



PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING SHEET (NORTHERN IRELAND CURRICULUM)


Easy activities parents can do at home

The NI Pre-School Curriculum is built around **play-based, holistic learning** that supports children's natural development and curiosity.

Below is a simple, ready-to-use sheet you can print or keep on your phone.

1. PERSONAL, SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT


Goal: Build confidence, independence, friendships, and emotional awareness.

 Try at home:

- Feelings Talk: Ask “How are you feeling today?” and let your child choose or draw an emotion face.
 - Helping Hands: Give small responsibilities (tidy toys, help set table).
 - Play Dates: Encourage sharing and turn-taking through play.
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2. PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT & MOVEMENT


Goal: Develop coordination, balance, strength, and fine motor control.

 Try at home:

- Gross Motor Play: Jumping, hopping, dancing to music.
 - Fine Motor Fun: Threading beads, using tweezers to pick up pasta, playdough squeezing. [Bing Videos](#)
 - Outdoor Time: Nature walk, ball-throwing, climbing safely.
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3. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT


Goal: Build listening, communication, early literacy, and vocabulary skills.

 Try at home:

- Story Time: Read daily; talk about pictures and ask “What do you think happens next?”
 - Chatty Moments: Describe what you see on walks (“Look! A big red bus!”).
 - Name Writing Practice: Encourage drawing and mark-making—they don’t need perfect letters yet.
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4. EARLY MATHEMATICAL EXPERIENCES


Goal: Develop early number, shape, pattern and problem-solving skills.

 Try at home:

- Sorting Games: Sort toys by colour, size, type.
 - Counting Everywhere: Count steps, apples, cars driving by.
 - Pattern Play: Make simple patterns with blocks or socks (e.g., red-blue-red-blue).
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5. THE ARTS


Goal: Encourage creativity, imagination, music, and expressive play.

 Try at home:

- Art Station: Crayons, paints, collage materials—focus on creativity, not the end product.
 - Music Time: Sing nursery rhymes, clap rhythms, dance freely.
 - Imaginative Play: Dress-up, pretend shops, puppet shows.
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6. THE WORLD AROUND US

Goal: Develop awareness of the environment, people, nature, and early science concepts.

 Try at home:

- Nature Hunt: Look for leaves, insects, clouds—talk about what you notice.
- Water Play: Pouring, measuring, floating/sinking objects.
- Real-World Involvement: Bake together, plant seeds, explore how things work.

A TYPICAL DAILY LEARNING ROUTINE (OPTIONAL)

Short, natural play-based chunks that fit real family life.

- Free play (20–30 mins)
- Story time (10 mins)
- Outdoor play (20 mins)
- Creative activity (10–15 mins)
- Snack + self-help skills (independence practice)
- Calm time/quiet play (10 mins)

KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE NI PRE-SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Parents can keep these in mind during everyday interactions:

- Children learn best through play and hands-on experiences [ccea.org.uk]
- Learning should be holistic, not rigidly academic at this age [daynurseries.co.uk]
- Focus on what children can do, building confidence and independence [daynurseries.co.uk]
- Adults support learning through interaction, encouragement, and observing interests [daynurseries.co.uk]