

Learning Area

Independence and self care

Teaching independence and self-care at Little Wrens involves guiding children through a structured series of milestones designed to foster self-sufficiency and confidence. From initial steps like identifying and managing personal items to mastering dressing and personal hygiene, the journey is scaffolded to allow children to develop at their own pace while being supported by attentive adults. As children progress, they are encouraged to take on more responsibility, with the end goal being their ability to handle their self-care routines independently and make informed decisions about their health and well-being, reflecting Little Wrens' commitment to nurturing capable, autonomous individuals.

Milestone I

- I can find my peg and put my own coat on – ask for help if I need it
- I know where the toilet is

Milestone II

- I can put my belongings in the right place
- I can take my coat off
- I can take my shoes off
- I can attempt to put my coat and wellies back on
- I can use the toilet, wash my hands with some support

Milestone III

- I can put my own coat on
- I can change my footwear with support
- I can use the toilet
- I know why I have to wash my hands

Final Milestone

- I am beginning to fasten my own coat
- I can change my own footwear (for inside and outside)
- I can use the toilet and wash my hands independently
- I know that some foods are healthy



Helping hands

- Show the children their own pegs and where to hang their coats up.
- Show children where to put their wellies and reminders of where their shoes need to go.
- Model where things need to go.
- Put the children's wellies the right way round and give support to put them on.
- Introduce within the daily routine toileting and handwashing and use vocabulary to explain systems. Know the children, send at regular times to the toilet.
- Adults to be present at toileting times.
- Adults sensitively acknowledge toilet accidents and fully support changing.

- Children encouraged to hang up own coat and bag and put their lunchbox away.
- Adults to model putting own coat on (over heads).
- Put the children's wellies the right way round and give support to put them on.
- Adults to give visual support for toilet and handwashing.
- Adults to give constant reminders and repetition to use the toilet correctly.
- Adults sensitively acknowledge toilet accidents and support changing.
- Self-help encouraged.

- Adults to provide modelling and praise for the children's efforts. Independence encouraged with regard to toileting and hand-washing.
- Independence promoted. Reduce help and leave children to do the last step.
- Teach children why it is so important to wash hands.



Independence and self care

Learning Area

Literacy & language

At Little Wrens, we cultivate a love for language through a carefully crafted program that tunes children into the rhythm and melody of words. By engaging them in the joyful world of rhymes and songs, we set the foundation for literacy. Starting with simple listening and participation, children gradually progress to anticipating and acting out missing words, enhancing their auditory discrimination and memory. Our approach integrates movement with phonics, allowing children to physically embody the sounds they hear. This multisensory method not only makes learning more enjoyable but also solidifies the neural connections necessary for reading. By the program's conclusion, children are expected to confidently recite rhymes and blend sounds, equipping them with the oral and auditory skills that are crucial precursors to fluent reading and clear articulation.

Milestone I

- To sit, listen and begin to join in with rhymes and songs.

Milestone II

- To be able to join in with rhymes.
- Learn the actions and begin to anticipate the missing word.

Milestone III

- To be able to join in with confidence to nursery rhymes.
- To use actions.
- Oral blend sounds into words

Final Milestone

- To recite 6 or more familiar nursery rhymes in a small group.
- To be able to orally blend.



Helping hands

- Focus Rhymes / song shared each week
- Adults to model and teach actions for songs.
- Use traditional rhymes, action songs and interest related songs.
- Focus on circle songs during the daily mile routine.

- Organise and sing daily ring games (outside)
- Adults to model and use actions for songs / rhymes appropriately throughout the session.
- Adults to model orally segmenting words.
- Adults to deliberately miss out a word in a rhyme so that the children have to fill it in.

- Introduce the 7 aspects of Phase 1 phonics.
- Adults to systematically deliver phase 1 phonics activities
- Link sounds to children's names.
- Repetition of rhymes with small groups.
- Model blending during routines i.e. 'c-oa-t'.



Literacy and language

Learning Area

My world and environment

At Little Wrens, our curriculum is designed to deepen children's connection with the natural world through observation and interaction. This begins with children expressing curiosity about their environment, using their senses to explore and making comments about their observations. Structured activities like daily walks and tending to plants foster a hands-on understanding of nature. Vocabulary development is intertwined with these experiences, enabling children to articulate their observations and questions with increasing sophistication. As they progress, they learn to use language to express empathy for living things, recognize patterns in the natural world, and discuss environmental stewardship. By the final milestone, children are not just noticing the world around them but also thinking critically about it, asking insightful questions, and beginning to understand their role in caring for the planet.

Milestone I

- Offer comments about their surroundings.
- Use senses to explore the Natural world.

Milestone II

- Begin to use new vocabulary to talk about what they see.
- Begin to show care and concern for living things.

Milestone III

- Use relevant vocabulary in appropriate context
- Show care and concerns for living things.
- Notice similarities and differences between living things.

Final Milestone

- Talk about what they see using a wide vocabulary and link to experiences and stories they have heard.
- Begin to understand how to look after the environment and living things.



Helping hands

- Daily walks around the school environment.
- Daily opportunities to observe the outdoor area, field, mud kitchen area.
- Adults to model using vocabulary to explain what we can see.
- Take part in Outdoor learning sessions.
- Have significant events and experiences in class – tadpoles, chicks, growing plants from seeds.

- Plan and introduce new vocabulary related to the ongoing topic and encourage children to use it.
- Ask open ended questions.
- Link stories to prior learning.
- Include vocabulary in books – fiction and non-fiction.
- Recast correct sentence structure and vocabulary to support language development.

- Help children to build sentences using new vocabulary by modelling and recasting.
- Discuss why and how we look after living things – use 1st hand experiences where possible
- Make collections of natural objects to investigate and talk about.
- Rephrase and expand on children's phrases by adding to and extending. Ask out loud – 'I wonder if.....'



My world and environment

Learning Area

Engaging with stories

At Little Wrens, our literacy program is a tapestry of experiences designed to bring stories to life for children, teaching them to retell familiar tales with confidence and joy. We begin by cultivating a love for reading, where children are encouraged to listen, engage, and ask questions about the stories shared with them. Through weekly story sessions and daily reading routines that are integrated with our phonics curriculum, children develop an appreciation for narrative structure, character, and setting. Interactive story stations and book club sessions further enrich their learning experience. As children progress, they learn to participate in storytelling, using vocabulary and concepts from the stories they've heard. By the final milestone, children are not just passive listeners but active storytellers, selecting their favorite stories to retell and discuss, demonstrating their understanding of the story's elements and the ability to link narrative to pictures.

Milestone I

- I am interested and can sit and listen to a story read by an adult.

Milestone II

- I am beginning to respond to books and stories with some repeated refrains.

Milestone III

- I know and join in with favourite phrases from books.
- I know about the concepts of print.

Final Milestone

- To choose a familiar story and talk about what is happening in the pictures.



Helping hands

- Weekly story (read daily) – linked to Phonics curriculum
- Interest or quality fiction based texts linked to theme used for daily story-time – displayed on reading wall.
- Use Story vote station daily
- Have enticing and well-resourced story baskets with quality texts, puppets and props.
- Book club sessions
- Small world setup linking to texts.
- Ask questions and use vocabulary linked to own experiences.
- Introduce concepts of print – i.e. holding the book the correct way and turning the pages.

- Use vocabulary linked to the stories.
- Use puppets/props /story sacks – model in small groups then leave in continuous provision.
- Introduce Helicopter stories and model how we tell them
- Use Drawing Club to respond to stories

- Adults to ask appropriate questions about the story: Characters, setting, plot, structure.
- Share and discuss non-fiction books linked to the main text or interest.
- Consolidate understanding of concepts of print – i.e. holding the book the correct way and turning the pages.
- Tell and perform Helicopter Stories



Engaging with stories

Learning Area

Physical Development: Handling

At Little Wrens, we empower children to hold and use basic tools effectively, laying the foundation for a lifetime of practical skills and creativity. Our program starts with the basics of hand-eye coordination, where children explore a variety of tools, from brushes to pencils, and make marks to express their ideas. As they grow, they are introduced to more complex tasks such as cutting with scissors and threading, always with an emphasis on safety and correct technique. Adults model and provide a vocabulary for discussing the tools, ensuring that children understand their uses and can employ them correctly. By the final milestone, our children can comfortably grip a range of tools, write most letters from their name accurately, and cut with scissors, showcasing their readiness for the next stages of their educational journey.

Milestone I

- To use hand-eye coordination to explore and manipulate tools and resources.
- To make random marks with a range of tools – brushes and pencils.

Milestone II

- Make more controlled movements with mark-making tools such as lines and circles.
- Hold scissors and open and close them.

Milestone III

- Develop pincer grip
- Form some letters from their name with support.
- Use scissors and attempt to cut paper.

Final Milestone

- To hold and use a range of tools with a comfortable grip.
- To write most letters from their name accurately.
- Snip with scissors.



Helping hands

- Adults model how to use tools correctly and safely using vocabulary to discuss and explain.
- Include in weekly planning: Dough Disco, Playdough, Squiggle, 'Funky Fingers'
- Make marks on name cards.
- Model using ball tweezers.
- 'Draw yourself' termly to show progress.

- Encourage tweezer work and provide opportunities to pick up small objects such as pea gravel, 'jewels', etc.
- Use name cards to trace over daily.
- Threading and peg activities.
- Use a range of mark-making resources for free use in the mark-making area.
- Model holding scissors correctly (hand over hand) – offer a range of scissor types
- Encourage writing for a range of purposes – cards, lists, envelopes.
- Have a wide range of stationary for free use.

- See resources for first and second milestone.
- Use the language of up, down, side to side to teach directionality
- Reduce help with scissor work.
- Use name cards to copy name – reduce as needed.



Physical Development Handling

Learning Area

Personal, social & emotional

At Little Wrens Nursery, we're dedicated to fostering personal, social, and emotional growth, helping children to become self-assured learners and empathetic peers. Our supportive setting encourages youngsters to build strong relationships and interact with their environment. Starting with settling in and recognising friends, we lay the groundwork for a secure nursery life. Progressing through our programme, children develop communication skills, learn to share, and begin to reflect on their own learning, embodying a proactive mindset. With initiatives like the Kindness Walk and Seesaw reflections, they cultivate the emotional intelligence necessary for collaborative play and decision-making. Our final goal is for each child to confidently navigate nursery life and interactions with peers, making thoughtful choices that reflect Little Wrens' ethos of nurturing independent, socially skilled individuals.

Milestone I

- Make strong relationships with adults in Nursery.
- Children begin to show willingness to explore the nursery environment.
- I know the name of some friends.

Milestone II

- I can engage with a peer in the same activity.
- I can develop play and exploration through communication.
- Develop a 'can do' attitude towards their learning.
- I am beginning to play and cooperate with others in groups.

Milestone III

- Talk about their learning and play and showing pleasure and pride in what they have done.
- Can persevere and not give up too easily when they find things hard.
- Develop strong friendships and can play in groups with other children.

Final Milestone

- To engage independently in the environment and with my peers.
- To have a strong sense of right and wrong and try to make the right choices.



Helping hands

- Settle into Nursery surroundings, people and routines.
- Learn the rules and expectations of Nursery.
- Introduce friends and their names.
- Support children to play alongside and with how to share with each other.
- Introduce the Kindness Wall .

- Share Seesaw feeds and talk about what they have previously done in Nursery using talk and vocabulary to discuss and explain.
- Model and engage in collaborative and cooperative play to develop sharing and turn-taking.
- Adults to positively challenge children's play – 'I wonder if....' – model being a thinker.

- Share seesaw feeds and encourage children to talk about and reflect on their learning, making links and thinking about new ideas.
- Adults model and suggest appropriate ways of being assertive through talk.
- Adults to talk about what to do to help them if they find things hard.



Personal social and emotional

Learning Area

Communication

At Little Wrens, our ethos is to cultivate effective communication as a cornerstone of early education. We begin by nurturing the ability to share and shift attention, introducing children to simple sentence structures and key vocabulary through daily interactions and play. As they grow, children learn to follow instructions, engage in conversations, and understand the 'why' of their inquiries, laying the groundwork for thoughtful communication. Our environment is rich with opportunities for expressing feelings and for storytelling, which encourages children to talk about their families and personal experiences, fostering empathy and a deeper understanding of the world around them. By the final milestone, children are adept at holding conversations, understanding complex instructions, and listening attentively, ensuring they have a strong linguistic foundation to build upon in their future learning journeys.

Milestone I

- I am beginning to share toys I can shift my attention by using my name.
- I can use a simple sentence.

Milestone II

- I am beginning to follow instructions with 2 parts.
- I understand 'why' questions with support.
- I can start a conversation.
- I can listen to a story and understand what is happening.

Milestone III

- I can talk about my favourite things and what I do with my family.
- I can listen to what other people have to say and respond to them.
- I can take on a role in play and continue a narrative.

Final Milestone

- I can hold a conversation.
- I can understand multiple part instructions.
- I can maintain attention, listen and sit quietly.



Helping hands

- Take part in daily group time and circle games
- Talk about friends and what makes a good one.
- To help with simple jobs in Nursery. (Tidy up time, Snack)
- Adults to introduce key vocabulary.
- Adults to ensure 'thinking time' is given to children and be sensitive to children who need more of this.
- WellComm screening to be made termly and activities carried out where understanding is

- Use vocabulary during Circle time to talk about our learning in Nursery and activities available.
- Display a Family wall with pictures of their own family members and talk about immediate family members and home life.
- Encourage talk about feelings, how we are able to express them and how others feel at different times.

- Adults to model language and conversation skills at every opportunity.
- Adults to model effective talking and listening behaviours through Check in and Circle time
- Adults model language that promotes children's positive thinking and attitude to differences.
- Children to be exposed to a variety of vocabulary rich books and texts throughout the year.



Communication

Learning Area

Understanding number

At Little Wrens, we provide a solid foundation in numerical understanding, guiding children to grasp numbers up to five through engaging, hands-on experiences. Our approach begins with learning number sequences and incorporating counting into daily activities, such as snack time or during story sessions. As children progress, they learn to associate numbers with quantities, match numerals to sets of objects, and confidently count beyond three. Interactive play with dice, dominoes, and number games reinforces their comprehension and use of numbers in various contexts. By the end of their journey, children at Little Wrens can not only recognise numbers up to five but can also count objects reliably and understand simple subtraction, all within a language-rich environment that encourages mathematical confidence and curiosity.

Milestone I

- I am able to say some numbers in sequence.

Milestone II

- I know that the final number means the number in a set.
- I can match the correct number of objects to a numeral.
- I can count objects 1:1 to 3

Milestone III

- I can match the numeral to the correct number (5)
- I can count objects beyond 3.
- I can recite numbers past 5.

Final Milestone

- I can recognise numbers to 5.
- I can reliably count 5 objects.
- I can subitise to 3.



Helping hands

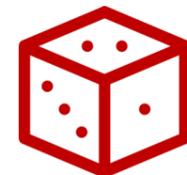
- Number rhymes
- Adult to model counting in everyday contexts – group time, lining up, registration
- Model and use Five frames for registration
- Counting at snack time – how many orange segments, etc.
- Count daily story vote coins

- Demonstrate finger numbers up to 5 – encourage children to match their fingers.
- Sing number rhymes – 5 little ducks, etc.
- Counting children at group time and finding on the number line.
- Play number games at appropriate level of understanding.
- Ask children to find a specific number of things. Count objects with children and repeat the last number.

- Model and repeat matching numbers to numerals – games and activities.
- Play dice and dominoes games and focus on subitizing.
- Compare quantities to 5 in different contexts.
- Use the language of more or fewer.
- Provide regular opportunities for subitising.
- Numerals and pictorial representations of number displayed throughout the setting.



1 2 3



Understanding number