

30–50 Months

Communication & Language

Listening & Attention

- Listens to others one-to-one or in small groups, when conversation interests them.
- Listens to stories with increasing attention and recall.
- Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories.
- Focusing attention – still listen or do, but can shift own attention.
- Is able to follow directions (if not intently focused on own choice of activity).

Understanding

- Understands use of objects (e.g. “*What do we use to cut things?*”)
- Shows understanding of prepositions, such as ‘under’, ‘on top’, ‘behind’ by carrying out an action or selecting correct picture.
- Responds to simple instructions, e.g. to get or put *away* an object.
- Beginning to understand ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions.

Speaking

- Beginning to use more complex sentences to link thoughts (e.g. *using and, because*).
- Can retell a simple past event in correct order (e.g. *went down slide, hurt finger*).
- Uses talk to connect ideas, explain what is happening and anticipate what might happen next, recall and relive past experiences.
- Questions why things happen and gives explanations. Asks e.g. *who, what, when, how*.
- Uses a range of tenses (e.g. *play, playing, will play, played*).
- Uses intonation, rhythm and phrasing to make the meaning clear to others.
- Uses vocabulary focused on objects and people that are of particular importance to them.
- Builds up vocabulary that reflects the breadth of their experiences.
- Uses talk in pretending that objects stand for something else in play, e.g. ‘*This box is my castle*.’

Personal, Social & Emotional Development

Self-Confidence & Self-Awareness

- Can select and use activities and resources with help.
- Welcomes and values praise for what they have done.
- Enjoys responsibility of carrying out small tasks.
- Is more outgoing towards unfamiliar people and more confident in new social situations.
- Confident to talk to other children when playing, and will communicate freely about own home and community.
- Shows confidence in asking adults for help.

Physical Development

Moving & Handling

- Moves freely and with pleasure and confidence in a range of ways, such as slithering, shuffling, rolling, crawling, walking, running, jumping, skipping, sliding and hopping.
- Mounts stairs, steps or climbing equipment using alternate feet.
- Walks downstairs, two feet to each step while carrying a small object.
- Runs skilfully and negotiates space successfully, adjusting speed or direction to avoid obstacles.
- Can stand momentarily on one foot when shown.
- Can catch a large ball.
- Draws lines and circles using gross motor movements.
- Uses one-handed tools and equipment, e.g. makes snips in paper with child scissors.
- Holds pencil between thumb and two fingers, no longer using whole hand grasp.
- Holds pencil near point between first two fingers and thumb and uses it with good control.
- Can copy some letters, e.g. letters from their name.

Health & Self-Care

- Can tell adults when hungry or tired or when they want to rest or play.
- Observes the effects of activity on their bodies.
- Understands that equipment and tools have to be used safely.
- Gains more bowel and bladder control and can attend to toileting needs most of the time themselves.
- Can usually manage washing and drying hands.
- Dresses with help, e.g. puts arms into open-fronted coat or shirt when held up, pulls up own trousers, and pulls up zipper once it is fastened at the bottom.

Managing Feelings & Behaviour

- Aware of own feelings, and knows that some actions and words can hurt others’ feelings.
- Begins to accept the needs of others and can take turns and share resources, sometimes with support from others.
- Can usually tolerate delay when needs are not immediately met, and understands wishes may not always be met.
- Can usually adapt behaviour to different events, social situations and changes in routine.

Making Relationships

- Can play in a group, extending and elaborating play ideas, e.g. building up a role-play activity with other children.
- Initiates play, offering cues to peers to join them.
- Keeps play going by responding to what others are saying or doing.
- Demonstrates friendly behaviour, initiating conversations and forming good relationships with peers and familiar adults.

30–50 Months

Expressive Arts & Design

Exploring & Using Media & Materials

- Enjoys joining in with dancing and ring games.
- Sings a few familiar songs.
- Beginning to move rhythmically.
- Imitates movement in response to music.
- Taps out simple repeated rhythms.
- Explores and learns how sounds can be changed.
- Explores colour and how colours can be changed.
- Understands that they can use lines to enclose a space, and then begin to use these shapes to represent objects.
- Beginning to be interested in and describe the texture of things.
- Uses various construction materials.
- Beginning to construct, stacking blocks vertically and horizontally, making enclosures and creating spaces.
- Joins construction pieces together to build and balance.
- Realises tools can be used for a purpose.

Being Imaginative

- Developing preferences for forms of expression.
- Uses movement to express feelings.
- Creates movement in response to music.
- Sings to self and makes up simple songs.
- Makes up rhythms.
- Notices what adults do, imitating what is observed and then doing it spontaneously when the adult is not there.
- Engages in imaginative role play based on own first-hand experiences.
- Builds stories around toys, e.g. farm animals needing rescue from an armchair 'cliff'.
- Uses available resources to create props to support role play.
- Captures experiences and responses with a range of media, such as music, dance and paint and other materials or words.

Literacy

Reading

- Enjoys rhyming and rhythmic activities.
- Shows awareness of rhyme and alliteration.
- Recognises rhythm in spoken words.
- Listens to and joins in with stories and poems, one-to-one and also in small groups.
- Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories.

Mathematics

Numbers

- Uses some number names and number language spontaneously.
- Uses some number names accurately in play.
- Recites numbers in order to 10.
- Knows that numbers identify how many objects are in a set.
- Beginning to represent numbers using fingers, marks on paper or pictures.
- Sometimes matches numeral and quantity correctly.
- Shows curiosity about numbers by offering comments or asking questions.
- Compares two groups of objects, saying when they have the same number.
- Shows an interest in number problems.
- Separates a group of three or four objects in different ways, beginning to recognise that the total is still the same.
- Shows an interest in numerals in the environment.
- Shows an interest in representing numbers.
- Realises not only objects, but anything can be counted, including steps, claps or jumps.

Shape, Space & Measure

- Shows an interest in shape and space by playing with shapes or making arrangements with objects.
- Shows awareness of similarities of shapes in the environment.
- Uses positional language.
- Shows interest in shape by sustained construction activity or by talking about shapes or arrangements.
- Shows interest in shapes in the environment.
- Uses shapes appropriately for tasks.

Writing

- Sometimes gives meaning to marks as they draw and paint.
- Ascribes meanings to marks that they see in different places.

Understanding the World

People & Communities

- Shows interest in the lives of people who are familiar to them.
- Remembers and talks about significant events in their own experience.
- Recognises and describes special times or events for family or friends.
- Shows interest in different occupations and ways of life.
- Knows some of the things that make them unique, and can talk about some of the similarities and differences in relation to friends or family.

The World

- Comments and asks questions about aspects of their familiar world, such as the place where they live or the natural world.
- Can talk about some of the things they have observed, such as plants, animals, natural and found objects.
- Talks about why things happen and how things work.
- Developing an understanding of growth, decay and changes over time.
- Shows care and concern for living things and the environment.

Technology

- Knows how to operate simple equipment, e.g. turns on CD player and uses remote control.
- Shows an interest in technological toys with knobs or pulleys, or real objects.
- Shows skill in making toys work by pressing parts or lifting flaps to achieve effects, such as sound, movements or new images.
- Knows that information can be retrieved from computers.

Reading

- Beginning to be aware of the way stories are structured.
- Suggests how the story might end.
- Listens to stories with increasing attention and recall.
- Describes main story settings, events and principal characters.
- Shows interest in illustrations and print in books and print in the environment.
- Recognises familiar words and signs such as own name and advertising logos.
- Looks at books independently.
- Handles books carefully.
- Knows information can be relayed in the form of print.
- Holds books the correct way up and turns pages.
- Knows that print carries meaning and, in English, is read from left to right and top to bottom.