Reception EYFS

Unit Rationale
Growing and Changing

PKC Primary Knowledge Curriculum

This unit is the second of two units focussed upon growing and changing in the PKC EYFS materials. The two units overlap in content, so it might be helpful for teachers to read both so they can see how knowledge and understanding will build across the foundation stage. In this unit children will explore seasons, growing plants, how animals grow and change, food and farming and how we grow and change. These are the same focuses we had for the Nursery unit: Growing and Changing but they have been adapted to meet the needs of all children, both those who have learned the knowledge from the nursery unit, and those who have not. Knowledge from this unit will help children to meet the Early Learning Goal Understanding the World: The Natural World and will also contribute understanding of People, Cultures and Communities and Past and Present.

Alongside the planning in this unit, teachers should use the resources available to them to give children hands on experience with growing plants and, where safe and possible, animals. A trip to a local farm or city farm would be an ideal enrichment opportunity for this unit of work. If any parents, grandparents or community members have an allotment and would be willing to show children what they have grown, now or at another point in the year, that would also be a useful complementary experience for children.

Children will learn that we have four seasons on earth. This builds on knowledge from Nursery and will be reconnected to in Year 1. They will recall that the earth orbits the sun (knowledge they learned in Reception: Space) and will know that when our part of the earth tilts towards the sun we experience summer. Then continuing to think about the idea of change, children will think about the past and how places change over time. This is another opportunity for children to establish an early understanding of chronology, building on their learning from the Autumn unit, Transport, where children learned about transport in the past and how it has changed over time.

Moving through the unit, children will have an opportunity to plant a seed and observe its growth. Here, teachers can use the resources available to them to choose a fast-growing seed, such as cress, and to give children the tools they need to help it to grow. If you have the resources, children could plant more seeds and or bulbs and ensure they have what they need to grow. Teachers will keep one example of a seed that doesn't get watered so children can understand that plants need water to grow. This knowledge will be built upon in Year 1 Plants and Year 2 Plants where children learn more about seed dispersal and growth. In KS2 children look at classification of plants and learn more about how plants reproduce.

In this unit children also look at how animals grow and change. If children have studied the Nursery unit: Growing and Changing, you may want to extend their knowledge by teaching different animal and offspring names. If children were able to observe caterpillars and butterflies in Nursery, you may want to focus on another animal, or repeat this and allow children to reinforce their understanding of life cycles.

Finally, children learn about how humans grow and change. This knowledge will be built upon when children study the Human Body throughout KS1 and KS2.

The planning within this unit should be used by teachers as one of many tools they will use to inform their practice within EYFS. The plans can and should be adapted to include any locally relevant knowledge, resources available and to incorporate children's interests. Teachers own knowledge and ideas play a vital role in bringing this planning to life for our children.