

Understanding the World at Ditton Nursery School

‘Understanding the World’ is all about helping your child make sense of people, places, and the natural world around them. Through fun, hands-on play—both inside our classrooms and outdoors—we help children to become curious, creative thinkers. This early learning sets the stage for future school subjects like science, history, and geography. We break this learning down into three areas:

Past and Present (Early History)

We help children understand how things change over time, starting with their own lives and families.

- All About Me: We talk about our bodies, celebrate birthdays, and share special family moments, like the arrival of a new baby.
- My Family: We look at family photos to talk about who we live with and our extended families.
- Growing and Changing: Children see time in action by planting seeds throughout the year and watching eggs turn into chicks or caterpillars turn into butterflies.
- Storytime: We read storybooks and non-fiction books to learn about people from the past.

People, Culture and Communities (Early Geography & Community)

We celebrate our diverse world, beginning right here in Widnes!

- Our Local Community: We learn about where we live, visit our local care home, and love welcoming real-life heroes to nursery, like local fire officers and paramedics.
- Celebrations: We share and celebrate the festivals, holidays, and traditions that are special to our children and the wider community.
- The Family Hub: We use our on-site Warrington Road Family Hub to connect our children and families together.
- Staying Safe & Caring for Our World: We practise road safety on our walks to the care home and other trips out, sun safety in the outdoor area, and learn how to look after our planet by recycling and cleaning up litter.

The Natural World (Early Science)

We use our senses every day to explore nature and see how things work.

- Sensory Exploration: Children use their five senses to explore the world around them. We explore lights, textures, and sounds by playing with natural materials like mud, water, sand, and crunchy autumn leaves.
- Water Play: We splash, pour, and experiment with water, testing what floats and sinks, and learning why we shouldn't waste water.
- Sand & Mud: We use wet, damp, and dry sand or mud to build and ‘bake’ with and see how textures change.
- Little Scientists: We bake and cook, sometimes using ingredients from our own outdoor area, to see how ingredients change when heated or frozen. We also explore magnets, magnifiers, and mirrors, and love taking apart old and broken things to see inside!
- Weather & Seasons: Rain or shine, we go outside. We talk about the changing seasons and look at raindrops and puddles, making sure we always wear the right clothes for the weather.