



## Greenhall

### Personal, Social and Emotional Development

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# Personal, Social and Emotional Development

## 1. EYFS Statutory Educational Programme

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

*Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.*

(EYFS – 2024)

## 2. Introduction

Personal, Social and Emotional development is identified as a prime area of learning and development and is divided into three aspects:

- Self-regulation
- Managing Self
- Building Relationships

The children at Greenhall have a wide range of needs, including physical, learning, communication, play and social skills. Thus, their development in the prime areas of learning is likely to be affected. For example, some children will be working at a sensory level and will only have made an initial beginning in becoming aware of themselves, other people and the world around them. Other children will have no or limited language and will therefore find it difficult to communicate ideas and ask questions. Other children will have restricted physical abilities both fine and gross motor and may be reliant on assistance to access learning experiences and activities.

It is necessary, therefore, to break the aspects of the curriculum areas down further and plan learning opportunities for the children which take account of the level of development they are operating within.

At Greenhall we recognise that every child is unique. Our approach is child-centred and we seek to tailor the curriculum to each child's needs. We use a holistic teaching approach, looking at the 'whole child', recognising that an impairment in one area of learning can affect a child's development in another area. The children at Greenhall are encouraged to be active, independent learners who develop the ability to problem-solve and apply skills (orthofunction). For example, to use their hand / eye to reach out for or look at what they want in order to make a choice; to accept the company of others or to adapt their behaviour to different situations.

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. They will all enter the setting at different starting points. Activities and resources are differentiated to meet individual children's needs.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is firmly embedded in the ethos of Greenhall (see Vision & Values, Conductive Education Policy & SMSC policy).

### **3. Self-Regulation**

This aspect is about how children can understand their own feelings and other people's feelings, and how they learn to manage their feelings without letting them spill out at every small annoyance they meet. It also links to how they learn and can follow simple rules which operate in different places such as home and a setting or a play area. Children need the support of adults to help them to understand these complex and often challenging areas.

We create a nurturing environment that enables children to thrive in all that they do. The age of our children means that physical comfort (cuddles) is very appropriate and forms part of this approach. Some children, particularly when children first start with us can find the experience of being around others a challenge, getting distressed if they hear another child crying for example. This is supported through the role of the 'key person' (see EYFS Policy).

At Greenhall, we believe that all behavior is communication (see Behaviour Policy). As adults, we need to look at what a child might be trying to communicate through their behavior, particularly when there are communication difficulties. We also need to ensure that boundaries are in place and that the approach is consistent across the setting. Due to their developmental stage, some of the children are learning how to interact with others and therefore, at times, inappropriate means may be used, for example hitting or biting. Positive Behaviour is modelled by adults alongside adults labelling how the children might be feeling, for example, 'you are cross that X took the toy. It wasn't kind'. This will, in turn, help to equip the children with the language and skills needed to be able to talk about their feelings. Children needing additional support with their behavior skills will have an Individual Behaviour Plan to support this (see Behaviour Policy).

As children develop, they are encouraged to consider how their actions and behavior may affect others. For some children, this begins with learning to take turns in structured activities such as 'song box' or skittles, for others this is about adapting their behavior to the circumstances. For example, helping younger children. Where appropriate, classes may have 'rules' and systems to increase their awareness of their behavior.

We believe in working WITH our children, offering high support and nurture but also high challenge.

Our structured daily routine with clear expectations supports children to wait for what they want and learn to control their immediate impulses when appropriate. Clear, simple language supported by the use of symbol cards that is repeated on a regular basis provides opportunities for children to begin to make sense of their world, anticipate and follow simple instructions.

Attention skills, particularly on activities that are not self-chosen can be a challenge for our children, a lot of whom have fleeting concentration. We set appropriate expectations and ensure the task is challenging yet achievable – everything is broken down into small steps. We explicitly teach attention building through Attention Autism – Bucket Time.

### **4. Managing Self**

Managing self is about children developing confidence in who they are and what they can do and in expressing their own ideas. We know that although many children have several people who care deeply about them, all children need to have at least one person who is 'on their side' for

them to really thrive. This helps the child feel valued and special and gives them a sense of self-worth. This in turn leads to them being confident with others and knowing when they need support from other people. Developing effective relationships is one of our values as a setting – it takes time to develop trust but the progress our children make with the support of a trusted adult is phenomenal.

To develop self-awareness and self-confidence children need to access a broad range of experiences. We provide opportunities for children to engage in indoor and outdoor activities planned and directed by adults as well as activities that offer opportunities for child choice and free play. This enables children to find out what they like and do not like and provides the adult with opportunities to observe children's own interests.

Children with spastic Cerebral Palsy in particular can often develop 'learned helplessness.' Through repeatedly experiencing failure or not being able to access experiences, they learn to give up trying. At Greenhall, we build on the child's initiation of movement and provide facilitation (equipment, manual, use of environment) to enable them to succeed at what they do. As all activities are seen as learning opportunities, experiencing success is crucial as it provides positive feedback and thus motivation for attempting the activity on another occasion. We also seek to develop in our children the ability to take risks and problem-solve. Every opportunity is an opportunity for learning! (See Conductive Education Policy).

Developing an awareness of others and initially learning to accept their presence is crucial in the early stages of developing self-awareness and self-confidence. For some children this will happen alongside further exploration of themselves as individuals for example, self-exploration through sensory activities such as messy play, peek-a-boo, making sounds with their voices and action rhymes and songs. Observation of children's responses during activities and then responding as an adult accordingly to further learning is vital, for example if a child vocalises, the adult could vocalise in response. What does the child then do? Do they vocalise again? Programmes such as 'Jabadao', 'Resonance Boards' & 'Intensive Interaction' are used to support this.

Ensuring children feel safe and secure in their environment is integral to developing confident individuals who are ready to learn. For children with sensory impairments, using objects of reference forms part of this process. Children learn to associate objects with certain activities or areas around the Nursery. By exploring the object of reference before going to a location / activity, children will learn to anticipate what is going to happen and will support a smooth transition. 'Now and Next' boards or visual timetables are also used with some children who benefit from a structured routine. Another part of this process is the role of the 'Key Person' (someone familiar with whom the child feels safe and secure, who will provide comfort and support when needed). As the child's confidence grows, they will gradually become less reliant on the 'key person' and more confident to explore for themselves (see EYFS Policy).

Adults model language, activities and interactions but also promote a culture of acceptance. One child's thinking may be different from another's but this is to be embraced, for example one child may use a building block and pretend it is a telephone whilst another simply uses it to build a tower. Adults not only praise achievement but also the willingness to 'have a go' and 'keep trying', thereby promoting the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Developing independence and responsibility is promoted where appropriate through practise and established systems. For example, internal gates in the outdoor learning environment are unlocked but have signs on showing children when they are able / unable to go through them. Children are sometimes involved in going to the School Office to deliver a message with an adult or to ask for more batteries for a toy. Children are praised for their efforts and for keeping going when things are difficult.

At Greenhall, we promote inclusion, both within our own setting and within society. We use a total communication approach and the use of Makaton signing is encouraged at all times. We seek to

develop the children's acceptance and awareness of their own disability so that they can communicate this to others where appropriate. This is particularly important when children are transitioning into a mainstream environment. To such ends, we also develop links with other settings and welcome students into our setting on placements. This also provides our children with a wider experience of life beyond Greenhall.

We have high expectations of our children with a structured daily routine and clear boundaries. This helps our children to make sense of the world around them. We explicitly teach turn-taking and how to interact with others, emotion coaching and commenting using age and stage appropriate strategies.

Children are taught the importance of washing their hands – it is incorporated into our daily routine at snack and mealtimes and after going to the toilet. Children are given the opportunity to sit on a potty / toilet and we have a range of these available to suit a range of different needs.

At Greenhall we have a regular lunchtime routine which prepares children for the eating process. This includes sitting correction and oral-motor activities. Lunchtimes are a key learning time and classroom practitioners are supported by lunchtime supervisors, giving a higher staff:pupil ratio enabling children to be appropriately facilitated in order to achieve independence. Children at Greenhall receive a hot dinner prepared on the premises. Special diets are catered for, as well as the appropriate consistency of food (e.g. puree) being provided to meet the individual children's needs.

Some of our children, particularly those with ASC are very reluctant to try different foods, instead having a small number of 'safe foods'. These children tend to bring a packed lunch in from home but are given the opportunity to explore different foods, even during play, should they wish.

Children are also provided with appropriate equipment such as angled cutlery, sloping dishes, and doidy cups. Where appropriate there are opportunities to practice going up to the dinner trolley to choose what they would like. Sectioned trays and non-lipped plates are provided. These opportunities support transition and prepare children for inclusion by enabling them to practice with the equipment that they will use when they move schools.

Children are given regular opportunities throughout the daily routine to practice dressing and undressing skills. This may include getting their coat on ready to go outside (Foxes, Robins and Squirrels), taking shoes and socks off for Task Series (Hedgehog Class) or getting changed ready for the hydrotherapy session.

Practitioners should ensure that children are given time to achieve success when dressing and undressing by giving time and appropriate verbal instruction and manual facilitation. For the children with physical difficulties, positioning is a factor in a child achieving success. It may be appropriate for a child to be in a supportive seat or to be facilitated to sit when practicing dressing and undressing skills dependent on their individual abilities and level of physical development.

## **5. Building relationships**

This aspect is about how young children learn to get along with other children and with adults; how they can see something from somebody else's point of view and take that into account when they play and work with other children. It is also significant in developing friendships. To be able to do these things children need role models – adults who show them how to be with others; how to be kind and to understand why people behave in certain ways – such as saying sorry for hurting another person's feelings.

This area of development and learning is one which many adults continue to struggle with since it

is far-ranging and complex. Helping children develop personally, socially and emotionally is often challenging but the benefits of this are life-long.

Developing an awareness of others is the first step in 'making relationships'. For many children, the experience of a new environment (Nursery) with its different sounds, sights, and smells can be daunting and takes time for children to adapt to this new experience. Awareness of and interest in others can be affected, particularly if there is a sensory impairment. Providing familiar, repetitive activities that provide opportunities for the children to anticipate and respond or interact are crucial. Examples of this are 'intensive interaction', 'resonance soundabout' sessions and 'TAC PAC'. For children working at early stages of development, we need to create opportunities to develop an awareness of others for example through turn-taking activities such as 'song box'.

Early relationships are established with familiar people, those that children form attachments with. The role of the 'Key Person' is pivotal to this (someone familiar with whom the child feels safe and secure, who will provide comfort and support when needed) (see EYFS Policy). Staff establish highly effective relationships with children and their families. We seek to do things WITH others, not to or for them.

Adults will model positive relationships at all times, both with other adults and with children. This may range from sharing equipment and using manners when asking for resources, modelling turn-taking in conversations, responding to what others have said and taking steps to resolve conflicts. We also forge strong links with parents and carers (See EYFS Policy & Local Offer).

At Greenhall, praise is given for friendly behaviour, sharing, being kind and demonstrating an awareness of others. Children will have opportunities to work in a range of groups which provides a range of opportunities for children to develop their social skills. We support working as a group where appropriate as the group provides a source of motivation as well as providing role-models (see Conductive Education Policy). We explicitly teach children how to share and take turns in highly structured activities so that, over time, they can extend these skills into their play.

#### **4. Home-school links**

We believe working closely with parents and carers is essential in order to maximise children's development. Parents are provided with information on their child's personal, social and emotional development and what they are working on at Greenhall through the Family communication app as well as the more formalised systems that are in place e.g. Personalised Learning Plans, Annual Reports etc. We involve parents in discussions, particularly with regards to their child's behaviour to ensure strategies are consistent between home and school and if a child requires an Individual Behaviour Plan, we work together on this. We also involve parents in celebrating their child's achievements at home through the Family app.

#### **5. Assessment, recording & reporting**

Children's progress is recorded on session evaluations and used to inform future planning. Annotated photographs and observations are kept in the children's individual learning journeys on the Family app.

Children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development is assessed using the EYFS and B-Squared EYFS assessment tool on entry to provide a baseline and then at the end of each term. This is reported to the Headteacher and data is analysed with regards to progress made at the end of each academic year although information is gathered on trends at each review point.

At the end of their reception year, children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals in line with National Regulations.

The majority of children at Greenhall also have an outcome related to their Personal, Social and Emotional development as part of their EHC Plan. This is reflected in their Personalised Learning Plan. These targets are reviewed termly with the EHCP reviewed every 6 months or annually, depending on the age of the child.

We work closely with other professionals such as Educational Psychologists to support children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development. These professionals will produce their own reports and, where appropriate, make suggestions as to appropriate strategies to support the child.

## **6. Monitoring Effectiveness**

The coordinator for Personal, Social and Emotional Development at Greenhall is Joanne di Castiglione. She will monitor the effectiveness of the policy together with the Curriculum Link Governor. They will then report back to the LGB.

## **7. Equal Opportunities**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Equal Opportunities policy.

### Appendix 1: Practical examples of how we develop Personal, Social & Emotional skills

N.B. This is not an exhaustive list

#### Managing Self

- Sensory room
- Mirrors
- Enclosed spaces e.g. dark tent, role-play theatre
- Sensory curriculum – smell of the day, visual timetable, musical timetable
- Reward systems – praise, stickers, Characters linked to Characteristics of Effective Learning
- Structured daily routine
- Conductive Education approach
- Educational visits
- Total communication approach – symbols, signing
- TAC PAC, resonance boards, Knill, Jabadao
- Promotion of pupil voice & ATAAC provision
- Special days (fund raising, cultural experiences and immersion days)
- Healthy Teeth (large teeth, toothbrush)
- Vegetable garden – field to fork
- Toilet training, social stories and toileting routine
- Structured daily routine
- Teaching hand-washing as part of daily routine
- Hydrotherapy (dressing and undressing)

#### Self-Regulation

- Ploum Bear
- Interactive feelings display
- Behaviour & Relational Policy & Individual Behaviour Plans
- Labelling feelings, modelling use of PODD feelings page
- Modelling strategies of how to calm when cross
- Sensory circuits and sensory diet
- Emotional Coaching
- Attention Autism Strategies – Bucket Time
- The Colour Monster

- Explicit teaching of how to take turns

Building Relationships

- Effective relationships as a value of our school – working WITH
- Key worker
- Song box
- Circle Time
- Structured turn-taking
- Working in small groups with the support of a trusted adult
- Conductive Education – The Group
- Links with other schools – Marshlands and Little Learners
- Horse-riding & other educational opportunities

Policy reviewed & approved by LGB on 27/6/23.

Signed.....Date.....  
(Headteacher)

Signed.....Date.....  
(Chair of Governors)