



Department
for Education

Early Years Design Guidance

A primer for school-based
nurseries

July 2026



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Summary

This publication provides non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education. It has been produced to help schools, governing bodies and childcare providers to establish or expand nursery provision on school sites, in collaboration with local authorities and responsible bodies.

This is an illustrative companion to the [Establishing school-based nursery provision](#) guidance, bringing together technical standards and resources into one place to support the design of nurseries for children aged 0-5. It offers considerations, examples and helpful links to support the early stages of project development.

Who this publication is for?

This guidance is for:

- private, voluntary and independent (PVI) childcare providers
- childminders
- local authorities (for community, voluntary-controlled schools, foundation schools and maintained nursery schools)
- academy trusts (for academies and free schools)
- governing bodies (for voluntary-aided schools)
- school/college leaders, staff and governing bodies in; maintained schools, academies and free schools, non-maintained special schools and maintained nursery schools
- technical professionals involved in the design, construction and maintenance of school and college premises.

Academy trusts with a religious character and the responsible bodies for voluntary-aided and voluntary controlled schools should engage with the land/site trustees for their land and buildings and the relevant religious body, most often their Diocese.

Document history

This table lists the key changes in each update

Revision code	Status code	Date	Amendment
C01	A	2026-07-03	GOV.UK publication

1 Overview

The Department for Education provide technical standards across England to support a safe, suitable, sufficiently sized and sustainable education estate. The sunflower in the image to the right, taken from the cover of *Building Bulletin 71* (1990), reflects this legacy and symbolises growth and future development.



1.1 What is a primer?

primer/ 'primə/ noun

An elementary guide designed to prepare someone for further learning

This primer is a design guide for nursery and early years settings, focused on school-based provision. It offers principles, a range of examples and prompts to consider when developing early design ideas - from beyond the wider setting to the building and everything in between. You should consider this alongside any other requirements, and within the context of your project.

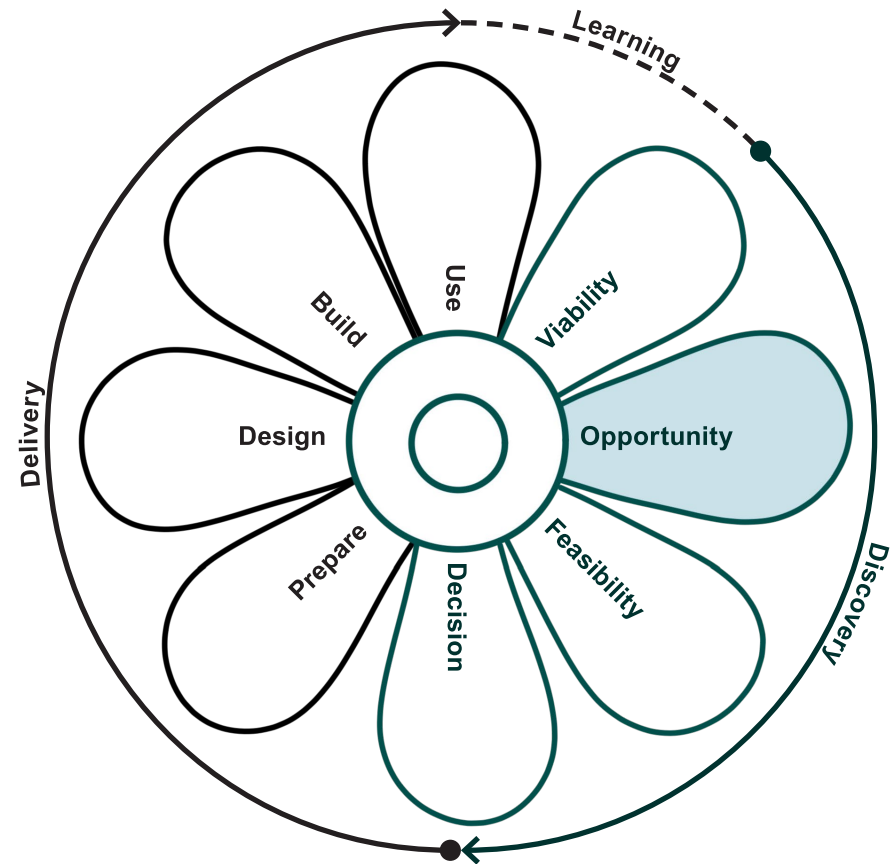


Figure 1: The design cycle: this primer will help you to explore opportunities for your nursery

1.2 Introduction

This guidance sets out clear and accessible design principles for anyone developing school-based nurseries. This includes schools, responsible bodies, local authorities, private and voluntary providers and their technical teams.

While introducing something new, this primer builds on over 75 years of work by the Department for Education: setting standards, sharing best practice and showing what ‘good’ looks like - from dining to daylight - grounded in evidence, research and user feedback.

Nurseries are at the heart of a vibrant community and vital for children and their families. They should provide safe, sustainable and inclusive environments for our youngest learners. We hope this guide supports your next steps - helping you evaluate options, explore possibilities and create high-quality environments to ensure that every child can achieve and thrive.



Figure 2: Nurseries are at the heart of a vibrant community

1.3 Child-centred day

Nursery environments should be designed from a child's perspective. For many young children, the setting is the place where they explore, play, learn and form relationships. The design should therefore consider how spaces are experienced through the rhythms of a child's day - from how they arrive at the nursery, to greeting their teacher and interacting with their classmates, to the places they meet their parents and siblings at the end of the school day.

This perspective informs decisions at every level, such as how the nursery sits within its community and how the spaces provide support, comfort and connect with outdoor environments. Together, these considerations help create inclusive settings that are welcoming and supportive of children's early years development.



Figure 3: A day in the life of a nursery

1.4 Design principles

Purpose

Pedagogy can guide how spaces are organised and experienced. Nursery environments should support learning through play, exploration and discovery, enabling a range of activities and types of movement throughout the day - inside and outside. Consider how the nursery fits with the school development plan as part of the wider educational approach.



Figure 4: External spaces should allow for safe exploration with good visibility for staff

1.4 Design principles

People

Users remain at the centre of nursery provision. Settings should create welcoming, nurturing and inclusive environments for children, staff and families, while supporting positive relationships, effective supervision and the wellbeing of staff.

Place

Nursery provision needs to respond to a variety of locations and constraints - from new builds and extensions to the repurposing of existing spaces, and across varying scales - from stand-alone settings to those integrated within schools. Design proposals should respond to this variety while providing safe and stimulating spaces that support early learning.

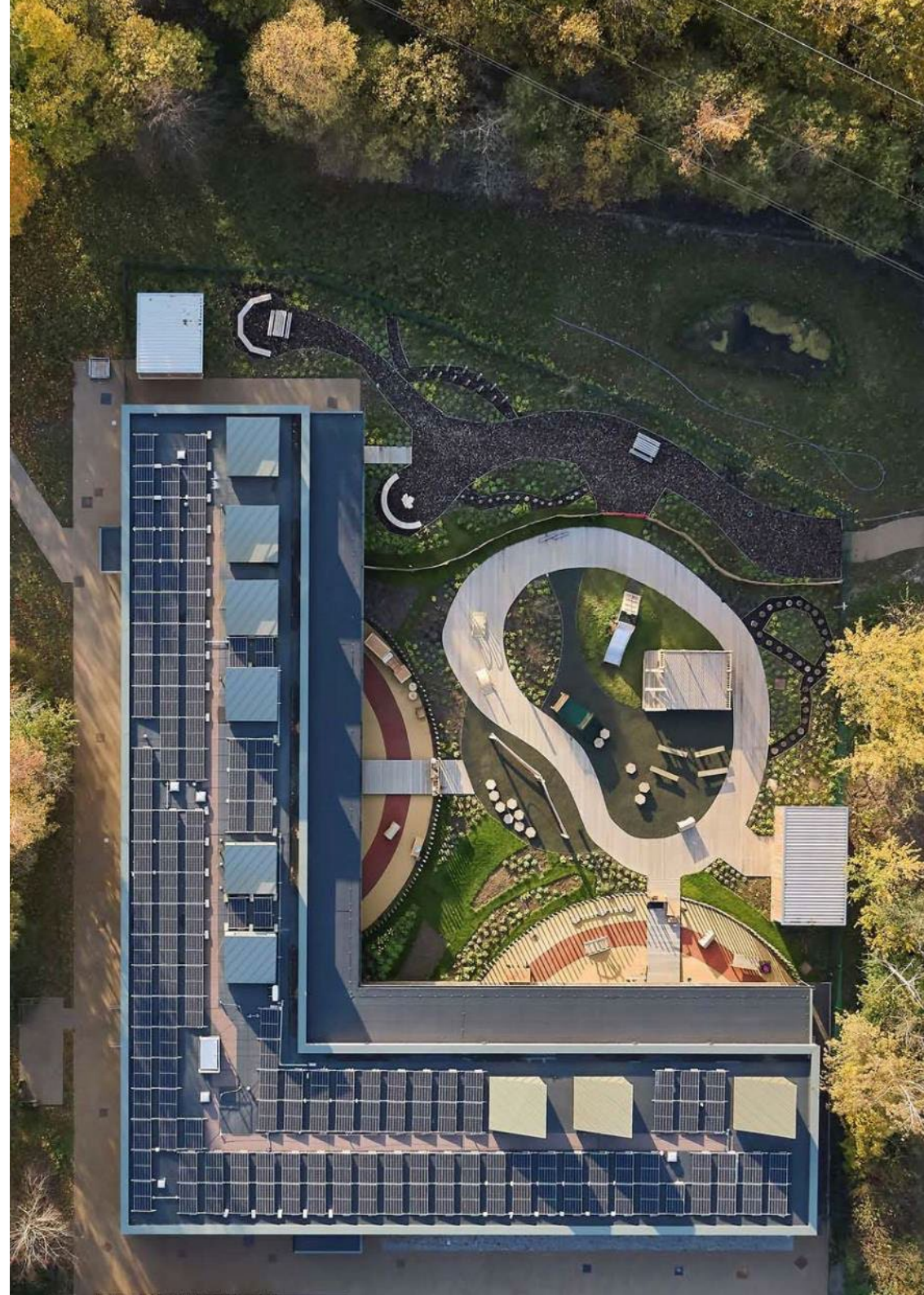


Figure 5: Staff welfare should be considered, with areas designed to enhance wellbeing



Figure 6: Nurseries adapt to their surroundings to create safe places for children to learn and play, such as tackling noise issues

2 Site strategy



2.1 Location

Strategic positioning

Assessing how the existing building, site or wider estate can facilitate good nursery provision is an important starting point. This may involve consolidating underused areas to release suitable space, reconfiguring internal layouts, extending the current building, or delivering purpose-built accommodation within the school grounds.



Figure 7: Engaging with all stakeholders to understand the constraints and opportunities of a site or existing buildings is an important step to achieve the best outcome

2.1 Location

Site planning

Clarifying whether the nursery operates as part of the school or through an independent provider will shape spatial planning, safeguarding measures and access arrangements. Operations influence security, shared facilities and staff provision and must enable the nursery to function effectively.

Nursery arrivals and entrance

The entrance should be clear and identifiable for parents and carers, with appropriate staff supervision. Paths to the main door should be accessible and accommodate all users. A secure route with a dedicated entrance may be needed if a nursery is located some distance away from the main entrance of a school.



Figure 8: A generous and covered entrance creates ample space for people to move through



Figure 9: Level access should be provided to create a seamless and accessible route across the site for all users

2.2 Configuration

Early years classrooms

Nursery provision should ideally be located close to reception classrooms and other early years spaces to support the transition between year groups. Adjoining these spaces encourages collaboration and a coherent identity within the wider school, while still allowing spaces to be used for different age groups and activities.



Figure 10: Review opportunities to cluster early years classrooms together, ideally in ‘stepping-stones’ from the baby room to reception classrooms

2.2 Configuration

Shared facilities

Explore opportunities to share staff welfare, meeting rooms and catering facilities to maximise opportunities for collaboration and efficient use of space. Timetabling and careful management can help to ensure the spaces are used effectively.

Outdoor areas

Direct access to the outdoor environment is fundamental to young children's development. Well-designed environments can support a variety of learning activities, physical health and mental wellbeing, emotional regulation and positive social experiences. Provision may range from ground-level areas to terraces or rooftop gardens, depending on site constraints.



Figure 11: Direct access from each playroom to dedicated outdoor areas creates safe and suitable spaces for different age groups



Figure 12: Outdoor spaces are essential for young children's development, promoting active play while ensuring safe, age-appropriate environments

2.3 Community use

Parent and carer engagement

The nursery should be designed to encourage strong engagement with parents and carers. This can include informal meeting areas, private rooms for discussions, and visual connections into learning spaces. Providing these features helps build positive relationships with families and supports better outcomes for children.



Figure 13: The nursery should feel part of the local community - consider how you can maximise use of the nursery facilities after hours and on weekends, bring in services throughout the day, for example the local dentist or other visiting professionals

2.3 Community use

Additional services

Nurseries can play a broader role in supporting families, particularly when aligned with community resources such as Best Start Family Hubs, health services or other support provision. Designing for this capability enhances a nursery to function as a community anchor, offering local services and welcoming visiting professionals on site using flexible multi-use rooms.

Wraparound care

Opportunities to extend provision beyond core school hours can maximise use of facilities and strengthen community connection. This may include wraparound provision for breakfast, after-school and holiday clubs. Creating a clear layout for school and community use with lockable storage is essential to allow extended use.



Figure 14: Flexible rooms and areas can support parent and carer involvement in the setting



Figure 15: Access to the outdoor environment enhances opportunities for wraparound care

2.4 Case study

The Woodlands Day Nursery makes use of its semi-urban setting, drawing on the neighbouring nature reserves to create a nursery environment that promotes links with the university. It forms part of a wider estate strategy, considering the ways in which the building supports both the university and the surrounding community.

A clear and intuitive arrival sequence leads to dedicated entrances for the nursery and the forest school, ensuring a calm and organised entrance to the site. The building itself is arranged to establish clear adjacencies for children and staff, with all spaces shaped around a strong connection to both covered and open outdoor play areas. The forest school exemplifies how additional elements can enrich the overall offer, extending opportunities for exploration, learning and engagement with the natural landscape.



Figure 16: The Woodlands Day Nursery and Forest School

2.5 Considerations

The following questions should be considered as you develop your nursery proposal:

How is the nursery situated in the wider context, and how might it support other functions within the community?

How can the nursery arrival ensure safe drop-off and collection?

How can a separate, dedicated outdoor space be provided for the nursery?



3 Internal areas



3.1 Space

The right size

Learning spaces should be designed to reflect the developmental stages of children, from babies through to reception class. Age-appropriate dimensions, scale and similar room proportions, and furniture support independence as children move through the early years.



Figure 17: Incorporate scaled furniture, including low-level storage to support independence. The timber wall panelling shown in this example creates a consistent lower level around the room, whilst providing a robust finish

3.1 Space

Flexible and adaptable

Internal layouts should minimise fixed elements, allowing reconfiguration as needs change. Spaces should be clearly zoned with movable furniture to allow daily routines and diverse activities, including calm areas for reading or reflective play, designated messy or wet play areas, dining and safe sleeping spaces, particularly for younger children.

Materials

Finishes should be robust, durable and safe for high-use spaces, while encouraging tactile and sensory exploration. Natural materials, considered colour palettes, and acoustics contribute to a calm, inspiring and inclusive environment, to enhance the learning experience.



Figure 18: Establish clear zones, using both formal elements such as trays for messy play and informal features like rugs for sitting, quiet play or reading



Figure 19: Spaces and furniture should be designed to be flexible, allowing them to support a range of uses, such as play, group activities or dining

3.2 Comfort

Acoustics

Spaces should control noise and enable speech and language development, which are particularly important in environments designed for young children. Sound transfer between adjacent rooms should be minimised throughout the layout. Calm and low-stress environments for play and rest can be achieved by using absorbent materials for linings to walls and ceilings.

Lighting and ventilation

Spaces should maximise natural daylight and access to fresh air to support wellbeing and focus. Lighting should be consistent, flicker and glare-free. Ventilation should promote good air quality throughout the day.



Figure 20: The use of windows and rooflights creates a connection to nature. Additional, glare-free electrical lighting can be used on overcast days

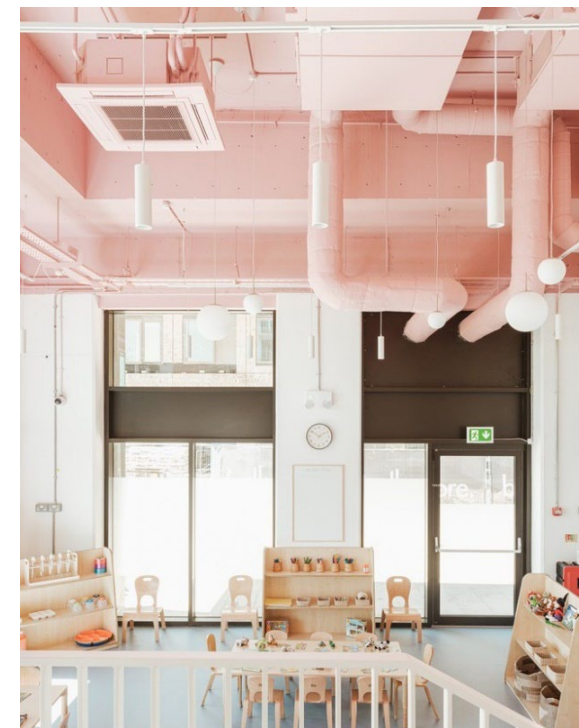


Figure 21: Ventilation units in combination with windows can be used throughout the year to provide fresh air

3.2 Comfort

Temperature

Spaces should feel comfortable for both children and staff throughout the year. Staff should be able to open windows to control the temperature. Heating systems should be maintained to ensure they work efficiently.



Figure 22: Ceilings are useful locations for acoustic linings, such as natural-fibre panels

3.3 Functionality

Visibility

Clear visibility, low-level furniture and internal glazed screens enable effective supervision without compromising comfort or learning. An open plan layout allows for smooth transitions across activities. Nursery environments should be designed from a child's perspective: take care to think about their eye-level to avoid distraction and to help create areas for focussed activities.



Figure 23: Furniture should be sufficiently low to allow good sightlines for staff while seated. Taller elements should be positioned against walls to not be obtrusive

3.3 Functionality

Cloakrooms and storage

Cloakrooms and storage should enable children to manage their own belongings. Appropriate heights for pegs, cubby holes and shelves support independence, tidy routines and ownership. Outdoor clothing should be situated to facilitate ease of transition between indoor and outdoor activities. Storage cupboards in learning spaces keep resources accessible and supports flexible, choice-led play.

Hygiene

Facilities should make hygiene part of the learning experience. Accessible and age-appropriate toilets, basins and changing areas can encourage independence, and should include durable surfaces with easy-clean finishes. It should be easy to move between the playrooms and toilet areas without disturbing other activities.



Figure 24: Enable ownership, from hanging coats to choosing resources for play and learning



Figure 25: Washrooms should be directly accessible from playrooms and within easy reach of outdoor play. Basins and toilets sized for children to enable independent clean up

3.4 Case study

In this setting, playrooms are designed with connection to the outdoors. Low-level furniture helps maintain clear sightlines across the room, making the space feel open, accessible, and easy to supervise. The layout is arranged to support different activities from storytelling to construction - using seating arrangements to define areas, while movable furniture allows the space to adapt throughout the day.

Lighting is carefully balanced, with daylight provided through large windows and doors, supported by well-positioned artificial lighting to maintain consistent light levels. Acoustic treatment at high level, combined with good ventilation and considered displays, contribute to a calm, inclusive learning environment. Fixed storage is integrated and easily accessible throughout the day without compromising the openness of the space.



Figure 26: Grenfell Early Years Nursery

3.5 Considerations

The following questions should be considered as you develop your nursery proposal:

How does the internal layout support a range of activities: noisy, quiet, messy, individual, group and sleep?

How does the design allow for free-flow between indoor and outdoor areas?

How can the playroom provide a comfortable environment for enhanced child and staff wellbeing?



4 External areas



4.1 Transition

Views out

Learning spaces should maintain visual and physical links to the outdoors. Thoughtfully placed windows and rooflights provide views of the landscape and sky to stimulate curiosity, support orientation and encourage children to actively move between indoor and outdoor environments.

Free-flow

Level access allows for seamless movement between indoor and outdoor areas. The areas can work together to support continuous play and exploration by integrating generously sized doors, canopies and flexible movement routes. Consideration should be given to the loss of heat through open doors and the avoidance of draughts.



Figure 27: Low-level windows provide places for children to sit with views of nature and external play areas



Figure 28: Free-flow between inside and outside spaces creates flexibility for children to play and supports independence

4.1 Transition

Covered space

Sheltered areas enable free-flow play and learning in all weather conditions, allowing children to engage with and experience the changing seasons. Covered spaces should be large enough to accommodate a range of activities and be constructed from robust and durable materials to ensure use of outdoor environments all year round.



Figure 29: Immediate access from inside to outside is created with a level threshold and generous double doors. The canopy made from natural materials provides shelter from sun and rain, and houses flexible play equipment

4.2 Exploration

Challenging play environments

Outdoor spaces should offer safe opportunities for children to take manageable risks, supporting physical awareness and development through activities such as climbing, balancing, and active exploration. Age-appropriate challenges help build confidence, coordination and problem-solving skills, supporting both large and small muscle development.



Figure 30: Create opportunities for children to take appropriate risks, such as climbing walls, balancing beams and stepping stones

4.2 Exploration

Varied surfaces

Using a range of outdoor textures and surfaces stimulates sensory exploration. Changes in surface type also encourages experimentation, imaginative play and awareness of materials, helping children develop spatial reasoning, balance and tactile engagement.

Nature-based play

Features such as plants, trees, water and natural materials give children opportunities to explore, investigate and understand cause-and-effect in the natural environment. They also encourage open-ended and sensory play.



Figure 31: Surfaces of varying colour and texture can be used, such as grass, sand, bark and rubber safety matting planted with grass. Ensure they are non-slip and well drained



Figure 32: Incorporation of natural elements, such as trees, plants, and loose bark create different opportunities to explore nature

4.3 Nature

Connection to context

Outdoor spaces should reflect and respond to their local surroundings. In urban areas, this may involve creating links to nature through rooftop play areas or small pocket gardens. Suburban or rural sites may offer opportunities to include larger green spaces, planting, and natural changes in ground level. Designing in response to the local context helps children develop a strong sense of place.



Figure 33: Rooftops are a good opportunity for outdoor play within dense, urban settings

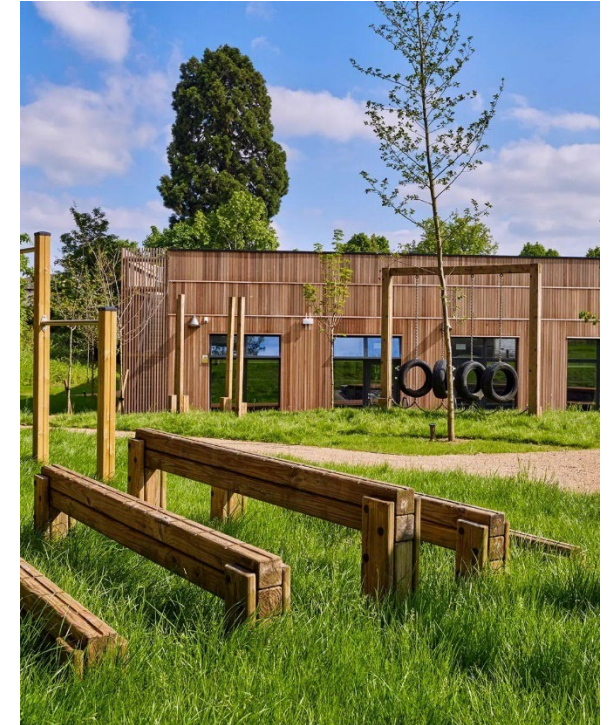


Figure 34: Suburban and rural areas typically offer broader opportunities for landscape

4.3 Nature

Sensory opportunities

Outdoor areas should engage all senses through sound, smell, texture, light and movement. Sensory-rich environments encourage observation, imaginative play and mindfulness, helping children develop cognitive, emotional and physical skills in a stimulating, multi-layered way.

Access to wildlife

Spaces should support safe encounters with flora and fauna, fostering curiosity and environmental guardianship. Features such as bug hotels, bird feeders, ponds and planting allow children to observe and interact with wildlife, developing awareness of ecosystems, seasonal change and the natural world.



Figure 35: Planting offers natural tactile play



Figure 36: Creating habitats, such as bird boxes and bee hotels provides spaces for children to observe wildlife

4.4 Case study

The nursery extension is carefully positioned to retain the existing garden, ensuring it continues to provide a rich setting for nature-based play, sensory exploration, and opportunities to observe wildlife. Children are able to move through a variety of play zones and surface types, transitioning between soft and hard landscape. These experiences encourage curiosity, physical challenge and imaginative play.

Large doors open directly onto the outdoor space, paired with a simple bolt-on canopy that creates shelter. This allows the playroom to flow seamlessly from indoors to outdoors, supporting play and learning in all weather conditions. Inside, generous windows with low-level sills provide comfortable seating nooks and clear views across the garden.



Figure 37: The Montpelier Community Nursery

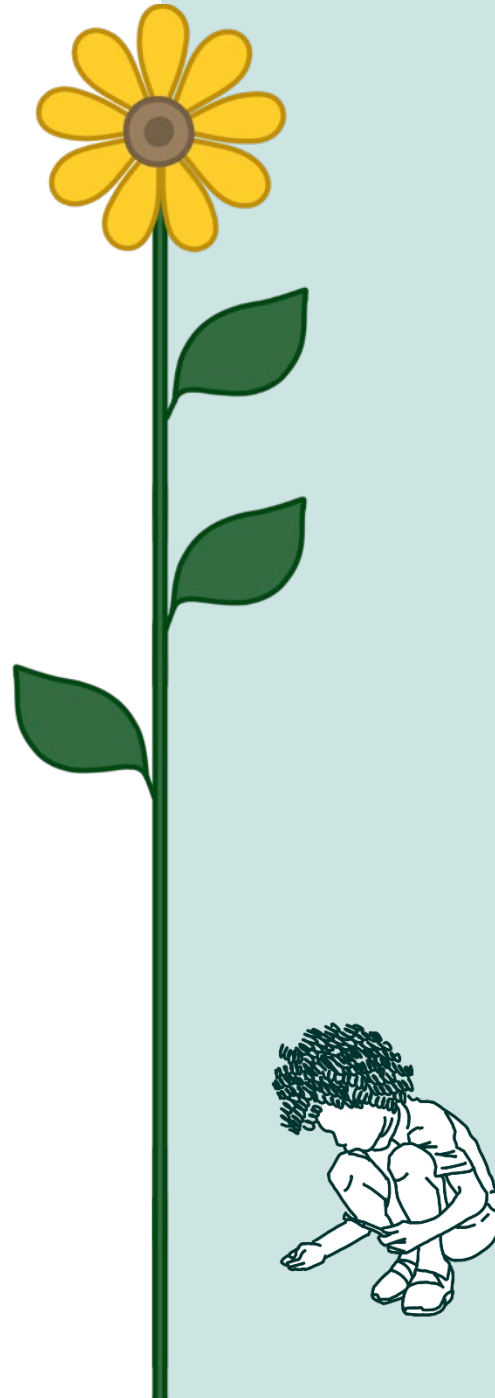
4.5 Considerations

The following questions should be considered as you develop your nursery proposal:

How can the outside link with the inside physically and visually to strengthen a connection with nature?

How can the nursery make the most of the character of the external space on site for exploratory and sensory experiences?

How are the functional requirements of the space met whilst supporting an understanding of the wider world?



5 Outlook



5.1 Rounded approach

Design decisions can be considered against the guiding themes set out below, for a rounded approach to developing a sustainable nursery setting:

Inclusivity

Settings are designed to be accessible, support diverse needs and enable every child to participate, feel valued and belong.

Built form

The building form should provide a safe, sheltered and child-centred setting, shaping play spaces that provide choice and respond to a variety of needs.

Movement

Well-designed routes enable safe movement from home, to arrival, to play - supporting physical development, responding to context and a creating a sense of autonomy.

Open space

Accessible, well-connected external spaces are integral to learning, with seamless links between indoor and outdoor play.

Connection

The nursery should offer a welcoming and recognisable place for children that helps them develop and move through the school.

Comfort

Thoroughly considered spaces with good natural light, acoustics, and fresh air support healthy and comfortable environments for the wellbeing of children and staff.

Nature

Access to nature should underpin learning and development, supporting physical activity, imagination and emotional wellbeing in nursery environments.

Environment

The nursery setting demonstrates a careful use of natural resources, fostering early awareness and impact on our planet.

Community

A clear identity and civic presence can support families and strengthen communities through shared and extended use.

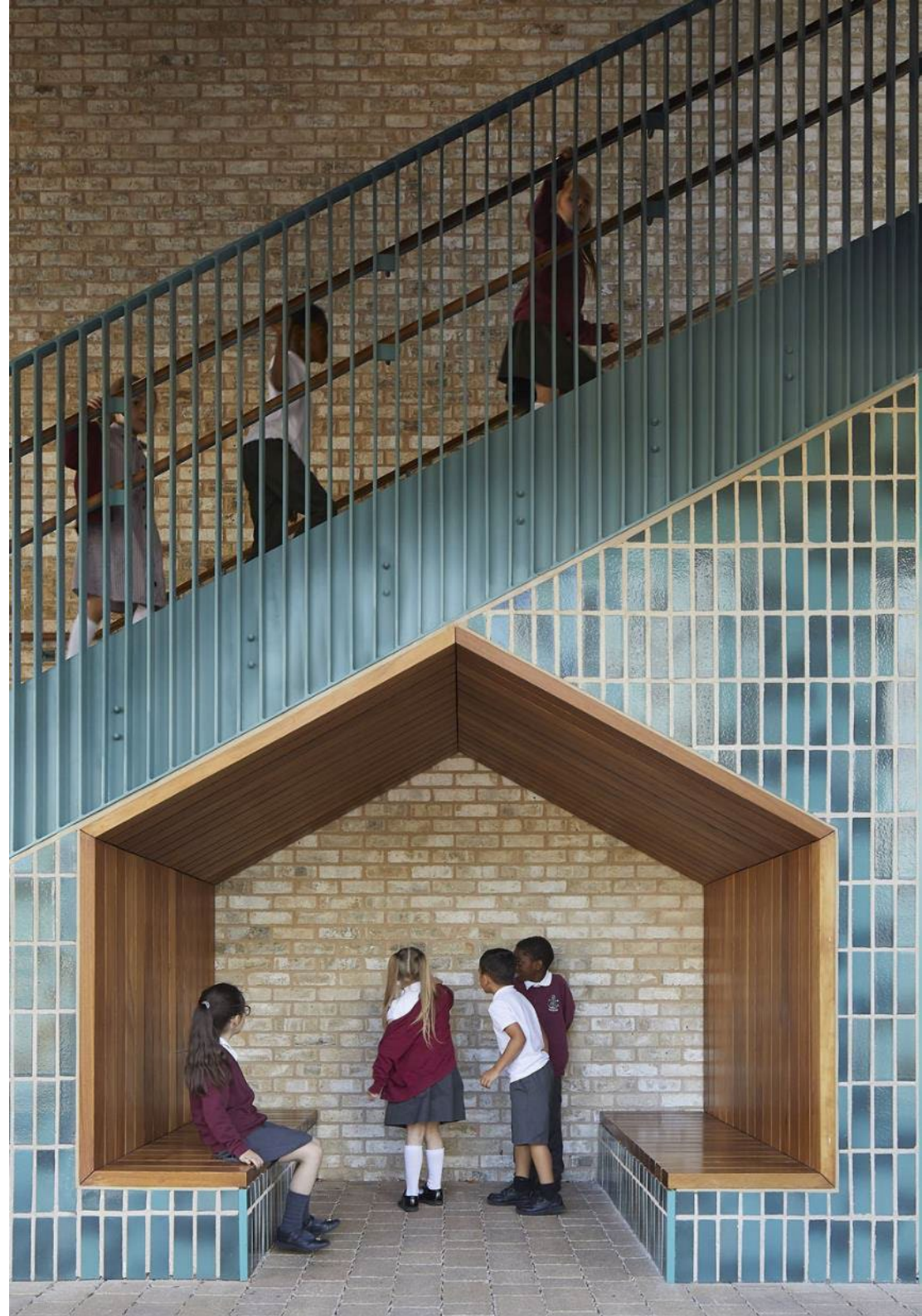
5.2 Next steps

Alongside the [Establishing school-based nursery provision](#) guidance, this primer promotes thoughtful, intentional design that inspires and enables young children and staff through the creation of good quality early years environments. It emphasises the importance of wellbeing, inclusion, nature and strong connections with families and communities, alongside comfort, movement and the built form. Together, these factors contribute to welcoming, versatile and uplifting places that nurture people and purpose - helping to shape the next generation and support every child to achieve and thrive.

The following pages provide additional links, technical information and guidelines to support the development of nursery proposals.



6 Annexes



6.1 Helpful links

Building Regulations

[The Building Regulations 2010](#)

Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework

[Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK](#)

Education estates strategy

[Education estates strategy - GOV.UK](#)

Establishing school-based nursery provision

[Establishing school-based nursery provision - GOV.UK](#)

Inclusive education estates

[Inclusive education estates - GOV.UK](#)

Manage your education estate

[Manage your education estate - GOV.UK](#)

School and college design and construction

[School and college design and construction - GOV.UK](#)

6.2 Design standards

For further information please refer to the DfE Employer's Requirements that cover ages 3 and up. This includes the *Technical Manual* which provides key technical performance requirements for education projects and signposts to statutory and regulatory requirements. The aim of the design standards is to ensure that buildings and outdoor environments are healthy and productive, the right size, safe, secure and sustainable.

Design standards: employer's requirements

[Design standards: employer's requirements - GOV.UK](#)



Figure 38: A variety of external spaces for socialising and physical activity



Figure 39: Comfortable learning spaces, with good daylight, acoustics and ventilation

6.3 Guidelines for 0-3s

The following table offers additional technical guidelines for nursery settings with children under 3 years of age. They should be considered alongside other requirements as necessary.

Spaces	Space	Occupancy	Area (m ²)			Notes
	Baby room: 0-2 years	Varies	As EYFS			<p>The adjacent areas offer spatial rules of thumb for planning nursery provision to ensure they are sufficiently sized. Recommended occupancy levels for baby room 0-2 years provision is provided within Establishing school-based nursery provision - GOV.UK</p> <p>Example sleep room size is based on 6 sleeping in cots. Additional information for safe sleep within early years settings is available within: Help for early years providers: Safer sleep</p>
	Playroom: 2-3 years	Varies	As EYFS			
	Sleep room: 0-2 / 2-3 years	6	13			
	Group room: 2-3 years	4	13			
	Milk kitchenette	2	7			
	Parent / meeting room	5	13			
	Store room	N/A	4			
Flexible and adaptable	Furniture heights (mm)	0-1 years	1-2 years	2-3 years	Notes	
	Chair height	130	170	210	<p>Doors and architectural features should not restrict layout options, create collision hazards (e.g. door swings) or use up valuable corners for activities (role play, reading etc). Furniture should be of age-appropriate size and scale as the adjacent table indicates. Baby room and playroom layouts should provide a range of spaces supporting both stimulating activities and quiet and calm rest time.</p>	
	Table height	320	360	400		
	Standing height surface	400	480	550		
	Sink for water play	N/A	480	550		
	Display boards (from finished floor level (FFL))	200	300	400		

Visibility					<p>Notes</p> <p>As part of a seamless connection between the indoors and outdoors, external doors can be glazed at a height suitable for children to see out when seated. Kettles, hot water boilers or microwaves should not be placed in a kitchenette within a baby room or playroom unless suitably separated from children. Milk kitchens must have some separation but be off playrooms and/or baby rooms to ensure supervision requirements are maintained.</p>
Cloakrooms and storage	Cloakroom heights (mm)	0-1 years	1-2 years	2-3 years	<p>Notes</p> <p>Cloakrooms should provide sufficient space and appropriate fittings to allow older children to remove their coat and, when applicable, hang it on their personalised pegs. Some settings require children to change their shoes, where a bench to sit on is useful.</p> <p>Younger children will need adults to help them, therefore pegs can be adult height. Some settings will require parents/carers to provide and drop off nappies etc before staff transfer them to change stations, therefore sufficient storage next to the pegs should be allowed.</p>
	Peg height	1600	1600	800	
	Bench seating height	N/A	220	250	
	Bench seating depth	N/A	300	300	

Hygiene	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="454 209 869 240">Sanitaryware heights (mm)</th> <th data-bbox="904 209 1048 240">2-3 years</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="454 260 517 292">Sink</td> <td data-bbox="904 260 965 292">500</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="454 311 846 343">Soap dispenser (underside)</td> <td data-bbox="904 311 965 343">600</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="454 362 797 394">Paper towel (underside)</td> <td data-bbox="904 362 965 394">800</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="454 413 595 445">Toilet pan</td> <td data-bbox="904 413 965 445">305</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="454 464 797 496">Toilet paper (underside)</td> <td data-bbox="904 464 965 496">500</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="454 515 763 547">Toilet cubicle partition</td> <td data-bbox="904 515 981 547">1200</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="454 566 719 598">Toilet cubicle door</td> <td data-bbox="904 566 981 598">1000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Sanitaryware heights (mm)	2-3 years	Sink	500	Soap dispenser (underside)	600	Paper towel (underside)	800	Toilet pan	305	Toilet paper (underside)	500	Toilet cubicle partition	1200	Toilet cubicle door	1000	<p data-bbox="1491 209 1581 240">Notes</p> <p data-bbox="1491 260 2051 403">Some settings will prefer wider cubicles than the standard provision to allow sufficient space for an adult to assist a young toddler to use the toilet or potty.</p> <p data-bbox="1491 422 2112 710">Nurseries may prefer a nappy changing area within the toilet block for 2-3 year olds. In larger nurseries, an additional changing area might be needed for 0-2s. Changing stations should be located next to an adult height wash hand basin and, ideally, a child height wash hand basin. There should be easy access to a toilet from outdoors.</p>
Sanitaryware heights (mm)	2-3 years																	
Sink	500																	
Soap dispenser (underside)	600																	
Paper towel (underside)	800																	
Toilet pan	305																	
Toilet paper (underside)	500																	
Toilet cubicle partition	1200																	
Toilet cubicle door	1000																	
Acoustics		<p data-bbox="1491 756 1581 788">Notes</p> <p data-bbox="1491 807 2101 916">The use of a range of soft surfaces to walls and furniture can help absorb sound and improve acoustics.</p> <p data-bbox="1491 935 1962 1002">Ensure products are fire safe and compliant with legislation.</p> <p data-bbox="1491 1021 2078 1197">Note: Fixed panels to walls or ceilings (including display boards) are classed as internal linings and must comply with the requirements of The Building Regulations 2010.</p>																

Materials	Notes <p>Safety considerations for nurseries are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low VOC and phthalate-free flooring material should be used particularly for babies, who are more floor-based.• Furniture should be compatible with antibacterial cleaning products.• Mats for group activities or rest areas should have anti-slide undersides to prevent slipping.• Furniture upholstered in environmentally friendly PVC-free textiles helps minimise health risks such as asthma.
Lighting, ventilation and temperature	Notes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Security and communication systems, including access control may be required, particularly where PVI nurseries are co-locating with schools. Where possible, these should be integrated with the school's wider systems.• Separate operation and energy metering should be considered, particularly when a PVI offers out of hours use.• Separate control lighting circuits for dimming in sensory rooms and sleep areas should be accounted for, either within an area of the baby room or a separate space.• Lighting should avoid glare and flicker for children who may spend time at floor level in the baby room, sleep and nappy changing areas.• Group rooms can provide opportunities for sensory and soft play areas which can be particularly helpful for children with SEND. Safe and age-appropriate equipment such as light tubes, sensory panels as well as projectors which display calming and soothing images onto walls should be considered. Sufficient power sockets, AV and Wi-Fi connectivity should be provided for the potential equipment. Ventilation rates should be carefully considered if the space has no openable windows.

Image credits

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to this document.

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Figure 4: Montpelier Nursery, AY Architects © Daniel Stier

Figure 5: N Family Club, Kennedy Woods © Taran Wilkhu

Figure 6: Hounslow Heath Infant and Nursery © Department for Education

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