

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy



William Hulme's Grammar School
The best in everyone™
Part of United Learning

1. Intent

In WHGS Early Years Foundation Stage, our intent is for children to be independent learners who are happy to come to school. We create opportunities for our children to be explorers, active learners, critical thinkers and risk takers. We understand that play is a fundamental part of this development and developing children's language and communication skills is central to our practice, as is the need to build strong social and emotional skills. We plan activities around the children's interests and enhance our classroom provision with resources that will ignite and support their enquiring minds. Children are expected to tidy up after themselves; this promotes care and respect for their environment and gives them a sense of responsibility. We consider ourselves partners in your child's learning and welcome observations and information about your child from home.

Our standards are set by the Government's Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance which seeks to provide:

- "quality and consistency, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- a secure foundation through planning for learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly
- partnership working between practitioners, parents and/or carers
- equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported"

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021

The guiding principles which shape our practice are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults
- Learning and Development

2. The Areas of Learning and Development

The Educational Programmes set out in the EYFS Framework has informed our Curriculum which will be implemented with activities and experiences tailored to the needs of our children at William Hulme's Grammar School whilst also guiding children to work towards the skills, knowledge and understanding they should have by the end of Reception. There are seven areas of learning and development within our curriculum which consists of three prime areas which are essential in nurturing a child's natural development and four specific areas which provide opportunities for the children to broaden their knowledge and skills.

The Prime Areas of Learning and Development

- **Communication and Language**
This area focuses on speaking, listening, attention and understanding. Children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning. Rich conversation between adults and peers is crucial for development, together with reading frequently, storytelling, singing rhymes and poems. Children will engage in roleplay and have opportunities to share their ideas with supporting adults who can model, and question. This will support children in becoming comfortable using a range of rich vocabulary.
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

This area focuses on self-Regulation, managing self and building relationships. These are very important skills for children if they are to lead happy and healthy lives and they are paramount for children's cognitive development. Children will be supported and guided on how to manage their emotions in different situations. They will learn about looking after themselves, independently managing their personal needs and learning about keeping healthy. Children will also learn about friendships and what makes a good friend and, through adult modelling and guidance, they learn to be co-operative, caring, and able to resolve conflicts.

■ **Physical Development**

This area focuses on developing children's fine and gross motor control. Children will engage in indoor and outdoor activities that will strengthen their core stability, balance, spatial awareness and agility. Activities will be provided to reinforce children's fine motor development, which will, in turn, support hand-eye co-ordination and precision.

The Specific Areas of Learning and Development

■ **Literacy**

This focuses on comprehension, word reading and writing. Children will be immersed in books (fiction and non-fiction) as it is crucial that children develop a love of reading. Adults will reinforce this through regularly reading with the children, and enjoying rhymes, poems and songs. Daily phonics sessions will support children's reading and writing skills

■ **Mathematics**

This area has an emphasis on number and numerical patterns so that children develop a strong sense of number in order to build strong foundations to excel mathematically. Using a variety of resources (manipulatives), children will be supported to develop a deeper understanding of numbers to 10 and recognising patterns within those numbers which will be the basis of future calculating skills. Children will also be provided with rich opportunities to develop their knowledge of shape space and measure and encouraged to look for patterns and make connections.

■ **Understanding the World**

This area focuses on people, culture and communities, past and present and the natural world. Children will have opportunities to make sense of their world, the community in which they live and begin to understand the diversity within this community. They will have opportunities to visit our local park, library, and religious settings and learn about important members of our society. There will be lots of opportunities to learn about living things. Children will explore different habitats starting with those in our own school grounds, they will learn about life cycles of living things including plants. With adult guidance they will become ecologically aware of how their actions can affect their environment.

■ **Expressive Arts and Design**

This area focuses on opportunities for children to create using different materials both natural and manmade and be imaginative and expressive through painting, dancing, music and play. Children will be encouraged to explore and experiment with colour, technique, texture, form and function. With adult support and guidance there will be opportunities to develop children's artistic and cultural awareness by introducing them to new skills and techniques.

We also understand that children learn in different ways and we are guided by the three Characteristics of Effective Learning documented in the Framework.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

■ **Playing and exploring – engagement**

Children investigate and experience things and events around them and 'have a go'.

■ **Active learning – motivation**

Children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve.

■ **Creating and thinking critically – thinking**

Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different and experiences and develop strategies for doing things.

3. Planning

Through planning, teachers ensure that there is a balance of adult led, adult initiated and child-initiated activities across the day. During child-initiated activities the adults' role is to show an interest in the children's ideas, build conversation, facilitate and share ideas and model different skills. Such interaction with the children is essential as this helps to build the children's understanding, introduce new vocabulary and therefore guides new learning.

4. Direct Teaching

At specific times in the day the children will take part in an activity that is teacher led. Such sessions include daily phonics lessons, daily literacy and maths/counting experiences, as well as teaching new skills to support their learning within the classroom environment. All direct taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each class using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and, in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for each child.

5. Learning Through Play

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. It is our belief that children learn best from activities and experiences that they have initiated and play with peers is important for children's development. We carefully plan the environment and provide opportunities within this environment to reflect these interests to inspire them further, whilst also making sure that children also can extend and practise the skills they have learned through direct teaching.

Through play, children explore and develop learning experiences, helping them make sense of their world. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. Through play, children are given chance to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in a controlled and safe environment.

Giving children the opportunity to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, allows them to make connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. With adult support, this process enhances children's ability to think critically and ask questions. Adults can support them in making connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions.

6. Assessment, Recording and Reporting of Progress

Assessment is an essential and important part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. Assessment takes a variety of forms to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. These can be through observations, photographic evidence, examples of work, parental conversations. Assessment occurs throughout any taught session as well as during free flow times when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. During children's independent play, adults will make an immediate assessment of a child's level of learning and endeavour to move the child's learning forward in that moment. Relevant evidence is collated electronically through a system called "Evidence Me,". We can digitally share these experiences with the child's parents/guardians and they can directly respond to the observations sent

to them. Parents/guardians can also send evidence to the class teacher regarding what their child is achieving at home.

On entry to Nursery/Reception a baseline assessment is carried out for each child. Parent's/carers will be kept up to date with children's progress through consultations which are held in the Autumn and Spring terms. Such consultations provide an opportunity to discuss the children's Learning Journey, talk about children's strengths, achievements, interests and next steps. These form the basis for the monitoring of pupil progress as the children progress through school.

7. Special Educational Needs and Inclusion

At William Hulme's Grammar School, we value the diversity of all children our school. We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

Assessments and teacher observations are used to identify children who may have specific needs within the first half term following admission. Results of assessments are used to ensure that a differentiated curriculum is offered to such children to meet their needs.

For more information, we have a very clear set out Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy which is available on the school's website: www.whgs-academy.org.

8. Safeguarding and Children's Welfare

Children learn best when they are happy, safe and feel secure. We aim to ensure that all children feel happy, safe and secure through the continuous development of positive relationships between children and staff as well as relationships with their peers. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework. Our school has rigorous Safeguarding and welfare policy and procedures that are used to identify anyone at risk or harm of radicalisation that sets out clear procedures for reporting any concerns. See our Schools Safeguarding Children Policy and Child Protection Procedures available on the school's website: www.whgs-academy.org.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to teach children that, in society as in a classroom, there is a need for boundaries, rules and limits which we all need to adhere to help us to stay safe. We aim to teach children to be consciously aware of their feelings and the feelings of others and how to manage their own behaviour by identifying behavioural issues and using them as a teaching moment. We also aim to teach our children to take risks whilst learning how to recognise and avoid hazards. Should accidents occur an emergency contact form is completed for all children on entry into school, which includes medical, personal and social details. Other than minor cuts and bruises, all accidents on school premises are recorded in the School Accident Book and parents are informed.

9. Induction

Parents of children who are offered a place in our Early Years will be invited to a short induction meeting in June. Children will be able to visit Early Years for one session before the summer holidays. Staff will visit the new nursery children and their families at home prior to starting. For new children starting Reception, staff will visit the children in their day care setting and liaise with staff about your child and what support may be required to support the transition

Children starting Nursery in September will start on a staggered basis. Children begin by staying for a short session and gradually build up to a full session, depending upon how long it takes them to settle in.

10. Partnership with Parents and Carers

The school recognises the importance of establishing effective relationships with parents/carers in ensuring the children achieve their full potential. Parental involvement is actively encouraged. Staff ensure that parents are well informed about the curriculum their child is experiencing through newsletters and online home learning tasks. Staff take the opportunity at the end of the day to talk to parents about significant achievements or any concerns as well as sending digital observations as evidence of the children's learning

Throughout the year, parents are invited to attend different workshops that help support their child's development at home. In Nursery, parents are also invited to take part in our Little Lion's Club. These sessions involve an informal chat and coffee and then a presentation led by the teacher on a particular area of the curriculum. The teacher shares how we deliver this subject in the nursery and parents are asked to share ideas of how they might support their child at home. The children are invited to join part of the session and explore a carousel of activities planned by the teacher. This is special time as the parent and child have an uninterrupted half hour of play and interaction. Parents are also provided with ideas to further support their child at home.

11. Equal Opportunities

Staff ensure that all children have equal access to the curriculum. They will be encouraged to respect similarities and differences within cultures other than their own. The school seeks to develop tolerance and concern for others.

12. Monitoring

The Early Years Leader is responsible for the monitoring of this policy. Areas for development will be incorporated into the School Improvement Plan as necessary.

Policy Information and Review

Designated Lead Person/s	Mrs C Halsall, Head of EYFS
Reviewed	Annually
Date of last review and by whom	July 2023 – Mrs C Halsall
Nominated Governor	Mrs J Andrews
Ratification by Local Governing Body	
Next Review Date	July 2024

