Our 2–3 Years Curriculum

Snowdrop, Sunflower & Tulip

At Auckland House Nursery, our 2–3 years curriculum builds on children's developing independence, communication, confidence and curiosity. Children are encouraged to explore, make choices, develop relationships and become increasingly confident in expressing their ideas, feelings and preferences.

At this age, children learn through meaningful play, stories, songs, movement, sensory experiences, outdoor learning and everyday routines. Our practitioners provide rich opportunities for children to explore the world around them while following their individual interests and developmental needs.

Our curriculum is organised around engaging monthly themes, providing children with opportunities to revisit important vocabulary and concepts in different ways throughout the year.

What does learning look like for our 2–3-year-olds?

Throughout the year, children will have opportunities to:

- Develop their confidence, independence and sense of self.
- Build positive relationships with familiar adults and other children.
- Develop their communication and vocabulary.
- Express their feelings, preferences and ideas.
- Enjoy stories, songs, rhymes and repeated language.
- Develop early literacy and mark-making skills.
- Explore number, counting, sorting, shape and pattern through play.
- Investigate the natural world and seasonal changes.
- Develop physical skills through movement and outdoor play.
- Explore materials through sensory and creative experiences.
- Develop imaginative and role-play skills.
- Learn about different families, cultures, traditions and celebrations.
- Develop confidence in making choices and solving simple problems.

Our Year of Learning

September – All About Me

We begin the year by helping children develop a strong sense of themselves and understand what makes them special.

Book: *Hooray for Hoppy*

Children explore:

- Body parts
- Feelings
- What makes them special
- Similarities and differences
- Talking about themselves
- Teddy Bear Day

Children are encouraged to talk about their feelings, preferences and experiences. Photographs, visual choices and familiar objects help children communicate and recognise themselves within the nursery environment.

October – Autumn

We explore the sights, sounds, colours and textures of autumn.

Book: *The Leaf Thief*

Children enjoy:

- Collecting natural objects
- Exploring autumn leaves
- Investigating autumn colours
- Discovering conkers and acorns
- Observing seasonal changes
- Halloween experiences

Children develop descriptive vocabulary such as *brown*, *falling*, *crunchy*, *acorn* and *conker* through real-life experiences and outdoor exploration.

November – Autumn

We continue exploring the changing season, weather and the natural environment.

Book: *Millie-Mae in Autumn*

Children experience:

- Autumn walks
- Mud and water exploration
- Weather sounds
- Wind and clouds
- Seasonal changes
- Bonfire Night and Diwali

Children are encouraged to describe what they can see, hear and feel, with visual prompts and simple sentences supporting their communication.

December – Christmas

We explore the excitement of winter celebrations while recognising that every family may celebrate in different ways.

Book: *Squirrel's Snowman*

Children enjoy:

- Decorating the room and tree
- Exploring shiny materials
- Christmas songs and stories
- Talking about presents and celebrations
- Christmas and Hanukkah
- Exploring different traditions

Children are supported through changes to routines using visual sequences and familiar language. Families are invited to share traditional foods, clothing, music, decorations and stories.

January – Winter

We investigate winter weather and explore what happens when materials freeze and melt.

Book: *Are You There Little Penguin?*

Children explore:

- Ice
- Freezing and melting
- Cold and icy materials
- Winter weather
- Temperature
- Winter songs and stories

Children develop descriptive language such as *cold, icy, frozen, freeze* and *melt* while exploring real materials and sensory experiences.

February – Love

We focus on relationships, feelings, friendship, kindness and caring for others.

Book: *The Feelings Book*

Children explore:

- Caring for friends and dolls
- Sharing
- Kindness
- Friendship
- Feelings
- Helping others
- Valentine's Day and Chinese New Year

Puppets, photographs and stories help children explore emotions and relationships. Children are supported to communicate feelings using words, gestures, signs or symbols.

March – Spring

Spring provides opportunities to explore growth, animals, plants and changes in the natural world.

Book: *Spring is Here*

Children enjoy:

- Planting seeds
- Looking for and making birds' nests
- Exploring flowers
- Watching plants grow
- Learning about animals
- Exploring butterflies and blossoms
- Ramadan and other spring traditions

Children are encouraged to observe changes and develop vocabulary such as *seed, nest, hatch, grow, blossom* and *butterfly*.

April – Easter & Spring

We continue exploring spring through animals, stories, sensory play and celebrations.

Book: *Happy Easter Mouse*

Children experience:

- Easter egg hunts
- Filling baskets
- Spring animals
- Easter stories and songs
- Exploring celebrations and traditions
- Easter and spring-themed sensory activities

Children can participate in different ways, with visual prompts, real objects and sensory alternatives helping every child to take part.

May – Journeys

Children begin to explore journeys, travel and different forms of transport.

Book: *Whatever Next!*

Children explore:

- Journeys
- Maps
- Routes
- Vehicles
- Destinations
- Travel role play
- Counting passengers

Children use maps, photographs, objects and role play to develop their understanding of journeys and the wider world.

Families are encouraged to share photographs, stories, songs or objects connected to journeys and important places.

June – Food

Food provides exciting opportunities for sensory exploration, communication, mathematics and understanding different cultures.

Book: *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*

Children explore:

- Fruit and vegetables
- Tastes and textures
- Healthy foods
- Food sorting
- Food tasting
- Cooking and food experiences

Children are encouraged to communicate their preferences and explore food through sight, smell, touch and taste without pressure.

We also introduce foods from different cultures and encourage families to share familiar food names and experiences.

July – Summer & Seaside

We explore summer through sand, water, shells and seaside experiences.

Book: *Bears at the Beach*

Children enjoy:

- Exploring sand and water
- Looking at seaside photographs
- Talking about beach experiences
- Sorting shells
- Exploring the sea and waves
- Summer songs and rhymes

Children develop descriptive vocabulary such as *beach*, *waves*, *seaside*, *shell*, *sand* and *sea*.

We also explore how families experience summer and seaside environments in different countries and cultures.

August – Fantasy & Adventure

We finish the year by encouraging children's imagination, creativity and curiosity.

Book: *The Way Back Home*

Children explore:

- Space
- Rockets
- Planets
- Small-world space play
- Comparing planet sizes
- Space-themed arts and crafts
- Fantasy and adventure stories

Children are encouraged to act out, communicate and represent stories in different ways, including through movement, role play, construction, drawing and creative activities.

Communication & Language

Communication and language are at the heart of our 2–3 curriculum.

Children are supported to:

- Develop new vocabulary.

- Use words and simple phrases to communicate.
- Talk about their experiences.
- Express their needs and preferences.
- Listen to stories and songs.
- Join in with familiar rhymes.
- Respond to questions and simple instructions.
- Develop confidence when talking with adults and children.

Practitioners model simple sentences and repeat important vocabulary throughout the day.

Personal, Social & Emotional Development

Children are supported to develop positive relationships and a growing understanding of themselves and others.

We encourage children to:

- Express their feelings.
- Recognise emotions.
- Develop friendships.
- Share and take turns.
- Show kindness and care.
- Develop independence.
- Make choices.
- Understand similarities and differences.
- Develop confidence and a sense of belonging.

Stories, puppets, photographs, role play and real-life experiences help children explore relationships and emotions.

Literacy

A love of books, stories, songs and rhymes is developed throughout the year.

Children have opportunities to:

- Listen to and enjoy stories.
- Join in with repeated phrases.
- Sing familiar songs and rhymes.
- Talk about characters and events.
- Explore books independently.
- Develop early mark-making.
- Use drawing and creative experiences to communicate ideas.
- Develop an understanding that print and marks carry meaning.

Our monthly books provide familiar opportunities for children to revisit stories, vocabulary and ideas.

Mathematics

Mathematics is developed naturally through play and everyday experiences.

Children explore:

- Counting
- Number
- Sorting
- Matching
- Comparing
- Size
- Shape
- Pattern
- Capacity
- Sequencing
- Position and direction

Mathematical learning is incorporated into experiences such as counting conkers, sorting shells, counting passengers and exploring food.

Understanding the World

Children are naturally curious about the world around them. Our curriculum provides opportunities to investigate people, places, nature and seasonal changes.

Children explore:

- Autumn and winter
- Spring and summer
- Plants and animals
- Weather
- Food
- Transport
- Journeys
- Celebrations
- Different cultures and traditions
- Space and the natural world

Children are encouraged to observe, explore, ask questions and talk about what they discover.

Expressive Arts & Design

Creativity and imagination are encouraged through a wide range of experiences.

Children have opportunities to:

- Paint and create.
- Explore colours and textures.
- Sing and make music.
- Dance and move.
- Explore role play.
- Use puppets and small-world resources.
- Create models.
- Explore imaginative stories.
- Use natural and recycled materials.

Children are encouraged to develop their own ideas and express themselves in ways that are meaningful to them.

Physical Development

Physical development is supported through everyday routines, indoor and outdoor play and practical experiences.

Children develop:

- Balance
- Coordination
- Movement
- Fine motor control
- Hand strength
- Spatial awareness
- Confidence in physical activity
- Independence in everyday tasks

Outdoor walks, messy play, sensory activities, construction and movement experiences all contribute to children's physical development.

Inclusion, SEND & EAL

Inclusion is embedded throughout our curriculum.

We recognise that every child develops differently and provide a range of ways for children to access and communicate their learning.

We may use:

- Visual choices
- Photographs
- Symbols and signs
- Real objects
- Visual sequences
- Sensory alternatives

- Gestures
- Additional processing time
- Alternative ways to participate
- Adapted physical activities

Children learning English as an additional language are supported through repetition, visual prompts, familiar objects and the use of home languages.

We value children's home languages and invite families to share important words, songs, stories and traditions.

Celebrating Families & Cultures

We want children to see their families, languages, cultures and experiences reflected in nursery life.

Throughout the year, families are invited to contribute:

Photographs | Home languages | Stories | Songs | Traditional foods | Clothing | Music | Celebrations | Family traditions

We explore celebrations and traditions respectfully and recognise that not every family celebrates the same festivals.

Working in Partnership with Families

Parents and carers are an essential part of children's learning.

We encourage families to share experiences from home so that practitioners can build on children's existing knowledge and interests.

Whether it is a family journey, a favourite food, a special celebration, a home-language word or an exciting experience, these contributions help children make meaningful connections between home and nursery.

Our aim

To nurture confident, curious and independent young learners who are developing their voices, relationships, understanding and love of exploring the world around them.