Waterloo Primary School Design and Technology Curriculum 2026–2027

Early Years foundations in designing, making, evaluating and exploring how things work

Pathway / year	Learning throughout the year
Pre-formal developmental curriculum	Communication and interaction; cognition and sensory exploration; attention and engagement; play and social development; physical and sensory development; independence and early learning behaviours. Personalised learning through daily routines, play, sensory experiences and meaningful interactions. Progression follows the school's Pre-formal Developmental Progression Framework, individual starting points and EHCP outcomes.
Nursery 2	Design: express ideas through meaningful marks and pretend play; use simple words to describe objects and properties. Make: explore paint with fingers, brushes and varied tools; investigate materials through the senses; stack, combine and nest objects. Evaluate: repeat and experiment with cause and effect; compare size and weight using gestures and language. Technical foundations: explore how materials behave.
Nursery 3–4 Continuous provision	Design: develop ideas through drawing, imaginative play and material choices; choose and combine shapes for a purpose. Make: select, combine and join materials; control one-handed tools, including scissors; select resources and construct collaboratively with large materials. Evaluate: discuss creations and what works; compare size, shape, weight and capacity; investigate how objects/materials work and describe the effects of actions.

Early Years learning across the six blocks

Year	LB1	LB2	LB3	LB4	LB5	LB6
Nursery 3–4	Paint a self-portrait from a photograph; choose and mix colours; take part in pretend play; sort objects by colour, size or shape.	Make and test boats using different materials. Explore textures; select materials for hibernation shoeboxes. Choose shapes for building, such as flat surfaces and roof prisms; select resources and move large items together.	Explore pushes/pulls with trains and cars; investigate wind-up vehicles, friction toys and moving boats. Use one-handed tools and make paper snips; develop ideas through small-world and role play.	Collage and print farm-animal pictures; freely explore materials; develop complex small-world stories; explore and describe 3D shapes.	Draw ideas; join materials and explore textures. Design constructions through building-site role play; build obstacle courses together. Investigate materials in water and describe changes.	Paint, draw and collage African animals; mix colours; draw with greater complexity and detail; compare objects by weight and capacity.
Reception	**Exploring tools and materials** Refine artistic effects to express ideas and feelings; use varied mark-making tools for self-portraits; develop pretend-play stories; handle fine motor tools safely and confidently.	**Superhero creations** Create a superhero vegetable with printing and collage; build dens; develop narratives around real-life superheroes; discuss and explain ideas.	**Castle construction** Build outdoor castles cooperatively; plan a challenge with a friend. Model with playdough/salt dough; develop tool control; create textured dragon pictures and castle role-play stories.	**Materials and techniques** Mix colours for a butterfly painting; recreate The Extraordinary Gardener pictures with varied tools/materials; refine fine motor skills.	**Applying creative skills** Express ideas through materials and imaginative experiences; develop confidence, competence, precision and accuracy in practical activities.	**Creative exploration** Role play linked to familiar texts, including hospital and space travel; develop fine motor control and safe use of small tools.

Design and Technology units

Year / pathway	LB2	LB4	LB6
Year 1	**Textiles** Sock puppets.	**Food technology** Fruit salad.	**Mechanisms** Sliders and levers: moving images under the sea.
Year 2	**Mechanisms** Wheels and axles: cars.	**Food technology** Fresh fruit flapjacks.	**Structures** Build a bridge and test its strength.
Phoenix / Orion Cornerstones	**Fresh Food, Good Food**	**Functional and Fancy Fabrics**	**Tomb Builders**
Year 3	**Shell structures** Make a fold-away board game.	**Food technology** Sandwiches / pittas.	**Textiles** Pencil cases.
Year 4	**Food technology** Taste of Italy: a pasta dish.	**Electrical systems** Night light.	**Mechanisms** Levers and linkages: a storyboard linked to digestion.
Year 5	**Food technology** Make scouse.	**Mechanisms** Pulleys or gears (CAM toys)	**Textiles** Join knitted pieces / fabric squares to make a shopper bag.
Year 6	**Food technology** Make chapati bread.	**Frame structures** Air-raid shelters.	**Electrical systems** Design and make an electric model.