

Literacy

Curriculum Overview for 2 Year Olds






EYFS Educational Programme:

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long learning of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

Intent Statement:


Reading


At Sir James Knott Nursery School, our intent for Literacy- Reading in our 2-year-old provision is to provide experience joyful, language-rich interactions and a print-rich environment so they begin to see themselves as readers. This is done through:


-  **Love books and stories:** choose and share books, handle them with care, attend to short stories, and retell familiar parts using props, actions and pictures.
-  **Tune into sounds and patterns:** delight in songs, rhyme and rhythm; join in with repeated refrains; begin playful phonological awareness (e.g., rhyme, alliteration) appropriate to stage.
-  **Build vocabulary and comprehension:** hear and use rich language; make links between stories and their own experiences through book talk and small-world play.
-  **Notice that print carries meaning:** recognise familiar logos/symbols; begin to notice their name and simple environmental print; follow simple visual sequences.
-  **Feel included and able to participate:** respond and retell using words, signs, symbols or alternative and augmentative (AAC) within a total-communication environment; encounter diverse, culturally representative and dual-language texts.


Writing


At Sir James Knott Nursery School, our intent for Literacy- Writing in our 2-year-old provision is to Our aim is provide purposeful mark-making and develop the physical foundations for later writing through sensory, large-scale and outdoor experiences. This is done through:

-  **Enjoy daily mark-making:** explore large-scale/sensory media (water, paint, chalk, mud) indoors and outdoors; choose tools (chunky crayons, brushes, sticks) safely with support.

 **Develop physical readiness for writing:** strengthen core, shoulder, arm and hand control through gross-to-fine movement (climbing, pushing, squeezing, posting, threading).

 **See writing as meaningful:** ascribe meaning to their marks and “read back” their ideas; use early symbols/pictures to label play (lists, signs, cards, name attempts).

 **Use multiple modes to record ideas:** communicate through marks, drawings, stamps, photos and simple visuals/PECS as appropriate within a total-communication approach.

 **Experience real purposes for writing:** observe adults modelling writing in play (menus, messages, name labels) and have opportunities to contribute their own marks.

We recognise that every child is unique and will develop at their own pace. Our practitioners are sensitive to developmental needs, including those related to communication, sensory regulation, and SEND, ensuring that all children feel respected and included.

Knowledge

Reading




I know....

- that stories have pictures and words.
- I can hold a book and turn the pages.
- the difference between the front and back of a book.
- some of my favourite books and stories.
- that looking at books can be fun with my family or key person.
- that the pictures can tell me something, even if I don't read the words yet.
- that books can show animals, people and things I see in real life.
- some actions or sounds that go with rhymes and songs.
- that pointing to pictures helps me talk about what I see.
- I can ask for my favourite story again and again.

Writing

I know....

- I can make marks with my hands, fingers, and tools.
- I can use crayons, chalk, or pens to make lines and dots.
- my marks can be different shapes, like circles or zig-zags.
- I can enjoy making marks on different surfaces, like paper, sand, or outside.
- that adults can see what I do and talk with me about my marks.
- that sometimes my marks can stand for something I say.
- I can use both hands or swap hands when I make marks.
- I can choose colours and tools I like to use.
- I can copy some simple actions, like dots, lines, or scribbles.
- that making marks is fun and I can share them with others.

Skills	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am learning to hold books and turn pages by myself. • I am learning to look at pictures and talk about what I see. • I am learning to point to things I know in books. • I am learning to listen to stories and rhymes I like. • I am learning to join in with actions and sounds in songs and stories. • I am learning to notice that stories and books have meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am learning to enjoy making marks with my hands and tools. • I am learning to make different shapes, lines, and patterns. • I am learning to choose crayons, chalks or pens I want to use. • I am learning to share my marks with others. • I am learning to copy simple movements like dots, lines, and circles. • I am learning that my marks can mean something I say.
<p>Implementation Statement:</p> <p>At Sir James Knott Nursery School, we implement high-quality provision for Reading in our 2-year-old setting through the following approaches:</p> <p>Reading</p> <p> Environment and resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core book spine (6–8 texts/term), including. wordless, dual-language and culturally representative books. • Cosy, low-level book areas indoors/outdoors; story sacks/baskets with puppets and real objects. • Environmental print and visual timetables to reinforce that print carries meaning. <p> Routines and experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily story and rhyme (short, frequent); playful phonological awareness (listening, rhyme, rhythm). • Book talk in play: adults join small-world/role-play to retell with props. • Re-read and revisit cycles (same text several times/week) to deepen vocab and comprehension. <p> Adult interaction and modelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model book handling, introduce new vocabulary, use commentary talk (describe/expand). • Total communication: gesture, signs, visuals, objects of reference/AAC for full participation. • Sustained shared thinking: wonder, predict, link to lived experience (brief, concrete prompts). 	

Assessment and adaptation

- Capture quick notes/photos of engagement, vocab, sound-awareness, recall.
- Adapt book choice/length/props (movement breaks, sensory versions) to attention and sensory needs.

Inclusion and family partnership

- Book bags, rhyme cards, home-language versions; invite family voice notes/videos of favourites.
- Targeted small groups (e.g., attention/listening/vocab) aligned with WellComm or similar tools.

Writing

At Sir James Knott Nursery School, we implement high-quality provision for Writing in our 2-year-old setting through the following approaches:

Environment and resources

- Large-scale/sensory mark-making daily (water, paint, chalk, sand, mud, foam); vertical surfaces.
- Chunky, grasp-friendly tools, clipboards in role-play; open-ended media and loose parts for printing.

Routines and experiences

- Movement-to-mark sessions (gross motor → big arm patterns → marks) 2× weekly.
- Real purposes: menus, tickets, signs, lists, name cards; children “add their mark”.
- Finger-gym/fine-motor invitations daily (dough, pegs, threading, squeezing, posting).

Adult interaction and modelling

- Scribe children’s words (adult writes idea; child adds marks/drawings) to show marks carry meaning.
- Narrate tool use and name strokes/shapes (curves, zig-zags) to build motor schemas.
- Total communication to plan/recall marks (photos, symbols, choice boards/PECS).


Assessment and adaptation




- Observe functional control (grasp/pressure/endurance), mark intent, participation; adjust tools/media.



- Provide sensory-aware alternatives (weighted tools, textured grips, quiet nooks).

Inclusion and family partnership

- **Home ideas** (bath crayons, pavement chalk, shopping lists); share photo prompts celebrating marks.
- **Targeted fine-motor/mark-making groups** (short, varied, playful) with clear next steps.

 **Overall Implementation:** In our 2-year-old provision, we create a language-rich and print-aware environment where 2-year-olds are encouraged to explore books, rhymes, stories, and mark-making as part of their daily play and routines. Staff model the joy of reading and writing, supporting children's early attempts to handle books, recognise pictures, and make marks with meaning. Through responsive interactions, well-planned provision, and consistent encouragement, children begin to understand that print and symbols carry meaning. Literacy learning is embedded across all areas of provision – indoors, outdoors, and through role play – so children develop confidence, curiosity, and a secure foundation for future reading and writing skills.

<p>First milestone:  Enjoys books and stories</p> <p>Shows interest in familiar books, songs, and rhymes, and may want them repeated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share books daily- Read simple, repetitive stories with strong rhythms, rhymes, and bold illustrations. • Follow the child's lead- Re-read favourites often and allow children to choose their own books.
<p>Second milestone:  Handles books correctly</p> <p>Holds books the right way up and turns pages, sometimes several at once.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model book handling- Show how to hold books the right way up, turn pages slowly, and talk about pictures.
<p>Third milestone:  Recognises and responds to pictures</p> <p>Points to and names familiar images or objects in books.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use props and actions- Add puppets, toys, or gestures to bring stories and rhymes alive. • Talk about pictures- Point, name, and describe things in books, pausing so the child can respond.

<p>Forth milestone:  Begins to make marks with meaning</p> <p>Uses crayons, chalk, or fingers to make marks and may start to talk about what they represent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer mark-making opportunities- Provide crayons, chunky pens, chalks, paint, and water brushes. • Use different surfaces- Encourage drawing on paper, card, pavement, sand, flour, or steamed-up windows. • Value all marks- Respond positively to scribbles and talk with children about what their marks mean. • Model writing- Let children see adults writing shopping lists, names, or labels, showing that marks carry meaning. • Encourage hand skills- Provide playdough, building blocks, and threading to strengthen fine motor control for early writing.
<p>Final milestone:  Begins to understand that marks, symbols, and pictures can carry meaning, and starts to use their own marks to represent ideas or experiences</p> <p>This is the foundation of early writing and creative expression.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a wide range of mark-making opportunities indoors and outdoors (chalk, paint, sand, water, crayons). • Celebrate and display children's creations, encouraging them to talk about their marks. • Model how marks and symbols carry meaning (e.g., writing names, labels, or captions in front of children). • Share books with illustrations, pointing out how pictures tell part of the story. • Offer responsive interactions, asking open-ended questions about children's drawings or marks ("Tell me about this...") • Encourage early role-play experiences where children use 'writing' for purpose (e.g., shopping lists, menus, signs).
<p>Vocabulary: book, story, rhyme, read, share, sit, action, turn, page, front, back, song, hold, chalk, pen, pencil, line, dot, circle, make, making, choose, share, sounds</p>	

Impact Statement:



Reading and Stories

By the end of being two I can...

- Enjoy looking at books and listening to familiar stories and rhymes.
- Hold a book the right way up and turn pages (sometimes a few at once!).
- Point to and talk about pictures or objects I recognise.



Writing and Mark-Making

By the end of being two I can...

- Make my own marks with crayons, chalk, or paint and talk about them.
- Begin to understand that my marks and pictures can carry meaning.



Communication and Expression

By the end of being two I can...

- Share my ideas, feelings, and experiences through early talk, play, and mark-making.



Overall Impact: In our 2-year-old provision, practitioners focus on children demonstrating a growing love of books, stories, and rhymes and showing confidence in handling books and recognising familiar images. They make their own marks with increasing purpose and begin to understand that marks, symbols, and pictures carry meaning. Through daily opportunities for reading, mark-making, and communication, children develop the foundations for future reading and writing.

Literacy

Curriculum Overview for 3 and 4 year olds


EYFS Educational Programme:


It is crucial for children to develop a life-long learning of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).


Intent Statement:


At Sir James Knott Nursery School, our intent for Literacy Development in our 3-4 year-old provision is to:

Reading:


 **Reading and Storytelling:** We want children to develop a strong enjoyment of books, rhymes, and stories, both familiar and new. To join in with repeated refrains, predict key events, and retell parts of stories. To build listening and attention skills through shared reading, story time, and small group work.


 **Print Awareness and Early Reading Behaviours:** We want children to understand that print carries meaning and is read from left to right, top to bottom. To recognise their own name and some familiar logos, signs, and labels in the environment.


 **Language and Communication for Literacy:** We want children to build a wide vocabulary through songs, rhymes, and storytelling. To use spoken language to retell, predict, and invent stories. To engage in sustained conversations that build narrative skills.


 **Imagination and Role Play:** We want children to explore story ideas through imaginative play.

Writing:

 **Writing and Mark-Making:** We want children to develop confidence in mark-making using a range of tools, media, and surfaces. To begin to ascribe meaning to their marks, explaining what they have drawn or written. To experiment with letter shapes and symbols, moving towards recognisable letters. To use early writing in role play and everyday experiences (e.g., shopping lists, labels, signs).

 **Physical Development for Writing:** We want children to strengthen fine motor control through threading, cutting, drawing, and construction play. To refine gross motor movements to support posture, pencil grip, and fluent writing in Reception.

 **Imagination and Role Play:** We want children to use props, puppets, and role-play writing materials to bring stories and writing to life.

 **Inclusion and Access:** We want children to access a diverse range of books, songs, and rhymes reflecting different cultures and experiences. To see their own lives, languages, and identities represented in texts and mark-making activities. To receive targeted support where needed to ensure every child can progress in Literacy.

We recognise that every child is unique and will develop at their own pace. Our practitioners are sensitive to developmental needs, including those related to communication, sensory regulation, and SEND, ensuring that all children feel respected and included.

Knowledge

Reading

I know....

- that books can tell me stories and show me pictures I like.
- how to hold a book the right way up and turn the pages one by one.
- some of my favourite books and rhymes and can ask for them again.
- I can join in with repeating words and actions in stories.
- that pictures and words can help me talk about what I see and remember.
- that I can guess what might happen next in a story.
- that print and symbols are all around me (like signs and logos).
- I can talk about what happens in stories I enjoy.
- how to listen to longer stories and talk about what happens.
- that print has meaning and is used for different purposes.
- that we read English books from left to right and top to bottom.
- that letters have names and sounds.
- some familiar words and signs in my environment (like my name or shop logos).
- I can join in with rhymes and predict what comes next in stories.
- that stories have characters, settings, and events.
- that I can retell a story in my own words or with props.

Writing

I know....

- I can make marks on paper, card, or other surfaces using my hands, fingers, or tools.
- that my marks can mean something, even if they are just scribbles.
- I can choose colours, pens, pencils, or crayons I want to use.
- I can copy simple shapes, lines, or letters that I see.
- that I can enjoy drawing and mark-making with adults or friends.
- that I can talk about the marks I make and what they mean.
- that I can begin to write some letters or symbols, especially the ones in my name.
- that writing carries meaning and I can use letters, marks, or symbols to communicate.
- some letter shapes and the sounds they make.
- I can write for different purposes, like lists, stories, or labels.
- I can use tools (pencils, pens, keyboards) safely and effectively to write.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to handle books carefully and talk about my favourite ones. • that reading is something I can do with adults and friends for fun. 	
<p>Skills: Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am learning to enjoy and listen to stories, rhymes, and songs. • I am learning to join in with repeated words, phrases, or actions in stories. • I am learning to look at pictures and talk about what I see. • I am learning to handle books carefully and turn pages correctly. • I am learning to handle books carefully and turn pages correctly. • I am learning to recognise familiar signs, labels, or symbols in my environment. • I am learning to listen to longer stories and recall events, characters, and settings. • I am learning to understand that print carries meaning and can be read from left to right and top to bottom. • I am learning to join in with rhymes and predict what comes next in stories. • I am learning to retell stories in my own words or with props. 	<p>Skills: Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am learning to make marks using my fingers, hands, or tools. • I am learning to copy simple shapes, lines, or letters. • I am learning to talk about the marks I make and what they mean. • I am learning to enjoy mark-making with adults and friends. • I am learning to begin to write my own name or familiar letters. • I am learning to use marks, letters, and symbols to communicate meaning. • I am learning to plan what I want to write and write for different purposes, like stories, labels, or lists. • I am learning to form letters correctly and use tools like pencils with control.

Implementation Statement:

At Sir James Knott Nursery School, we implement high-quality provision for Reading in our 2-year-old setting through the following approaches:

Reading



Reading and Storytelling

- Daily story sessions, small-group reading, and interactive rhyme times led by staff.
- A balance of familiar, repetitive stories and new, challenging texts introduced regularly.
- Use of puppets, props, and role-play areas to retell and act out stories.
- Adults model reading behaviours- turning pages, following text, using expression.



Print Awareness and Early Reading Behaviours

- Labels, signs, and print displayed throughout the environment at child level.
- Children's names and photos used daily (self-registration, coat pegs, snack time).
- Practitioners draw attention to print in the environment, modelling directionality (left to right, top to bottom).



Language and Communication for Literacy

- Staff model rich vocabulary and story language during play.
- Open-ended questions encourage children to predict, retell, and sequence events.
- Use of dialogic reading strategies to build comprehension and inference skills.



Imagination and Role Play

- Storytelling corners with props and costumes to inspire narrative play.
- Opportunities for children to create and act out their own stories.

Writing



Writing and Mark-Making

- Accessible mark-making areas indoors and outdoors with varied tools (chalk, crayons, pens, paint, sticks).
- Adults scribe children's words, captions, and stories, modelling the connection between spoken and written language.
- Daily opportunities for purposeful writing in play (menus, shopping lists, signs, messages).

Physical Development for Writing


- Planned fine motor activities: threading, dough, scissors, tweezers, pegboards.
- Large-scale mark-making opportunities: brushes, rollers, water painting outdoors.
- Gross motor play (climbing, balancing, dancing) to support posture and control.

Imagination and Role Play

- Literacy materials (notepads, clipboards, pens) in role-play areas.

Inclusion and Access

- A diverse range of books reflecting cultures, languages, and family experiences.
- Dual-language texts and visual supports for EAL learners.
- Targeted support and differentiated resources for children with SEND.
- Regular audits of provision to ensure accessibility and representation.





 **Overall Implementation:** For our older children, Literacy is embedded throughout daily routines, play, and interactions so children experience reading and writing as meaningful, enjoyable, and purposeful. Staff act as models of readers and writers, sharing books with enthusiasm, drawing attention to print, and scribing children's thoughts and stories to show the power of the written word.

Children are immersed in a language-rich and print-rich environment where books, labels, signs, and story props are readily available. They take part in daily storytelling, rhyme, and reading opportunities that build vocabulary, comprehension, and a love of stories.

Mark-making and writing are supported through a wide range of tools and contexts, from large outdoor brushes and chalks to clipboards in role play, giving children choice and purpose in their early writing. Fine and gross motor activities are planned to strengthen control, preparing children for fluent writing later.

All children, regardless of need or background, are provided with inclusive and accessible literacy experiences. Resources reflect diversity, and practitioners differentiate support to ensure every child can make progress in both reading and writing.

Through this approach, children develop the confidence, skills, and motivation that provide a secure foundation for their future journey as readers and writers.

<p>First milestone:  Enjoys stories and rhymes</p> <p>Listens to and joins in with familiar stories, songs, and rhymes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read stories daily, using expressive voices and gestures. • Repeat favourite stories and rhymes to build familiarity. • Encourage children to join in with repeated phrases, sounds, and actions. • Use props, puppets, or toys to bring stories to life.
<p>Second milestone:  Handles books correctly</p> <p>Holds books the right way up, turns pages carefully, and engages with illustrations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model how to hold a book, turn pages slowly, and point to pictures. • Provide books with sturdy pages and appealing illustrations. • Encourage children to explore books independently and share them with peers.
<p>Third milestone:  Begins mark-making</p> <p>Makes marks using fingers, hands, or simple tools, and begins to understand that marks can have meaning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a variety of mark-making tools (crayons, chalk, paint, pencils) and surfaces (paper, card, sand). • Praise all marks and talk with children about what they have created. • Join in with drawing and scribbling to model creativity and vocabulary for marks.
<p>Forth milestone:  Recognises print in the environment</p> <p>Notices familiar signs, labels, or symbols around them and may attempt to copy them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point out labels, signs, and logos in the classroom or outdoors. • Encourage children to copy letters, symbols, or signs they see. • Integrate print into play areas (e.g. shop signs, menus, name labels). • Read environmental print aloud to show that text has meaning.

Final milestone: 🌟 I can make marks and begin to understand that marks, symbols, and pictures can have meaning, enjoy listening to and joining in with familiar stories, songs, and rhymes, and recognise some print in their environment.

This shows that I am developing the early foundations of reading and writing, building the confidence, curiosity, and skills I need for my future literacy journey.

- Choose my favourite books and rhymes and ask for them again and again.
- Point to and talk about pictures in books, making links to my own experiences.
- Experiment with different ways of making marks (chalk, crayons, paint, fingers).
- Spot familiar letters, logos, or signs around me and begin to copy them.
- Use my own words to explain what my marks or pictures mean.
- Show excitement and confidence when exploring books, stories, and writing in play.

Vocabulary: story, rhyme, song, book, pages, front, back, carefully, turn, upside down, right way up, character, happens, next, beginning, end, middle, repeat, draw, write, crayon, pen, pencil, paint, what, signs, letters, sounds, list, menu, label, scribble, line, circle, dot, shape, talk, picture, left, right, meaning, setting, predict, problem, solution, events

Impact Statement:

Reading and Storytelling

By the end of Nursery I can...

- Children listen attentively to stories and rhymes, joining in with repeated refrains and predicting what might happen next.
- They handle books carefully, hold them the right way up, and turn pages with increasing control.
- Children begin to retell familiar stories in their own words and use story language in their play.

Print Awareness

By the end of Nursery I can...

- Children notice print in the environment, such as their own name, labels, or familiar logos.
- They begin to understand that print carries meaning and use this knowledge in play and real-life contexts.

Writing and Mark-Making


By the end of Nursery I can...

- Children use a wide range of tools and materials to make marks, drawings, and early attempts at letters.
- They ascribe meaning to their marks and begin to share what their drawings and writing represent.
- Children use writing purposefully in role play (e.g., menus, shopping lists, signs).

Communication and Expression

By the end of Nursery I can...

- Children talk confidently about stories, characters, and their own creations, using new vocabulary and imaginative ideas.
- They show pride in their work and are eager to share it with adults and peers.

 **Overall Impact:** By the end of Nursery we want children to leave with a secure foundation in early literacy: A love of books and storytelling. An awareness that print carries meaning. Confidence in expressing themselves through mark-making.

The motivation and curiosity to continue their reading and writing journey in Reception and beyond.