



CURRICULUM POLICY

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Early Years Curriculum

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. This sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. All children have the opportunity to learn through play, supported by experienced and qualified teachers and staff, in an inclusive, safe and secure environment with enjoyment and challenge. As the children grow, learning moves towards focused, adult led sessions in preparation for more formal schooling.

A link book is used to keep parents informed and involved and the EY Log captures evidence of each child's learning journey. Homework is given to children when appropriate which helps consolidate the learning in class. Each child's educational programme is tailored specifically for them and the high staff/pupil ratio facilitates this. We ask parents to support their child's learning throughout their time at the school and forge a strong partnership with us.

There are seven areas of learning that chart a child's development from Birth to 5 years old. The learning objectives from the adult led activities are taken from the development stages so each child's development is charted through each area. Some nurseries / schools simplistically define a child's day via these areas. In reality our notion of child development recognises that the process is more holistic than this and our structures are therefore integrated opportunities for children to develop concurrently. As a reference the seven areas of learning are:

Prime Areas (these are the main areas of development from birth to two years)

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Making relationships
- Self confidence and self-awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour

We very believe that children learn best when they are happy and secure. The number of children in each key group is limited so that each child receives the maximum attention and care possible from their key worker. Children are encouraged to be self-expressive and feel confident in themselves as an individual. We slowly introduce the babies and toddlers to the older children and adults in the school. Children are not only given the opportunity, but are also encouraged to communicate and interact with the other children whilst being supported by their key worker.

2. Communication and Language

- Listening and attention
- Understanding
- Speaking

Research has shown that in these formative years, the development of language is of crucial importance. Through nursery rhymes, games and carefully chosen dialogue, the children will be learning sounds and vocabulary in a fun way. All babies are taught to sign with their key worker which is especially advantageous to very young babies who lack the maturity to communicate verbally. Even the youngest babies are taught to recognise sounds and foster excellent speaking and listening skills. We ensure that every child is adequately prepared for the transition to the next stage of their education.

3. Physical Development

- Moving and handling
- Health and self-care

The resources provided are attractive and inviting in order to encourage your child to investigate, explore and develop physical skills. Separate areas of learning are provided which encourage exploration through sight, sound, touch, smell and movement. Rooms are vibrant and interactive in order to completely immerse the children in learning, play and fun. Through additional lessons such as Sport, Gymnastics and Dance, the children advance quickly in terms of physical maturity, dexterity and gross motor skills.

Children are encouraged to eat a healthy diet and the importance of a healthy lifestyle is taught at an age-appropriate level. Toilet training is introduced when the child is ready, and parents and school work together to devise a plan to suit the child's needs. Children are encouraged to be independent within the setting, dressing and undressing when able as well as identifying their own needs.

Specific Areas (these are the main areas of development to complement and support the Prime Areas from 2 – 5 years)

4. Literacy

- Reading
- Writing

Excellent phonics teaching is provided which is engaging and multi-sensory, and helps to develop all four inter-dependent strands of language: speaking, listening, reading and writing. We feel that it is extremely important to foster good speaking and listening skills as these lay the foundation for reading and writing. Most of the children begin to read towards the end of Pre-school. Due to early phonics and the blending of sounds, the children are already equipped with secure foundations for reading and follow the Read, Write, Inc literacy scheme. By the end of nursery we expect our children to be competent, early readers which helps the children considerably in all other areas of their education. Writing and picture making is enjoyed daily and the scope and variety of topics covered, further develop the whole child, educationally, emotionally and socially.

5. Mathematics

- Numbers
- Shape, space and measure

Daily maths sessions are also included into our curriculum. Basic numbers, shapes and colours are introduced through song, rhyme and play experiences as soon as a child is ready in our babyroom. This knowledge is extended through our various topic activities and small group sessions in Pre-school to incorporate patterns, sequences and order. Those children that transfer to Nursery and Reception are then introduced to the concepts of time, money, measuring, 3D shapes, and more complex number skills.

6. Understanding the World

- People and communities
- The World
- Technology

Hall School children are encouraged to recognise diversity and difference in the world around them. The setting celebrates all religious festivals and welcomes children and families to share their experiences with the school. The children learn about the world around them in the form of people, animals, plants and places. Teachers create an environment that is stimulating and encourages children to scrutinise and question their knowledge. With its continued importance in the modern world, the Hall school also ensures all children gain a level of technological understanding, using a variety of interactive devices to record their school experiences.

7. Expressive Arts and Design

- Exploring and using media and materials
- Being imaginative

The arts are well supported at the Hall School with specialist teachers in art, dance and music. The children have weekly dance and singing classes as well as daily opportunities to try their hand at art and craft skills. When not in adult led sessions the children have a wealth of role play toys to help develop their social skills and engage in a make-believe world of their choosing.

Key Stage One

Our children arrive with a wide range of abilities, strengths and weaknesses. During the first few weeks at school, the children are assessed and grouped within their own ability where work is differentiated. The children are treated as individuals and work at their own pace. Whilst we do not 'select' our pupils we reserve the right to decline any application from a pupil who we feel would be unsuited to our setting or for whom we feel we could not adequately meet their needs.

Our programme of education is designed to support our pupils to be fully and appropriately prepared to move on to their next school. All pupils are encouraged to be spontaneous, but to consider the needs of others and to adopt a caring and polite attitude. We aim to compliment a broad-based curriculum with a sound understanding of excellent social skills and citizenship in order to equip our children for their future in the world outside.

The National Curriculum

For years 1 and 2 the School follows the National Curriculum for Key Stage 1 with many additional extensions and enrichment opportunities. A variety of subjects are covered according to term and age. The core subjects of Literacy, Mathematics and Reading are followed daily throughout the school. The children cover the full range of the National Curriculum subjects: Science, History, Geography, Religious Education, Music and Singing, Recorder, Art, Craft, Design and Technology, French, ICT, Personal Social and Emotional Development, PE in the form of Outdoor Sport and Gymnastics, as well as Drama and Dance. Every morning there is a registration time when the children cover and discuss a wide variety of different topics. Each Friday there is a whole school assembly where those children awarded with a merit certificate are celebrated.

Homework

The children will be given a small amount of homework and reading on a daily basis. Homework is intended to consolidate areas of learning we have covered in class, to extend understanding, to introduce a routine of good practice for later on in their school life and to encourage independence. The work set is not intended to be too taxing at the end of a tiring school day and could even be done before school, next morning when the children are fresh and alert.