

# Nursery Overview 2025-2026

## King Athelstan EYFS Curriculum Information



### Planning in the Moment at King Athelstan

At King Athelstan, we use the EYFS approach of 'planning in the moment' to support children's natural curiosity and love of learning. Rather than following a fixed plan, our practitioners observe children closely and respond to their interests as they arise throughout the day. When a child shows curiosity or begins an activity, staff join in to extend learning through meaningful conversation, open-ended questions, and carefully chosen resources. This keeps children fully engaged and ensures learning is relevant, enjoyable, and tailored to each child's individual needs.

### Key Texts to Spark Curiosity

We use a range of carefully selected key texts, including stories and non-fiction books, to spark curiosity and support learning. These texts are introduced flexibly and linked to children's interests, helping to develop vocabulary, encourage discussion, and inspire imaginative play. Key texts are often revisited during play and group times, supporting children to make connections and deepen their understanding.

### Understanding Common Play Behaviours

Alongside planning in the moment and key texts, we use 'Common Play Behaviours' to help us assess where the children are at with their play, a term used by Early Years Specialist Dr Alistar Bryce Clegg:

*"Children learn best when they are engaged in play that is meaningful, exploratory, and self-directed. 'Common play behaviours' is a term first introduced to help practitioners unlock the true potential of their Continuous Provision. By recognising these natural, frequently observed patterns of play, we can ensure their environment is truly child-centred, purposeful, and rich in learning opportunities."*

Common play behaviours emerge when children interact with open-ended materials, explore their surroundings, and engage in self-directed activities. These behaviours offer valuable insights into how children think, problem-solve, and develop essential skills across different areas of learning.

By understanding and supporting these behaviours, practitioners can enhance their provision to better support skill development and ensure progression, rather than simply offering resources without intention.

By combining planning in the moment with key texts and an understanding of common play behaviours we capture real learning opportunities as they happen. This approach supports **every child** to develop confidently and progress at their own pace in a nurturing and engaging environment.



### Our Learning Environment

Our learning environment is calm, welcoming, and thoughtfully designed with children at its heart. We use low-level lighting to create a warm and relaxed atmosphere where children feel safe, comfortable, and ready to learn.

We celebrate children's achievements through our proud walls, where their work, photographs, and learning journeys are displayed at child height. This helps children feel valued, builds confidence, and encourages them to talk proudly about their learning.

Both our indoor and outdoor spaces are enriched with natural and open-ended resources, encouraging creativity, exploration, and imaginative play. Children are free to choose and move resources between areas, allowing learning to flow naturally indoors and outdoors. Whether exploring loose parts, creating with natural materials, or investigating mud and water, children are supported to follow their interests and curiosity.

Adults join children in their play, offering guidance, conversation, and encouragement. Through careful observation and meaningful interactions, next steps are planned to meet each child's individual needs, supporting confident, happy learners in a nurturing environment.



### Observations

All our observations focus on quality interactions—between children or with staff—and use gentle "I wonder..." questions like "I wonder what will happen?" or "I wonder how...?" This encourages curiosity and helps children feel confident and engaged.

Observations are a key part of planning in the moment, helping us respond to children's interests as they arise and plan meaningful next steps tailored to each child's learning and development.

We share your child's learning journey through Tapestry, a secure online journal with photos, videos, and stories. You can leave comments, add your own moments from home, and celebrate your child's progress together.



### Helping at Home

You can support your child's learning at home by following their interests, asking open-ended questions, and encouraging them to explore and experiment. Sharing stories, singing songs, playing games, and enjoying creative activities together all help build language, curiosity, and confidence. Little everyday moments—like cooking, tidying up, or going for a walk—are full of opportunities to talk, ask questions, and learn together.