

DT in the Early Years

The Early Years Foundation Framework for physical development, understanding the world and expressive arts and design set the foundations for design and technology in key stage 1 and 2, along with other areas of learning.

‘The development of children’s artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.’ ‘Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.’ ‘Listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world.’

This is what you might see



Us caring for our growing vegetables.



Picking fruit and vegetables that we have grown



Children will start to gain the DT knowledge that they’ll build on throughout their primary school years, such as developing their gross and fine motor skills to be able to hold a range of tools and equipment with control; design, make and evaluate models with a



Creating paper slider mechanisms



Designing, making and adapting models



weaving



Preparing food

Progression to Year 1

Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design purposeful, functional, appealing products for themselves and other users based on design criteria. • Generate, develop, model and communicate their ideas through talking, drawing, templates, mock-ups and, where appropriate, information and communication technology.
Make	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select from and use a range of tools and equipment to perform practical tasks (for example, cutting, shaping, joining and finishing.) • Select from and use a wide range of materials and components, including construction materials, textiles and ingredients, according to their characteristics.
Evaluate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and evaluate a range of existing products • Evaluate their ideas and products against design criteria.
Technical Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build structures, exploring how they can be made stronger, stiffer and more stable. • Explore and use mechanisms (for example, levers, sliders, wheels and axels) in their products.

Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build structures exploring how they can be made stronger, stiffer and more stable. Recognise areas of weakness through trial and error.
Textiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore different methods of joining fabrics and experiment to determine the pros and cons of each technique.
Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce and explore simple mechanisms, such as sliders, wheels and axels in their designs. Recognise where mechanisms such as these exist in toys and other familiar products.
Cooking and Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about the basic rules of a healthy and varied diet to create dishes. Understand where food comes from, for example plants and animals.