

Learning in EYFS: What Science Subject Leaders Need to Know

The EYFS framework is structured very differently to the national curriculum as it is organised across seven Areas of Learning rather than subject areas. This document aims to help subject leaders understand how the skills and knowledge developed across EYFS form the foundations of the national curriculum subjects.

It shows which statements from the non-statutory guidance, Development Matters, are prerequisites for science within the national curriculum. EYFS settings may choose to use other guidance instead of

Development Matters and may decide on different statements as the prerequisites. The table below outlines the most relevant statements taken from the Early Learning Goals in the EYFS statutory framework and from the Development Matters age ranges for three and four-year-olds and reception to match the programme of study for science.

The most relevant statements for science are taken from the following Areas of Learning:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Understanding the World

Science		
Three and Four-Year-Olds	Communication and Language	• Understand 'why' questions, like: "Why do you think the caterpillar got so fat?"
	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	• Make healthy choices about food, drink, activity and toothbrushing.

Understanding the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use all their senses in hands-on exploration of natural materials. • Explore collections of materials with similar and/or different properties. • Talk about what they see, using a wide vocabulary. • Begin to make sense of their own life-story and family's history. • Explore how things work. • Plant seeds and care for growing plants. • Understand the key features of the life cycle of a plant and an animal. • Begin to understand the need to respect and care for the natural environment and all living things. • Explore and talk about different forces they can feel. • Talk about the differences between materials and changes they notice. 		
Reception	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Communication and Language</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn new vocabulary. • Ask questions to find out more and to check what has been said to them. • Articulate their ideas and thoughts in well-formed sentences. • Describe events in some detail. • Use talk to help work out problems and organise thinking and activities, and to explain how things work and why they might happen. • Use new vocabulary in different contexts. </td> </tr> </table>	Communication and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn new vocabulary. • Ask questions to find out more and to check what has been said to them. • Articulate their ideas and thoughts in well-formed sentences. • Describe events in some detail. • Use talk to help work out problems and organise thinking and activities, and to explain how things work and why they might happen. • Use new vocabulary in different contexts.
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Reception Continued	Personal, Social and Emotional Development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know and talk about the different factors that support their overall health and wellbeing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - regular physical activity - healthy eating - toothbrushing - sensible amounts of 'screen time' - having a good sleep routine - being a safe pedestrian
	Understanding the World		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the natural world around them. • Describe what they see, hear and feel while they are outside. • Recognise some environments that are different to the one in which they live. • Understand the effect of changing seasons on the natural world around them.
ELG	Communication and Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Managing Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.
	Understanding the World	The Natural World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants. • Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. • Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.