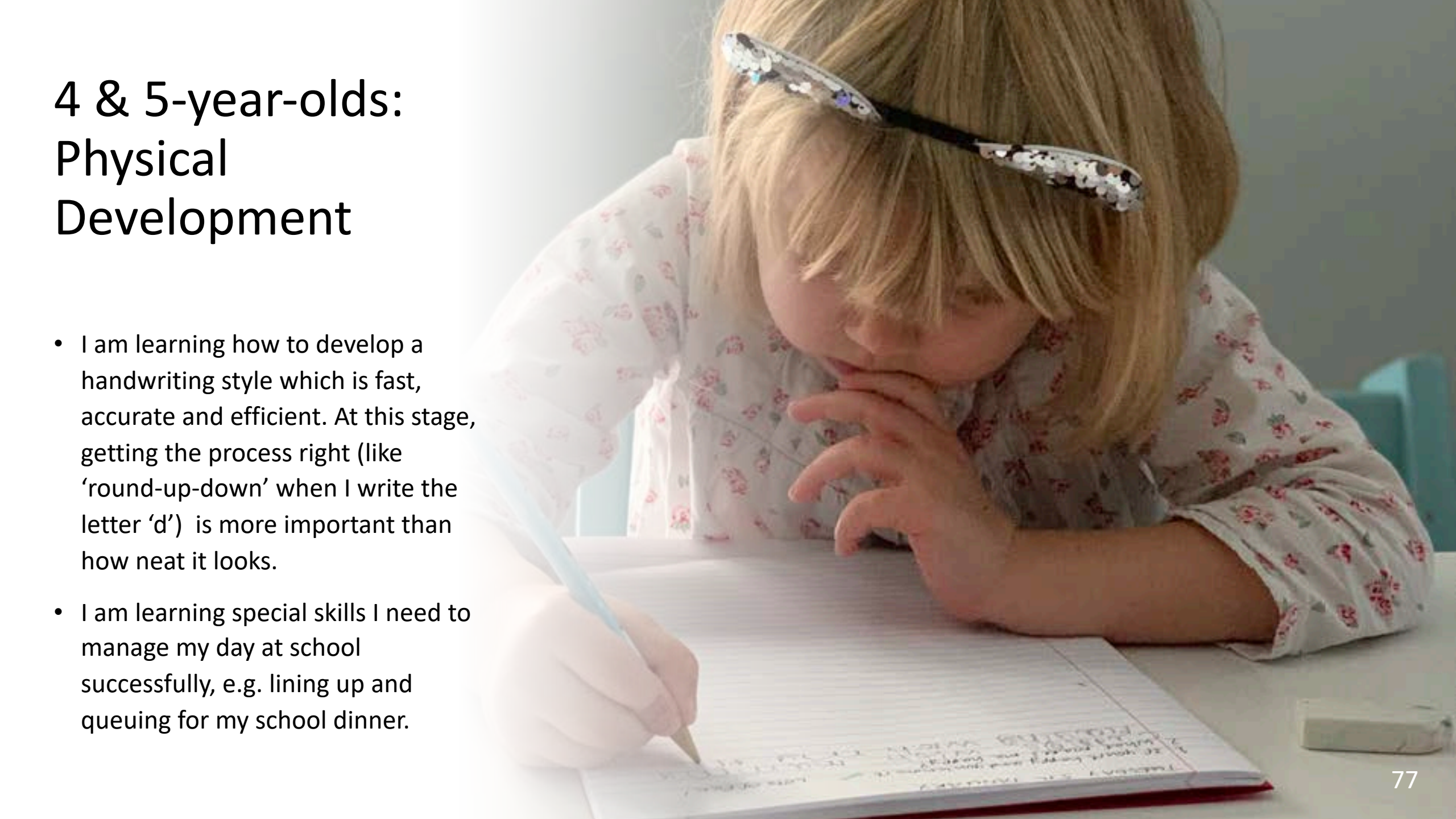
- I can use a range of movements with ease.
- I can respond quickly to changes of speed and direction.

# 4 & 5-year-olds: Physical Development

- I can move with increasing control and grace.
- I have the body strength, coordination and balance to engage in future PE and physical disciplines like dancing, swimming and gymnastics.
- I can use a range of tools such as pencils for drawing and writing, paintbrushes, scissors, knives, forks and spoons.
- I have good posture when sitting at a table or sitting on the floor.
- I am confident using a range of large and small equipment safely indoors and outdoors.
- I am developing confidence, precision and accuracy in throwing, catching, kicking, passing, batting and aiming balls.

# 4 & 5-year-olds: Physical Development

- I am learning how to develop a handwriting style which is fast, accurate and efficient. At this stage, getting the process right (like ‘round-up-down’ when I write the letter ‘d’)  is more important than how neat it looks.
- I am learning special skills I need to manage my day at school successfully, e.g. lining up and queuing for my school dinner.



# 4 & 5-year-olds: Literacy

- I can read individual letters by saying the sounds for them.
- I can blend sounds into words. This helps me to read short words made up of known letter-sound correspondences. Such as ‘h-a-t’.
- I am learning to read some letter groups such as ‘th’, ‘sh’, ‘ee’ and say the sounds for them.
- I can read some common exception words such as ‘do’ and ‘said’ (these will be linked to the phonics programme at your child’s school).

# 4 & 5-year-olds: Literacy

- I can read simple phrases and sentences that are made up of words with familiar letter-sound correspondences. I can read a few exception words where needed.

- I re-read these books at home and in school. I am building up my confidence in word reading, my fluency. I am understanding and enjoying these books.

# 4 & 5-year-olds: Literacy

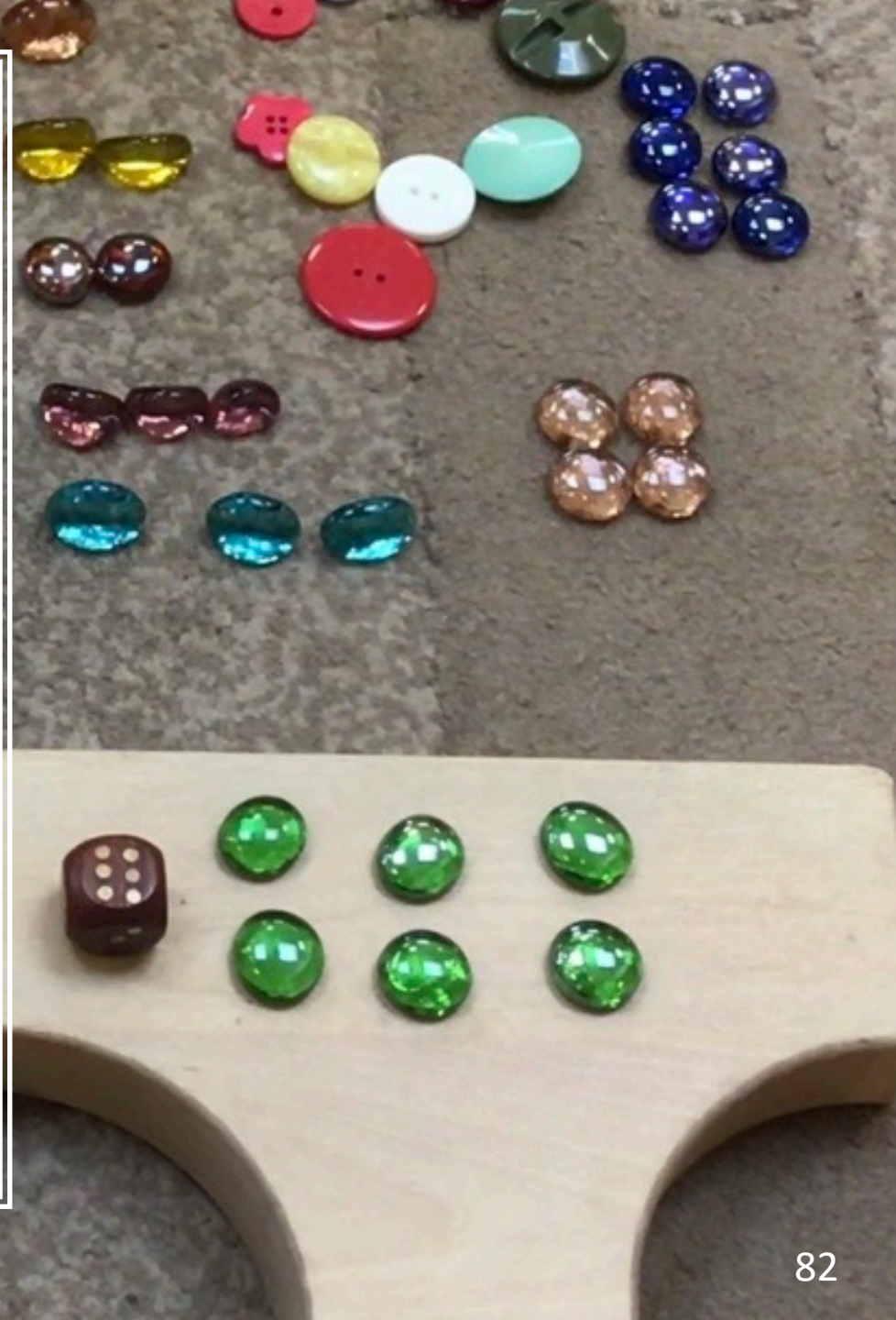
- I can form lower-case and capital letters correctly.
- I can spell words by identifying the sounds. I can write the sound with letter/s.
- I can write short sentences with words when I know the sound-letter correspondences. I can use a capital letter and a full stop.
- I re-read what I have written to check that it makes sense.

# 4 & 5-year olds: Mathematics

- I can count objects, actions and sounds.
- I can quickly recognise a group of up to five objects without counting. This is called ‘subitising’.
- I can match the correct numeral (number symbol) to the right amount, e.g. I can play ‘snap’ where some cards have numerals, and some have dot arrangements.
- I can count beyond ten.
- I can compare numbers of items.
- I understand the ‘one more than/one less than’ relationship between consecutive numbers.

# 4 & 5-year olds: Mathematics

- I am learning about how numbers are made up of other numbers up to 10, e.g. 3 and 3 makes 6. This is called composition of number.
- I know and can say number bonds for numbers 0-5 and some to 10.
- I can select and rotate shapes, this helps me to learn spatial reasoning skills.
- I am learning about how shapes can be combined to make new shapes, e.g. two triangles can be put together to make a square. This helps me to recognise a shape can have other shapes within it, just like numbers can.
- I can continue, copy and create repeating patterns.
- I can compare length, weight and capacity, e.g. “This is heavier than that.”



# 4 & 5-year-olds: Understanding the World

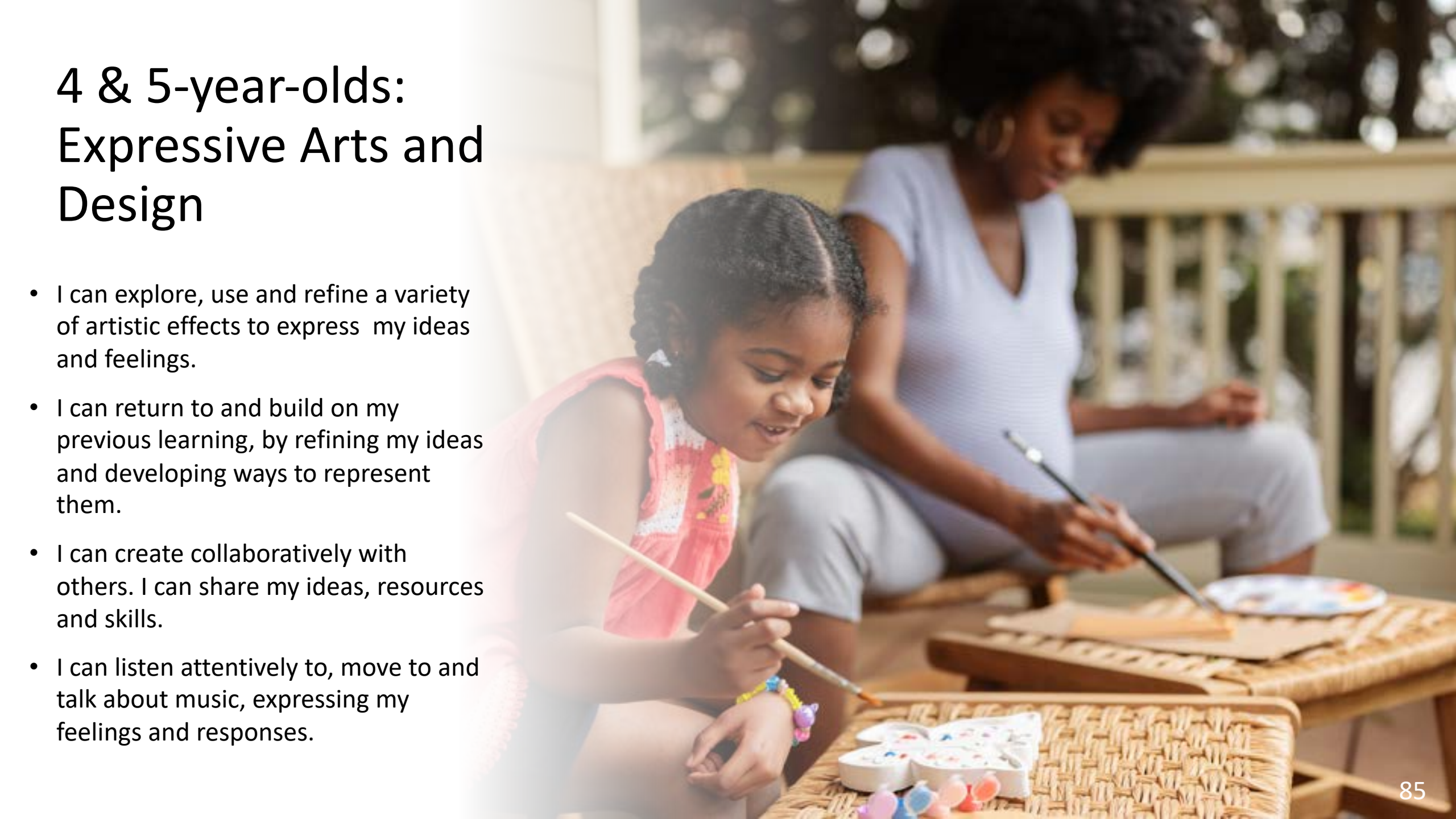
- I like to talk about my family and community.
- I can name and describe people that I have come across within my community, such as hairdressers, the police, nurses, doctors and teachers.
- I can talk about images of familiar situations that happened in the past.
- I am learning about the past and present by comparing and contrasting characters from stories.
- I can draw information from a simple map.

# 4 & 5-year-olds: Understanding the World

- I understand that some places are special to members of my community.
- I understand that people have different beliefs and celebrate special times in different ways.
- I understand that there are similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries.
- I enjoy exploring the the natural world.
- I can describe what I see, hear, feel when I am outdoors.
- I know that the local area I live in is different to other environments.
- I understand that the seasons change and have an effect on the natural world.

# 4 & 5-year-olds: Expressive Arts and Design

- I can explore, use and refine a variety of artistic effects to express  my ideas and feelings.
- I can return to and build on my previous learning, by refining my ideas and developing ways to represent them.
- I can create collaboratively with others. I can share my ideas, resources and skills.
- I can listen attentively to, move to and talk about music, expressing my feelings and responses.



# 4 & 5-year-olds: Expressive Arts and Design

- I can sing in a group or on my own, I am increasingly able to match the pitch and follow the melody.
- I enjoy creating storylines in my pretend play.
- I enjoy exploring and engaging in making music and dance. I can perform by myself or in a group.

# 4 & 5-year-olds: how you can help me with my learning

**Communication & Language**

- Play games with me where I have to listen to your instructions such as a treasure hunt.
- Share a wide range of books and stories with me, including non-fiction and poetry.
- Talk out aloud, commenting on your actions and mine. This helps me hear clear, well-formed sentences.
- Encourage me to have lots of back and forth conversations with other children and adults.

**Personal, Social & Emotional Development**

- Listen carefully to me. Encourage me to express my feelings using words.
- Help me solve problems by talking them through with me. This will help me keep going even when I find it really hard.

**Physical Development**

- Give me time and space to be highly active and get out of breath every day.
- Encourage me to crawl on all fours, climb, pull myself up on a rope and hang on monkey bars. These activities will help me develop the strength I need for writing.
- Let me use one-handed tools like peelers and knives.

# 4 & 5-year-olds: how you can help me with my learning

**Mathematics**

- Name small groups of things, this helps me to 'subitise' (instantly seeing how many without counting) e.g. "There are 3 slices of pizza left."
- Ask me to count out a number of things from a group, e.g. "Could you get me 6 eggs?"
- Make number snap or bingo with numerals and pictures. Match the numerals with the right amount.
- Make patterns with objects, e.g. buttons or shells. Such as 'big, small, big…' Make a mistake and talk with me about how to fix it.

**Understanding the World**

- Share photos and tell stories about my family, both past and present.
- Take me to places of worship and places of local importance in my community.
- Let me help you cook. Talk about changes such as 'melting' or 'boiling'

**Literacy**

- Keep reading with me everyday. Share books that let me see people of different races, cultures, gender and religion.
- Play games where you give me an instruction like "Can you h-o-p?" I have to put the sounds of the word together.
- Let me make up stories – you could write them down for me and we could act them out.
- Make a photo book of our family or when we went to the park and let me write my own words in it.

**Expressive Arts & Design**

- Sing and dance with me when we hear our favourite songs. Encourage me to make up my own routine.
- Give me string, scissors, glue, sticky tape and boxes to make a model.

# Communication and Language *checkpoints*

- Do I like to babble to communicate with you and other familiar adults?
- Around 6 months old, do I respond to my name and ‘take turns’ in conversations with babbling?
- Around 12 months do I ‘take turns’ by babbling and using single words? Do I point and use gestures to show you things that I am interested in?
- Around 12 months old, am I beginning to use single words like ‘mummum’, ‘dada’ and ‘tete’ (‘teddy’)?
- Around 12 months, can I choose between 2 objects: “Do you want the ball or the car?”

# Communication and Language *checkpoints*

- Around 15 months can I say around 10 words? These may not all be clear yet.
- Around 18 months,  can I listen and respond when you give me a simple instruction like: “Adam, put on your shoes?”
- Around 18 months, can I use a range of speech sounds and at least 20 clear words?
- Around 18 months, do I understand lots of different single words and some two-word phrases, such as “Give me.” or “Shoes on.”?
- Around two years, am I starting to show an interest in other children’s play? Do I sometimes join in?

# Communication and Language *checkpoints*

*Towards my second birthday:*

- Can I use up to 50 words?
- Can I put two or three words together such as “More milk.”?
- Do I often ask questions, such as the names of people and objects?
- Am I starting to use pronouns (she/her), plurals and words to describe space? These are tricky and I may not use them correctly to begin with.
- Can I understand lots more words than I can say – between 200–500 words?
- Can I understand simple questions and instructions like: “Where’s your hat?” or “What’s the boy in the picture doing?”

# Communication and Language *checkpoints*

*Towards my third birthday:*

- When we read a book together, can I show I understand action words by pointing to the right picture For example: “Who’s jumping?”
- Do I pay attention if you use my name? E.g. “Jason, please can you stop now. we’re tidying up.”
- Can I use around 300 words? E.g. words to describe things and how they are used (a sponge is for washing). Words to talk about time (now, later), and space (over there).

# Communication and Language *checkpoints*

*Around 3 years:*

- Can I link up to 5 words together?
- Do I use pronouns (‘me’, ‘him’, ‘she’), and plurals?
- Do I use prepositions (‘in’, ‘on’, ‘under’) - these may not always be used correctly to start with.
- Can I follow instructions with three key words like: *“Can you wash dolly’s face?”*
- Can I switch my attention from one activity to another if you use my name?

# Communication and Language *checkpoints*

*Towards my fourth birthday:*

- Can I use sentences with 4-6 words?
- Can I use sentences with joining words such ‘because’, ‘or’, ‘and’? E.g. “I like ice cream because it makes my tongue shiver.”
- Can I use different tenses: “I am going to the park.” and “I went to the shop.”?
- Can I answer simple ‘why’ questions?

# Personal, Social and Emotional Development *checkpoints*

- Around 7 months, do I respond to my name? Do respond to the emotions in your voice?
- Around 12 months, do I start to be shy around strangers and show preferences for certain people and toys?
- Around 18 months, am I increasingly curious about my world? Do I want to explore the world and be noticed by you?
- Around the age of 2, am I starting to see myself as a separate person? E.g. do I decide what to play with, what to eat, what to wear?
- Between 2 and 3 years, am I starting to enjoy being with other children and want to play with them?

# Personal, Social and Emotional Development *checkpoints*

*Towards my third birthday:*

- Can I sometimes share or take turns with others? (with guidance from you) Do I show an understanding of 'yours' and 'mine'?
- Can I settle to some activities for a while?

*Around the age of 4:*

- Do I play alongside others or do I always want to play by myself?
- Do I take part in pretend play (e.g. being 'mummy' or 'daddy'?)
- Do I take part in other pretend play with different roles? Such as being the Gruffalo, for example?
- Can I generally solve conflicts in my play?

# Personal, Social and Emotional Development *checkpoints*

- Around age 4, am I reliably dry during the day? This is typical for most children but not all. Working in partnership with your child's key person will really help.
- Some children can get very upset by certain sounds, smells or tastes, and cannot be calmed. Some children seem to flit from one thing to the next. Some children seem to stay for over-long amounts of time and become distressed if they are encouraged to do something different.
- If you or your child's key person notices that your child is experiencing some of these challenges, you will need to work together. This may involve including other professionals to find out more about these developmental difficulties.
- If you notice that your child seems worried, sad or angry for much of the time, speak to your child's key person or childminder.

# Physical Development *checkpoints*

- As a baby, can I move around with ease and enjoyment?
- At around 12 months, can I pull myself upright from a sitting position and sit down?
- Can I use my first finger and thumb to pick something up?
- Around my second birthday, can I run, kick a ball and jump with both feet off the ground at the same time?
- Around my third birthday, am I a confident climber, can I catch a large ball and pedal a tricycle?

# Physical Development *checkpoints*

- If I find it tricky to sit on a chair comfortably, I might need some help to develop my core tummy muscles.
- You can help me by encouraging me to scoot on sit-down trikes without pedals and jumping on soft play equipment.
- Your child's key person or childminder will be looking out for babies and toddlers who appear underweight, overweight or to have poor dental health. If they are worried, they will need to work closely with you and your health visitor to help your child's health.

# Where to go to learn more

| Source | Link | Support offered |
|---|---|---|
| Action for Children | https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk | Range of resources to support with your child's development. |
| Book Trust | https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/bookfinder/ https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/reading-tips/ | Find children's books for every age. Tips, advice, reading guides. |
| Bilingualism Matters | http://www.bilingualism-matters.ppls.ed.ac.uk/parents-questions/ | Frequently asked questions from parents about raising bilingual children. (In eight languages). |
| Boromi | https://www.boromi.co.uk/dailyplay-2 | Daily emails during school holidays share simple, accessible and play-based activities. |
| Cbeebies Grown-ups | https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups | Tips and ideas for parents. |

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# Where to go to learn more

| Source | Link | Support offered |
|---|---|---|
| DREME Family Maths | https://familymath.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Math-Snacks.pdf | Finding the maths in everyday activities. |
| Early Movers | https://www.earlymovers.org.uk/activities | Information and activities for children 0-5. |
| Easy Peasy | https://www.easypeasyapp.com | App: ideas, advice and inspiration. |
| Family Lives | https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/early-years-development/ | Advice and information on early years development. |
| Foundation Years | https://foundationyears.org.uk/2019/09/resources-for-parents/ | Resources for parents about the EYFS. |
| Formy Books | https://www.formybooks.com | Diverse range of inclusive children's books. |

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# Where to go to learn more

| Source | Link | Support offered |
|---|---|---|
| Harvard Centre | https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/how-to-5-steps-for-brain-building-serve-and-return/ | Video explaining how interactions build babies brains. |
| Hungry Little Minds | https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk | Simple, fun activities for kids, from newborn to five. |
| ICAN: Talking Point | https://ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/parents/ | For parents who are concerned about their child's development. |
| Literacy Trust | https://wordsforlife.org.uk/activities/ | Activities and videos. |
| Love My Books | http://www.lovemybooks.co.uk | Newsletter, activities and videos. |
| Mantralingua | https://uk.mantralingua.com | Bilingual books in 65 languages. |

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|---|---|---|
| Mattel (Laura Henry-Allain MBE & Emma Worrollo) | https://www.mattel.com/sites/mattel_mattelcom/files/2020-07/Supporting_you_to_raise_antiracist_children2.pdf | Parents' guide: supporting you to raise anti-racist children. |
| National Childbirth Trust | https://www.nct.org.uk | Parenting support. |
| NHS – Children's Teeth | https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/taking-care-of-childrens-teeth/ | Dental health advice. |
| NHS Change 4 Life | https://www.nhs.uk/change4life | Easy ways to eat well and move more. |
| Tiny Happy People | https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people | Child development advice, activities and videos. |
| Unicef Parenting | https://www.unicef.org/parenting/ | Child development advice, activities and videos |
| 50 Things to do before you're five | https://www.50thingstodo.org/about/the-app | App: low/no-cost experiences. |

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