

The Learning Environment: Children require an environment that reflects and respects their interests and ideas. It brings new experiences to children and provides creative and open-ended experiences, offers opportunities to work both alone and alongside each other, and promotes a sense of authentic choice. Children have access to both indoor and outdoor learning in all weathers, promoting resilience and a wide range of rich learning opportunities.

Some areas of the classroom are reimagined when we start a new termly topic. This term, our topic 'Once Upon a Time' sees us exploring Fairly Tales and Traditional Stories in both our carpet sessions and through activities around the learning environment.

Group Work and Carpet Sessions: When children participate in group discussion they develop their identity, sense of community and well-being. Children develop their awareness of the needs and rights of others, are open to new challenges, show interest in others and in being part of a group, express a wide range of emotions, thoughts and views.

Children broaden their understanding of the world in which they live, respond in positive ways to people with similarities and differences, and listen to others ideas, respecting different ways of being and doing. During group time, children share humour, happiness and confidence, make new discoveries, feel connected to others, share culture and heritage.

We work on building children's understanding of family and communities, contribute ideas, develop listening and turn-taking skills and engage with technology to make meaning, as well as laying the foundation of knowledge to enable the children to thrive when they move up to Year One and access the National Curriculum.

Our carpet sessions this term will include learning the stories of Jack and the Beanstalk, Cinderella, The 3 Little Pigs and Goldilocks and the 3 Bears. We will look at characters and settings, and how stories have a beginning, middle and end.

Construction Resources: Resources in the Construction Area provide children with opportunities to explore science concepts. Children learn science when they experience gravity as their constructions falls. They also learn about simple machines as they investigate ramps and levers. Construction play also allows children an opportunity to explore spatial reasoning. Young designers learn to manipulate space and objects and explore navigation of space and direction. Block play allows children opportunities to explore maths concepts. These opportunities include counting, comparison of length and width, names of shapes and how to combine certain geometric shapes to make other shapes. Children also develop co-operation and responsibility through construction play as they share and work together. In addition, they learn how to take responsibility when they clear up after finishing with the engineering materials.

This term, we will be encouraging construction of castles and cottages using a range of materials to support our topic.

Role Play: Children need many opportunities for dramatic play to develop rich oral language and a range of literacy and numeracy skills in the early years, as well as problem solving, decision making, persistence, collaboration, negotiation, creativity and lateral thinking. Through dramatic play, children explore perspectives and roles of others to act out what they experience or observe in their own lives.

Children have access to a Home Corner throughout the year, as well as a themed Role-Play area which is sometimes changed based on the children's interests and curiosities and sometimes updated to support our topic learning. This term, our Role Play area is starting as a castle and will change to a cottage as the settings of our stories change over the term.

Literacy Resources: The Literacy area contains a variety of writing implements, a range of papers, notepads, envelopes, cards, stencils, rulers, post-it notes, booklets, invitations, diaries, telephone books, birthday books, registers, magnetic letters, white boards and lists.

Children are able to use these resources to mark-make, draw, trace and write, and as they progress through our Phonics programme, they have the opportunity to use this learning in a range of ways in this area and around the wider classroom. We provide opportunities for mark making and writing across many other areas of the classroom, including outside, role play, the home corner and the creative area. This helps children to recognise that writing is part of everything they will do at school and highlight the importance of developing this skill.

To support our topic this term, we have introduced castle-themed pencil control activities, a range of word mats and vocabulary related to castles and stories, and we are working with interested children to write their own stories using Tales Toolkit.

Numeracy Resources: This area contains the tools and resources of numeracy for the children to use throughout their investigations and the day to develop their mathematical thinking and strategies.

The Numeracy resources include a variety of open ended materials and tools for counting, measuring, timing, calculating and weighing, helping them view numeracy as a set of skills that are useful in everyday life.

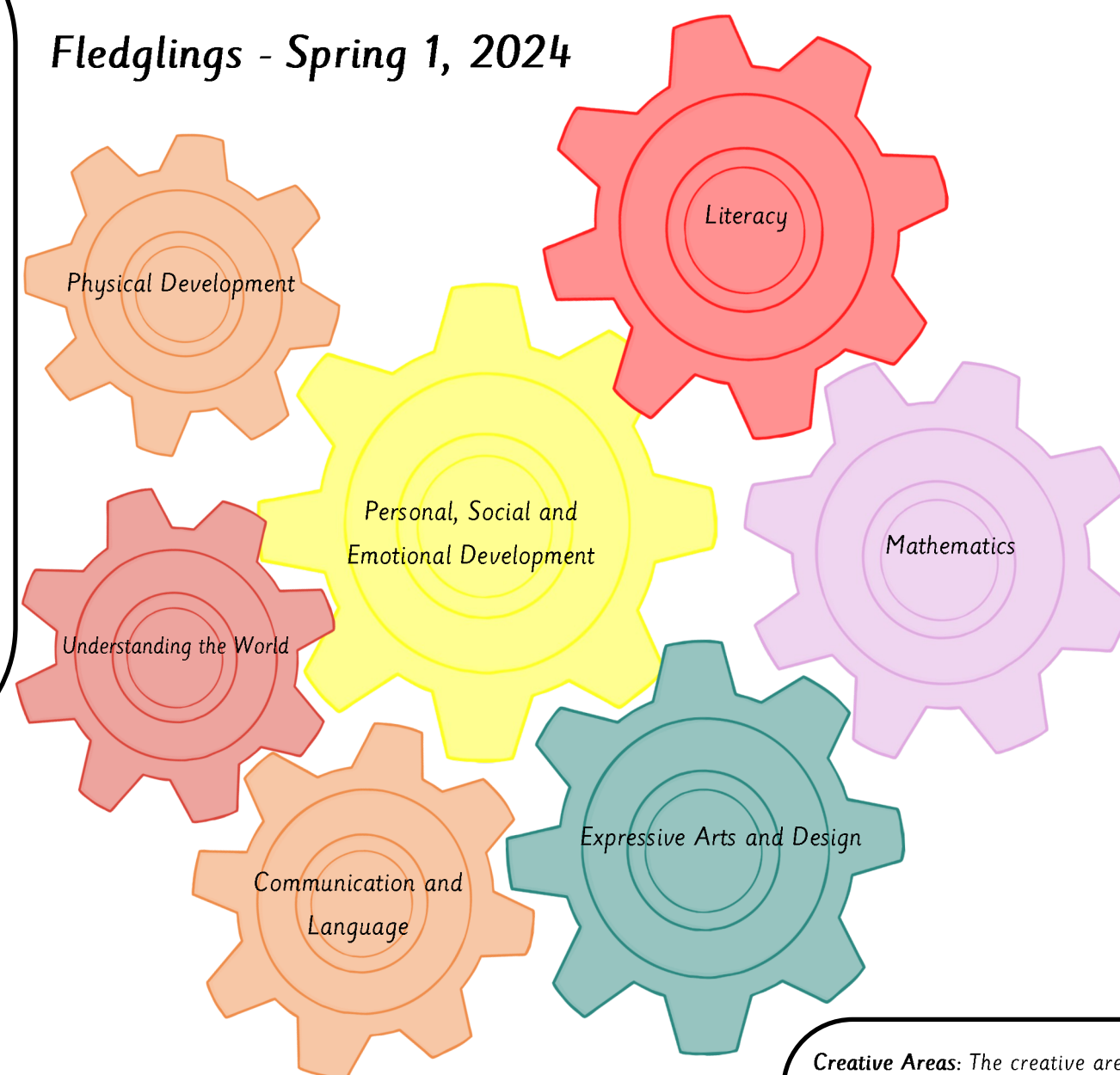
In our daily maths sessions, this term we will be looking at consolidating some concepts covered in the Autumn term, such as subitising to 5 and the language of 'more than', 'fewer than' and 'equal to'. We will also be looking in more depth at the composition of numbers 6 and 7 to help us with our understanding of number bonds.

We are linking numeracy to our topic by using numbers in the stories to reinforce the concepts covered, such as the 5 magic beans in Jack and the Beanstalk, and all the threes in Goldilocks and the 3 Bears.

Creative Areas: The creative areas provide a rich opportunity for a never ending range of creativity and experimentation. The materials displayed create a sense of invitation, order grouping and organisation. The range of resources reflect a variety of different experiences, times, and seasons to allow children to construct a range of artefacts that represent interests, concepts, skills and experiences. The materials are open ended and the focus is on the process rather than the end product. Children develop a wide range of fine-motor skills using a variety of tools and equipment, as well as learning to work safely.

We often provide optional creative activities, to encourage children to develop skills if they find it trickier to create from a blank base. This term will include character stick puppets, making ball gowns for Cinderella, and knights and dragon masks.

Fledglings - Spring 1, 2024



Reading Area: This is an area children can visit for relaxing, reading, researching, sharing information and storytelling. We have themed book boxes around the classroom so children are able to easily find – for example—animal books when exploring the small world farm, or a recipe book when they are making “cupcakes” with playdough.

This term, we have a range of non-fiction books about castles to complement the stories we are learning that are set in them.