



Merridale Primary School
'Growing together'



Themes for the Foundation Stage

The topics that we use in Nursery and Reception to enrich the learning of our children are explored to develop several areas of learning. In addition, we may introduce mini topics that link in with children's interests. This is because if children are interested in a topic they are more likely to learn. In Reception, for instance, our child focused topics have been superheroes, dinosaurs, pirates and Space. The following are the main topics for each half term.

Take a look (Autumn term 1st half term)

The children explore the indoors and outdoors of their new setting. They become familiar with the routines and the new children and adults that they work and play with daily. They investigate the grounds and Forest School, finding out about the wonderful outdoor classroom which changes as the seasons change. They may harvest the apples, pears and damsons growing outside which leads to a topic on food. The children will explore the food talking about what it looks like and small cooking activities enable them to make their own fruit kebabs. As they become more settled and begin to make friendships they learn about each other and this is when we are more likely to introduce mini topics to help them engage in a meaningful way with their interests and their new friends.

Let's Celebrate (Autumn term 2nd half)

As Autumn arrives it is time to learn about the changes outside—the colourful leaves arrive and the children investigate them together with the seeds from the trees using them for printing in their art project. The pumpkins are harvested from the garden ready for a Pumpkin party. The children will learn about other celebrations too. They will explore the different festivals of Diwali, Eid and Christmas. They will learn about special celebration clothes, customs and food. They will talk about their own home and what they celebrate. Reception children begin to explore their local area, finding out about the local streets and where they live. They will learn about maps and learn new vocabulary about their local community.

People who help us (Spring term 1st half)

As children become more aware of the wider community they learn about the people who help them in school and we have visits from our local Community Support Officers and the Fire Brigade. The children learn about their special jobs and in their own role play they demonstrate their new learning by writing and talking about their knowledge.

Fantasy and adventure (Spring term 1st half)

In this topic children focus on traditional tales and favourite stories from the literacy spine like "The Bear Hunt" or "The Gruffalo". The children will have the opportunity to act out and retell the stories.

Curiosity and wonder (Spring term 2nd half)

The children use their senses and observational skills to find out the changes outdoors. It is an opportunity to learn about the frogspawn in the pond or the ice in the puddles and how this freezes and melts. The children freeze their own ice and make ice sculptures. The children can begin to feed the birds and observe them from the Bird Hide, learning how they are different.

Growing and changing (Summer 1st half)

The children find out about growth by growing their own plants for the garden. They watch them grow and then help to transfer them to the garden. They watch and learn how the plants change and they ensure that they take it in turns to look after them. They find out about their own growth, measuring their height and comparing the differences in size. As they explore in the garden we usually have a topic on minibeasts. We learn the name of them and find out how they are different.

Exploring and travelling (Summer 2nd half)

We explore the theme of journeys which links in with our school visits as the children travel to another venue. It is also an opportunity for children to prepare themselves for their journey to a new class or setting. At this time we may introduce one of our mini topics such as Pirates which develops children's imagination and creative abilities as they make their own pirate costumes.