

Ducklings – Making and Baking

Level 1 (Birth to 3) Level 2 (3-4 years) Level 3 (Reception)

The *Making and Baking* curriculum provides children with complex needs meaningful, sensory-rich learning experiences rooted in real life. Learning is adapted to individual starting points for children working within Birth to 3, 3–4 years and Reception, with a strong focus on communication, engagement, independence and sensory regulation. Through hands-on baking and simple scientific exploration, children experience changes of state and natural phenomena, developing early understanding of cause and effect. Adults use consistent routines, visual supports, objects of reference and modelling to ensure learning is accessible and inclusive. Fiction and non-fiction texts, including visual recipes, are used to support early literacy and understanding of processes. Progress is measured through observation of small steps, increased engagement, communication, and independence, rather than age-related expectations.

Texts

The Little Red Hen by Ronne Randall

Sweet: Inside a Bakery by Lisa Greathouse

Children engage with fiction and non-fiction texts through carefully planned enhanced provision and adult-led experiences that are matched to their developmental stage and individual needs. Texts are embedded within practical, sensory activities, enabling children to make meaningful connections between stories, information books and real-life experiences. Adults model enjoyment of books, introduce and repeat key vocabulary, and use visuals, objects of reference, signs and symbols to support understanding and communication. Adult-led sessions provide structured opportunities for shared attention, listening and interaction, while enhanced provision allows children to independently explore books, visual recipes and story props at their own pace. This approach supports early literacy, communication and comprehension, and enables children to demonstrate engagement in a range of developmentally appropriate ways.

Daily sessions:

- Attention Autism Bucket Time
- Sensory Story and/or story massage
- Sensory Circuit
- Phonics
- Life skills

Weekly overview

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
PSED	Winning and Losing	Winning and Losing	Kind words	Kind hands and feet	Growing up – how do we change?	Growing up – babies, children and adults
PD	Bouncing a ball	Bounce and catch	Throwing a ball through a hoop	Throwing to a partner	Catching a ball – increasing distance	Throwing and catching in a group
Literacy	That's not my Snowman	That's not my Snowman	The Little Red Hen	The Little Red Hen	Sweet: Inside a Bakery	Sweet: Inside a bakery
Maths	Find 6 and 7	Show 6 and 7	Recap 1-7	Compare by size	Order by size	Explore length
UTW	Exploring ice	Exploring ice/ice cream	Making bread	Making cupcakes Melting chocolate	(Old and New) Green and ripe banana mixing	(Old and New) Toys
EAD	Colour collage	Shape collage	Texture collages	Photo collages	Nature collages	Large scale collaborative collage

Phonics	Baa baa black sheep	Baa baa black sheep	Pat a cake	Pat a cake	Row your boat	Row your boat
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Learning Objectives for “Making and Baking”.

Planning is rooted in Development Matters guidance and adapted to meet individual needs. Children with complex needs may be working below age-related expectations; progress is measured through engagement, communication, independence, and small, meaningful developmental steps. We collect evidence through photographs and observations and ensure planned activities alongside continuous and enhanced provision to provide the opportunities required for meeting EHCP targets.

Communication and Language

Birth to 3

- Enjoys listening to familiar sounds, songs, and simple stories linked to baking
- Uses eye gaze, gestures, vocalisations, signs, or symbols to communicate needs and interests
- Responds to familiar words and phrases such as “mix”, “pour”, and “stop”
- Shows shared attention during sensory baking activities

3–4 Years

- Listens to and understands simple questions and instructions
- Uses words, signs, or short phrases to express ideas, needs, and preferences
- Begins to use new vocabulary related to baking and changes (e.g. hot, cold, melt)
- Engages in back-and-forth interactions during shared activities

Reception

- Listens attentively and follows simple instructions
- Uses words, signs, symbols, or short phrases to describe experiences
- Develops and uses vocabulary linked to changes of state and processes
- Participates in conversations during adult-led and child-initiated activities

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Birth to 3

- Forms secure attachments with familiar adults
- Shows awareness of own emotions and sensory preferences
- Anticipates familiar routines such as baking sessions
- Seeks comfort and reassurance when exploring new experiences

3–4 Years

- Separates from key adults with support
- Expresses a range of emotions and begins to regulate behaviour
- Shows confidence to explore new activities and materials
- Begins to take turns and play alongside others

Reception

- Manages emotions with adult support
- Develops independence in routines and self-care
- Builds positive relationships with adults and peers
- Shows pride and confidence in achievements

Physical Development

Birth to 3

- Explores materials using hands, mouth, and body movements
- Develops grasp, strength, and coordination through pouring and squeezing
- Shows increasing control in large movements
- Cooperates with care routines such as handwashing

3–4 Years

- Moves confidently and safely in practical spaces
- Uses tools and equipment with increasing control
- Develops hand strength through mixing, kneading, and scooping
- Shows increasing independence in self-care routines

Reception

- Uses a range of tools effectively
- Develops fine motor control for functional tasks
- Shows awareness of safety when using equipment
- Manages personal care needs with confidence

Literacy

Birth to 3

- Enjoys sharing books and sensory stories
- Explores pictures, symbols, and familiar objects
- Makes marks using fingers, tools, or ingredients
- Begins to understand that pictures and symbols carry meaning

3–4 Years

- Engages with stories and non-fiction texts related to baking
- Shows interest in print and visual recipes
- Makes marks with purpose
- Begins to understand that print conveys meaning

Reception

- Engages with a range of fiction and non-fiction texts
- Recognises familiar words, symbols, or logos
- Uses visual recipes and labels
- Uses mark-making or early writing to represent ideas

Mathematics

Birth to 3

- Explores quantity through filling, emptying, and transferring
- Experiences size, weight, and capacity through sensory play
- Experiences sequences and routines
- Hears mathematical language modelled by adults

3–4 Years

- Counts small numbers in meaningful contexts

- Uses language related to measure (full, empty, more, less)
- Explores size, weight, and capacity
- Understands simple sequences and routines

Reception

- Counts small quantities with accuracy
- Uses measure language in practical contexts
- Understands order, sequence, and changes over time
- Begins to solve simple problems during baking activities

Understanding the World

Birth to 3

- Explores materials through sensory experiences
- Notices changes and cause and effect
- Experiences natural phenomena such as heat, melting, and texture change
- Shows curiosity about ingredients and materials

3–4 Years

- Explores changes of state through cooking and baking
- Talks about what they notice during changes
- Begins to understand simple processes
- Makes links between experiences and stories or information texts

Reception

- Describes changes of state and natural phenomena
- Explores processes using simple tools
- Makes connections between real-life experiences and texts
- Shows curiosity and asks questions about changes

Expressive Arts and Design

Birth to 3

- Explores textures, smells, and materials freely
- Responds to sensory experiences through movement or expression

- Shows preferences for certain sensory experiences

3–4 Years

- Explores colour, texture, and form through mixing and decorating
- Engages in imaginative play related to kitchens and baking
- Expresses ideas and preferences creatively

Reception

- Uses materials creatively to express ideas
- Engages in role play and imaginative experiences
- Takes pride in creations and shares outcomes