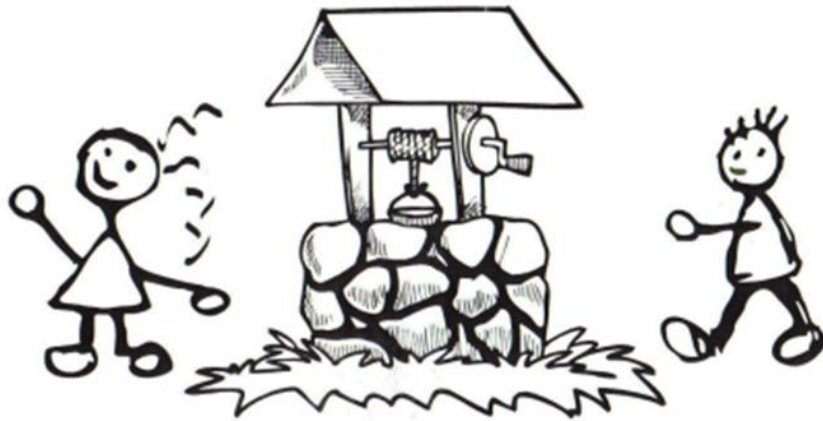


Chasewell Nursery

Chasewell Playgroup



Early Years Curriculum Handbook

For Children Aged 2–4 Years

“Emotionally secure, endlessly curious”

Reviewed: September 2025






Next Review Due: September 2026

Our Ethos at Chasewell Nursery

At Chasewell Nursery, we believe children thrive when they feel safe, seen, and celebrated.

Rooted in over 50 years of community history, our setting is a warm, inclusive space where trusted relationships, child-led exploration, and emotional well-being form the foundation of everything we do.

We are passionate about:

-  Emotional Security: When children feel emotionally secure, they are free to explore the world with confidence. Our practitioners offer consistent, nurturing relationships and use emotion coaching to build resilience and self-awareness.
-  Play as Powerful Learning: Children learn best through open-ended, exploratory play. We design environments that spark curiosity, invite discovery, and empower children to follow their interests—indoors and outdoors, every day.
-  Language, Confidence & Connection: We immerse children in rich storytelling, songs, and conversation, helping them grow as confident communicators and deep thinkers.
-  True Inclusion: Inclusion is not an add-on—it's embedded in our practice. Every child, including those with SEND or EAL, is recognised as competent and capable. We tailor our support, celebrate differences, and provide tools for every learner to access, engage, and succeed.
-  Family & Community Partnerships: As a community-based setting, we work hand-in-hand with families, listening closely and valuing their insight. We know children flourish when supported by a strong circle of care.

Our Curriculum

Intent: What We Want Children to Learn

We want all children in our care to:

1. Feel Safe and Emotionally Secure

- Develop strong, trusting relationships with key adults
- Understand and express their emotions in healthy ways
- Begin to regulate their emotions with adult support

2. Thrive Through Play

- Learn through open-ended, exploratory play
- Be curious, creative, and confident learners
- Follow their interests freely, without pressure or restriction

3. Build Strong Communication and Social Skills

- Use rich language to express ideas, emotions, and experiences
- Enjoy and engage with stories, songs, and conversations
- Build positive relationships with peers and adults

4. Experience Inclusive, Child-Centred Learning

- Access learning tailored to their developmental stage, interests, and needs
- Be recognised as competent and capable, whatever their starting point
- Be supported to meet their potential, including those with SEND

Curriculum Goals by Area of Learning (Ages 2–3 and 3–4)

Area of Learning	2–3 Years	3–4 Years
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to express basic emotions (happy, sad, upset) • Start to form attachments to familiar adults • Play alongside peers (parallel play) • Show preferences for familiar people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express a wider range of emotions • Begin to regulate emotions with adult support • Play cooperatively with peers, starting to share and take turns • Show empathy towards others
Communication & Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use single words and simple phrases • Follow simple instructions • Enjoy action songs and rhymes • Begin to name familiar objects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use language in longer sentences • Engage in back-and-forth conversations • Retell simple events or familiar stories • Ask and answer simple questions
Physical Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk, run, and climb with increasing confidence • Use hands to explore objects (stacking, turning pages) • Begin to feed self using spoon or fork • Attempt simple self-care (hand washing, removing shoes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move confidently and with control • Begin to use mark-making tools with purpose (pencils, paintbrushes) • Pedal tricycles or scooters with confidence • Dress with some independence (putting on coat, shoes)
Literacy (Emergent)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy looking at books and turning pages • Recognise familiar logos (shop signs, food packaging) • Scribble and make marks with meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show awareness that print carries meaning • Recognise some familiar letters or own name • Retell parts of stories using pictures • Begin to give meaning to marks they make
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to say number names in play (1, 2, 3...) • Recognise simple shapes (circle, square) • Show awareness of size (big, small) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Count objects up to 5 and beyond • Recognise and name common shapes • Use language of quantity (more, less, lots) • Notice and create simple patterns
Understanding the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore with senses (touching, tasting, smelling) • Notice differences in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about their own family and community • Explore nature and seasonal changes

	people and environments • Show curiosity about animals and vehicles	• Ask questions about how things work • Show awareness of similarities and differences in people
Expressive Arts & Design	• Enjoy messy play (painting, playdough, water) • Begin to use pretend play with toys (feeding doll, driving car) • Move to music and enjoy simple songs	• Use imagination in role play with peers • Create simple representations through drawing or modelling • Explore different materials and textures creatively • Sing songs from memory and create own movements

Implementation: How We Deliver the Curriculum

1. Emotionally Responsive Practice

- Emotion coaching used daily to support behaviour and build self-regulation
- Feelings are named, validated, and discussed openly
- Adults co-regulate and model calm responses to conflict

2. Storytelling and Language Enrichment

- Daily storytelling using high-quality, diverse texts
- Adults use rich, descriptive language throughout the day
- Songs, rhymes, and role-play used to extend vocabulary and narrative understanding

3. Learning Through Play

- Children are offered open-ended, play-based opportunities that allow them to explore their ideas and deepen their interests freely, without predefined outcomes
- Indoor and outdoor environments are rich, flexible and responsive, encouraging children to test theories, take risks, and follow their own lines of enquiry
- We intentionally avoid overly structured or outcome-driven tasks, instead nurturing creativity, independence, and critical thinking

4. Planning in the Moment

- No rigid topics or themes; planning is guided by children's interests and developmental stages
- Observations inform next steps and adaptations
- Learning is documented in ways that are meaningful and inclusive

Impact: What Progress Looks Like

We know our curriculum is effective when children:

- Demonstrate high levels of well-being and engagement
- Form secure attachments and return to key adults when dysregulated
- Begin to name and talk about their feelings and experiences
- Show curiosity, creativity, and sustained interest during play
- Use spoken language to express needs and share ideas
- Make progress from their starting points, including those with SEND

Assessment is used to support learning, not track data. We use:

- Ongoing formative observation
- Developmental checkpoints based on EYFS guidance
- Regular reflective discussions between practitioners and families

This is supported through our use of the online Tapestry programme, where both parents and key staff can share information on the children's individual development.

Inclusive Education and Support for SEND

We are committed to providing inclusive education that adapts the curriculum to suit every child's needs, including those with SEND, EAL, or developmental differences.

How We Support All Learners:

- Universal Design for Learning: All activities are open-ended and accessible to diverse learners
- Individualised Support: We follow individual learning plans (if required), working closely with families and other professionals
- Visual and Sensory Support: Use of visual schedules, calm spaces, and sensory tools for regulation
- Flexible Communication: Use of Makaton, visuals, and simplified language where needed
- Partnership with Families: Families are key collaborators in identifying and supporting children's needs
- Key Person Approach: Each child has a trusted adult who understands their unique communication style, triggers, and needs

We believe inclusion is not a bolt-on — it's embedded into everything we do. Every child deserves to learn in an environment that is designed with their individuality in mind.

Working with Families

- We value parents as children's first and most enduring educators
- We share strategies for emotional literacy and regulation at home
- Parents are invited to contribute to their child's learning story and celebrate successes
- Regular communication ensures children are supported consistently across home and setting

Monitoring and Review

This curriculum is reviewed annually and updated based on:

- Children's emerging needs
- Feedback from staff, families, and professionals
- Updates to statutory guidance (e.g. EYFS reforms)

Senior leadership and the SENDCo oversee curriculum consistency, inclusive practice, and practitioner development.

Children's development is monitored daily, through observations and planned next steps by the key person. We also do;






- Termly reviews (3 times a year)
- 2 Year check reviews on the 3 prime areas of development; this is usually done between the age of 28-36 months.
- Regular check ins with parents/carers to chat about progress and have open discussion on what is next.



School Readiness at Chasewell Playgroup

At Chasewell Playgroup, we see school readiness not as a checklist of academic skills, but as a holistic journey that prepares each child to thrive as they move on to school. Guided by our ethos of Nurturing, Belonging, and Curiosity, we focus on the whole child—their emotional security, confidence, independence, and love of learning.

School readiness at Chasewell Playgroup looks like:

-  Confidence in Themselves – Children who feel secure in relationships and are beginning to manage their emotions, knowing trusted adults are there to support them.
-  Confidence with Others – Children who can play alongside and with peers, take turns, share, and build positive friendships.
-  Growing Independence – Children who can make choices, follow simple routines, and manage practical skills such as toileting, putting on shoes, and beginning to do up their coats.
-  Skills for Learning – Children who show curiosity, concentration, and persistence in their play. This includes developing fine motor control through play and mark-making, which lays the foundations for early writing.
-  Confidence in the Wider World – Children who are curious about new experiences, who can engage in their community, and who are ready to embrace the new opportunities school will bring.

Our Approach

We prepare children for school by:

- Encouraging resilience and emotional security so they feel safe to try.
- Offering daily opportunities to practise independence in everyday routines.
- Embedding rich play and mark-making to support language, literacy, and creativity.
- Working in partnership with families and local schools to ensure each child's transition is smooth and positive.

Our Commitment

We believe children who feel secure, curious, included, and connected will arrive at school not only “ready to learn,” but ready to flourish. At Chasewell Playgroup, school readiness is about nurturing confident explorers, caring friends, creative thinkers, and resilient learners—children who are eager to take their next step with pride and joy.

☑ Summary Statement

At Chasewell Nursery, our curriculum is rooted in emotional well-being, secure relationships, and child-led play. We create a nurturing space where children are free to explore their interests without limits, build resilience through emotional coaching, and develop a lifelong love of learning. Progress is personal, inclusive, and guided by the child's voice.

Children at Chasewell Playgroup will be...

Emotionally secure, endlessly curious.

