Bollinbrook Pre-school

Weekly Planning: Light and Dark 9th-13th November 2026

Theme	Light, dark, shadows and seeing	EYFS links	All seven areas of learning

Weekly learning intentions

Explore light and dark using safe, hands-on experiences. • Notice and talk about differences between light and dark places. • Investigate shadows, reflections, colour and how light travels. • Develop language, listening, curiosity and confidence to ask questions. • Build fine and gross motor skills through creative, sensory and movement play. • Explore early maths through matching, sorting, counting, size and shape. • Begin to understand day and night and how light helps us see.

Weekly activity plan

Focus	Adult-led activity	Key vocabulary	Differentiation: younger / emerging	Differentiation: older / extending	Additional support	Continuous provision
Light and Dark: What Can We See? **Focus: Communication and Language; Understanding the World**	Introduce light and dark with photos and safe objects. Explore a bright area and a cosy, dimmed area, comparing what children can see. Share a simple picture book about night-time and ask children what they notice. Star printing with white paint on black paper.	Light, dark, bright, dim, see, night, day.	Explore contrasting objects and photos; respond by looking, pointing, gesturing or using single words.	Describe what they notice and sort pictures or objects into light and dark groups.	Use real objects, high-contrast photos, simple choices, visual prompts and a calm space for children who prefer not to enter a dim area.	Light/dark photo books; matching cards; black, white and yellow mark-making; cosy den with lights kept safely visible; day/night picture sorting.
Torch Explorers **Focus: Understanding the World; Mathematics; Communication and Language**	In a supervised space, let children use child-safe torches to shine light onto walls and objects. Explore what happens when the beam moves nearer or further away. Try shining onto different surfaces and discuss what can be seen.	Torch, beam, shine, bright, near, far, on, off.	Switch a torch on and off with help; follow the light and explore where it lands.	Predict where the light will appear, compare near/far and describe how the beam changes.	Offer larger easy-grip torches, adult support, short turns and a non-torch alternative such as reflective objects.	Torches with adult supervision; large reflective and non-reflective objects; light-coloured and dark-coloured fabrics; picture prompts showing on/off.
Shadow Play **Focus: Physical Development; Expressive Arts and Design; Understanding the World**	Use a lamp or torch directed at a wall to make shadows with hands, toys and large shapes. Move objects closer to and further from the light and notice how the shadow changes. Invite children to make simple animal or body shapes.	Shadow, shape, big, small, move, behind, in front.	Watch shadows move and make marks or hand movements with adult modelling.	Try making a bigger or smaller shadow and guess which object made it.	Use familiar toys, clear visual demonstration and options to observe rather than perform.	Shadow screen; large animal figures; blocks and shapes; shadow drawing with chunky crayons; puppets and simple story props.
Colour, Reflection and Light **Focus: Expressive**	Explore sunlight or a safe light source through translucent coloured shapes. Look at reflections in child-safe mirrors and notice colours on the floor or wall. Create a stained-glass-style collage with large	Colour, reflection, see-through, shiny, mirror, red, blue, yellow.	Choose and place large coloured pieces; look at reflections and name or point to colours.	Sort colours, describe transparent/opaque objects in simple terms and notice how colours overlap.	Use large pieces, pre-prepared sticky sheets, accessible positioning and verbal or visual colour choices.	Large translucent blocks; child-safe mirrors; colour paddles; collage materials; colour-matching baskets and light/dark painting.

Arts and Design; Mathematics; Physical Development	translucent paper pieces on clear contact paper- leaf suncatchers					

Continuous provision throughout the week

Area	Resources and opportunities	Adult role
Reading and language	Books about day/night, bedtime, shadows, stars and light; photos and picture cards.	Share books, repeat key vocabulary and encourage children to point, gesture, describe and ask questions.
Creative area	Black and white paper, chalk, paint, chunky crayons, translucent paper and large collage pieces.	Model mark-making and talk about contrast, colour and children's choices.
Small world and role-play	Day/night scene, people, houses, animals, moon and star props, cosy den.	Encourage imaginative play and language about routines, sleep and the sky.
Construction	Blocks, tunnels, cardboard tubes, large shapes and safe reflective materials.	Support building, comparing size and exploring light through spaces.
Maths and sorting	Light/dark objects, matching cards, colour baskets, shapes and simple sequencing pictures.	Model matching, sorting, counting and words such as same, different, big and small.
Sensory exploration	Textured fabrics, large safe objects, reflective surfaces and supervised water play.	Describe textures and visual effects; follow children's sensory preferences.
Music and movement	Day/night songs, scarves, movement games and familiar sound effects at comfortable volume.	Encourage movement, listening, imitation and calm transitions.
Outdoor area	Observe natural light and shadows, shadow tracing with chalk, reflective items and shade/sun comparisons.	Support noticing changes outdoors and use language such as sunny, shady and shadow.

Differentiation and inclusion

Younger children and emerging learners	Keep experiences short and flexible. Use simple phrases, repetition, gestures, songs and real objects. Allow children to watch before joining. Prioritise sensory exploration and shared attention.
Children developing confidence and skills	Encourage children to choose resources, name colours and describe what they notice. Introduce matching, sorting, simple counting and predictions through play.
Older children and children ready for extension	Ask open questions, encourage predictions and comparisons, explore how shadows change, and invite children to explain what they discovered.
Children with additional needs or sensory differences	Use visual timetables, now-and-next boards, communication aids and familiar routines. Do not require children to enter dark spaces. Offer a well-lit alternative, reduced visual stimulation, adapted tools and extra processing time.

Adult interaction: suggested questions

Focus	Questions and prompts
Communication	"What can you see?" "What do you notice?"
Understanding the World	"What happens when we block the light?" "Where do we see shadows?"
Mathematics	"Which is bigger?" "Can you find another one that matches?"
Expressive Arts	"What colours can you see?" "How could we make a shadow?"
PSED	"Would you like to explore together or watch first?"