



Pearson
Edexcel



Creating the Pearson Edexcel Reception / Early Years programme

In 2020 we launched our new Reception / Early Years programme. This covers the two years immediately preceding Year 1 of iPrimary – typically for students aged 3 to 5. This programme was created and launched following research on best practice for the age group and market needs, as well as teacher expertise.

Why does Reception matter?

Extensive research shows that high quality early education plays a significant role in promoting children's development – both cognitively and socially. Research has shown that there is a correlation between achievement and learning outcomes at age 5 and later GCSE results – and by extension, later achievement as well.

Reception / Early Years is where students learn how to learn, how to interact with the world – and with others – in a supportive environment but without the safety net provided in their home life - and with many more variables than a typical home can provide.

Effective education at this age ensures students are ready and able to access the curriculum from Year 1 onwards, and are prepared for the increased requirements of many modern teaching programmes. It ensures students are equipped with the building blocks of the necessary skills required to engage with the world around them.

How did we carry out research?

In carrying out our research we started with three main questions.

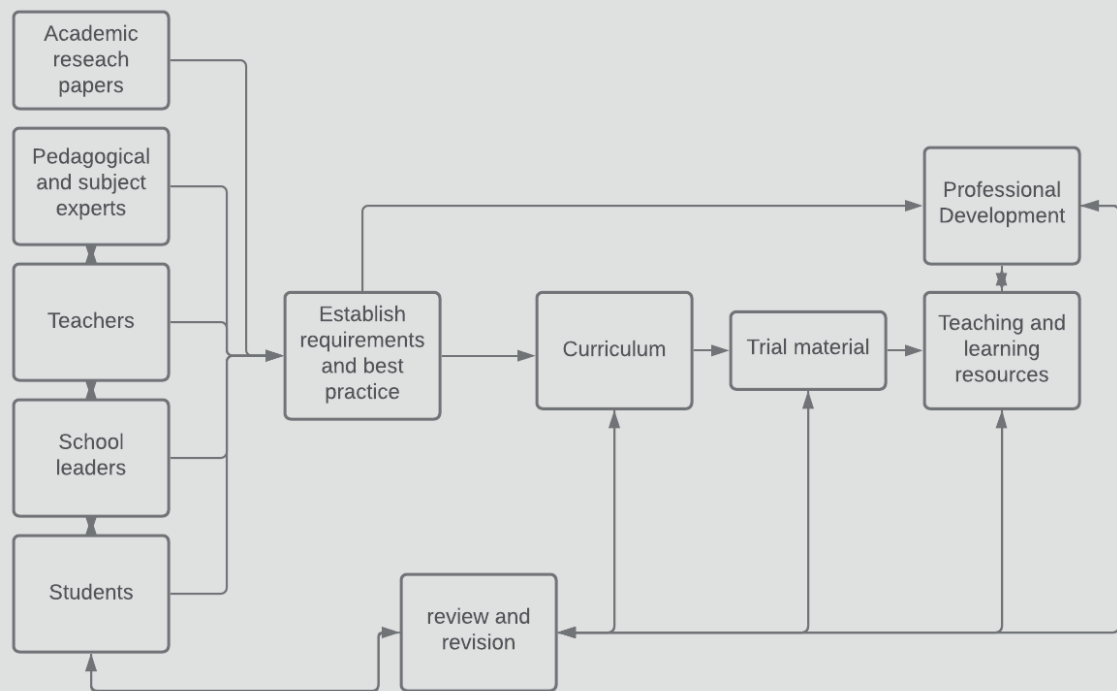
1. What does good practice look like at this age – and what impact can it have?
2. What is required to effectively support this good practice?
3. What works for our teachers and learners? (and for potential teachers and learners)

The research that went into answering these questions consisted of

- Reading and reflecting on current academic research , including research commissioned for other Pearson initiatives and programmes
- Conversation, questioning, observations and commissioned work and research with Early Years practitioners and experts
- Conversation, questioning and observations with iPLS and English Curriculum teachers and school leaders

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(for summary see <https://www.dur.ac.uk/news/newsitem/?itemno=33210>)
- 🔗 <https://azpbs.org/2017/11/early-childhood-brain-development-lifelong-impact/>
- 🔗 <https://www.earlyyearsmatters.co.uk/eyfs/positive-relationships/transitions/>

At every stage of development, we included a review and revision cycle, keeping these stakeholders involved in development of resources and ensuring that feedback was incorporated in the resources and curriculum.



What were our key findings?

- The majority of sources identified the importance of this phase of education and identified the highly positive impact an outstanding Early Years / Reception experience has on later achievement.
- Subject experts and teachers showed a clear preference for a UK curriculum style experience and identified that this would and should be different to later, more formal settings.
- Over 80% of school-based stakeholders placed preparation for 'formal' education in Year 1 as their top requirement for an Early Years / Reception programme.
- 90% of school-based stakeholders, as well as all subject experts, identified 'current UK best practice' as their preference in designing any teaching or supporting materials (including professional development).
- School leaders and teachers placed a high value on a clear, structured progression and an equally high value on being able to assess where a child is in their development.
- All sources identified English, closely followed by Maths as their number one subject priority at this age.
- All sources identified the importance of supporting general cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development as well – and agreed that supporting development in these areas contributes significantly to later achievement (and happiness!)

Despite the agreement and the similarities above, international Early Years / Reception settings varied hugely in terms of:

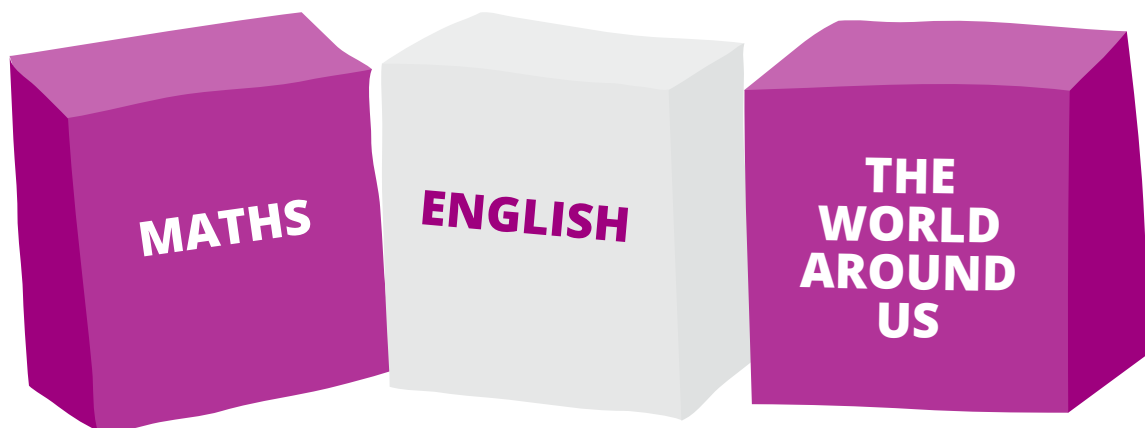
- Staff training and confidence
- Class size, and level of adult support available
- Availability of digital resources (including but not limited to, interactive whiteboards, ipads, computers)
- Availability of physical resources
- Perceived understanding of Early Years / Reception settings techniques and methodology amongst colleagues and parents

This variance occurred not only across but within countries.

How did we create our materials?

Working closely with school-based stakeholders, as well as pedagogical and subject experts, the above research informed the development of all of the materials.

At each stage of development, for each item, we utilised the research and went back to those stakeholders to ensure that the materials produced are appropriate, rigorous and engaging for both teachers and learners. Making certain that review and revision happens throughout the development process, rather than just at the start, ensures that we are creating truly supportive materials that are usable within our markets and help to support identified best practice.



What have we produced?

We have used the research and development cycle to create a programme designed to give students the best possible start to their school career – and to support teachers in delivering this. The materials cover two years of teaching and are expected to be accessed by children between the ages of 3 and 5.

It includes:

- Curricula – each provides explicit preparation for Year 1 of iPrimary (or effective preparation for any English language curriculum).
 - English – supporting communication and language, developmental writing and mark-making and early reading.
 - Maths – supporting mathematical development and understanding, including counting, addition, subtraction, shape work, pattern recognition and chronological sequencing.
 - The World Around Us – explicitly supporting the development of questioning, investigation, and problem-solving; as well as supporting social, emotional and physical development.
- Schemes of Work – each provides suggestions for teaching and activities suitable for each subject adaptation to a wide range of settings. Teaching is arranged around short, engaging topics designed to appeal to children around the world
- Lesson planning – complete ‘pick up and go’ planning covering every lesson for every subject for every year.
 - Easily adaptable by more confident or experienced teachers wishing to personalise the learning further.
 - Provide a structure and progression ensuring all objectives are covered and learning progresses in a clear and supportive way.
 - Provide confidence and support for teachers of all levels of experience and training.
 - Provide a huge range of options for teachers, regardless of the resourcing of their setting.
- Progress tests – designed to sensitively check on students progress against each curriculum. Tests consist of information-rich illustrations designed to stimulate discussion and include a marks scheme and script for the adult linking this clearly to curriculum points.
- Workbooks – these have gone through the same research, review and revision process as the rest of the course. Designed to work alongside iPrimary Reception / Early Years or work as a complete stand-alone. Books have been designed with clear, adult facing explanations of the learning so it’s easy to help the student – and with activities designed to support and engage the student as they learn.
- Professional Development – bespoke, high quality professional development designed to give teachers the confidence and skills required to use the course materials and to ensure students do receive the best possible experience.

Tell me more...

The Pearson Edexcel Reception/Early Years programme covers the prerequisites for students moving into full-time academic education and starting our iPrimary programme. The following support is available:



Schemes of Work: Topic based planning covering two years (ages 3-5), grouping complimentary objectives within each curriculum into themed topics and suggesting activities and resources.



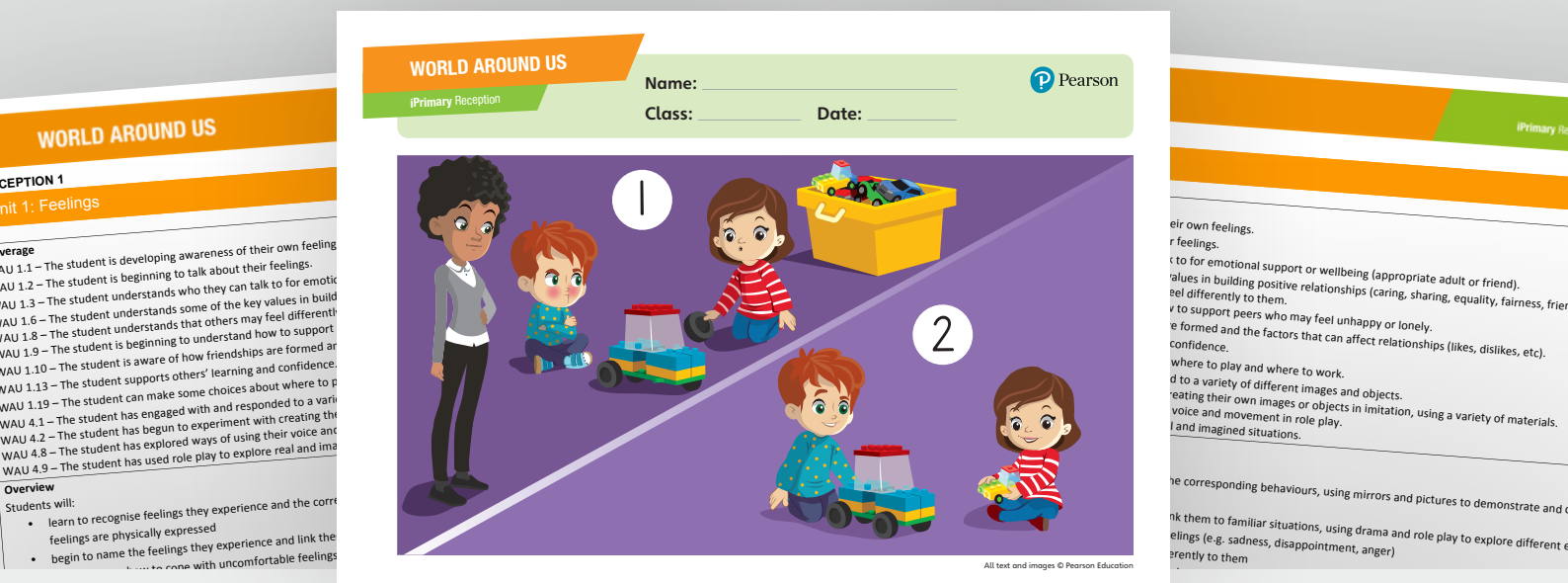
Lesson planning: Detailed, lesson-by-lesson planning for each curriculum, for each year. Includes suggestions of activities suitable for a range of school settings and levels of support.



Progress tests: End-of-topic tests for each curriculum. These are designed to check understanding and progress through a supportive, discussion based approach to assessment. The tests include informative illustrations, detailed guidance and mark schemes to help the teacher to interpret children's answers.



Professional Development: Face-to-face training and on-line support help to upskill teachers and give them the confidence to fully engage with the new curricula.



To find out more please visit
quals.pearson.com/iprimary