



THE CURRICULUM

Introduction

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)...promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.'

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2021, DfE).

As an early years setting, the EYFS is explicitly followed at Greenhall.

Curriculum Intent Statement

At Greenhall, our curriculum is designed to fulfil our vision;

...to provide high quality, child centered education which will maximise every child's potential. We are dedicated to whole-child development and want to inspire our children to be actively engaged in their learning, to be as independent as possible, to take risks, to learn from and with others and to believe in themselves. We want our children to know they have a 'voice' and to provide them with the tools to use this. We want to give our children the best start – to lay the foundations for later learning.

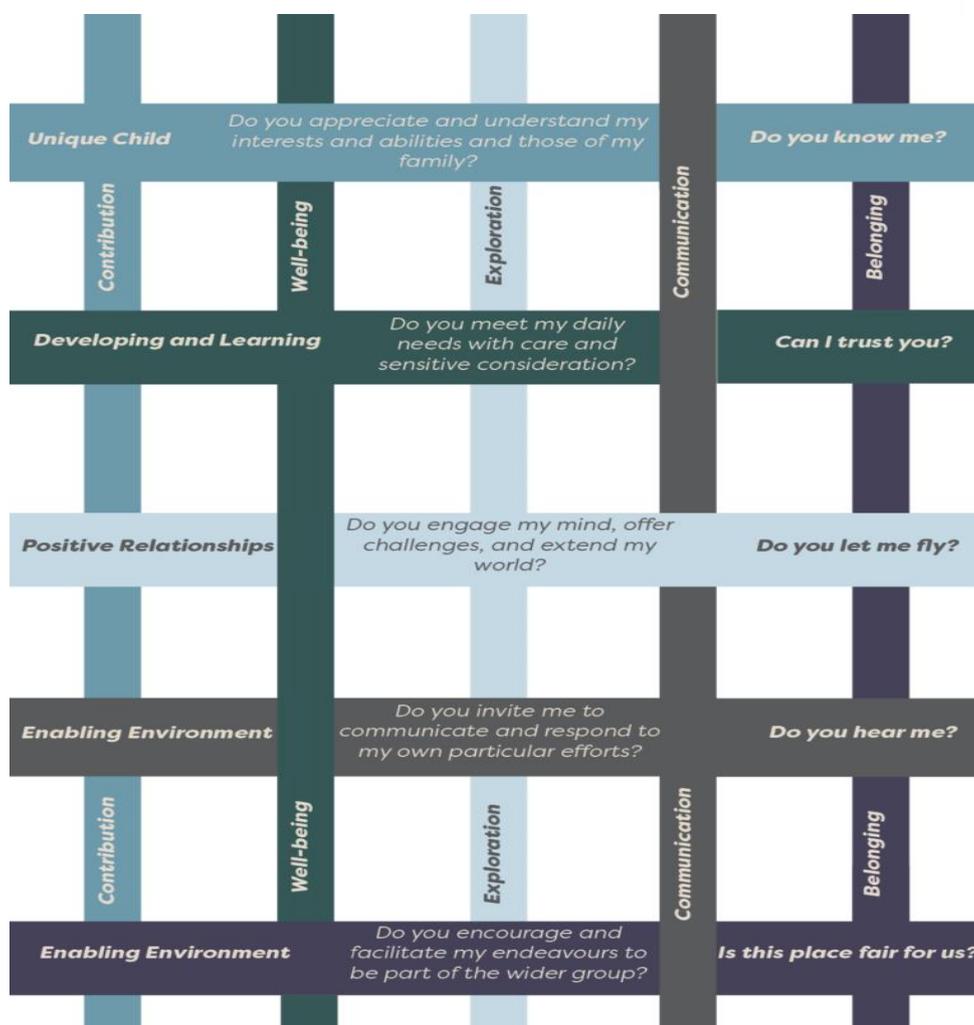
Our approach is child-needs led and thus, our curriculum is personalised to meet the children's individual needs. We structure our approach to always consider the principles at the heart of the EYFS;

- Unique Child
- Developing and Learning
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments

and the 5 questions below that come from the 5 strands of the New Zealand 'Te Whariki' Curriculum;

- Do you know me?
- Do you hear me?
- Can I trust you?
- Is this place fair for me?
- Do you let me fly?

(Carr et al, 2002)



A Celebratory Approach to giving additional Support in the Early Years (2021)

Our curriculum is

- Communication-rich
- Skill and context based
- Encourages active engagement and learning
- Recognises that if basic needs are not met, children are not in a position to learn (this includes attachment and sensory needs)
- Provides opportunities for children to learn from and with others
- Fun, engaging and relevant to our children's needs
- Designed to provide opportunity to find out about the world around them and to extend their cultural capital

Our children demonstrate similar learning styles and we reflect this by grouping them into 'Pathways', all aiming to promote 'readiness to learn'.

We have three main pathways at Greenhall, all of which enable our children to access a personalised, relevant and challenging curriculum.

Pathway 1 - Hedgehogs

This pathway is for children for whom physical development is their main area of need. Our pedagogy is based on the principles of Conductive Education (see Conductive Education policy), a holistic teaching approach, looking at the whole child and considering all of their needs. There is a strong belief that the child CAN learn and therefore all activities are

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viewed as learning opportunities. Children are encouraged to be active, independent learners who develop the ability to problem-solve and apply skills (orthofunction). The experiences will build on what the children already can do. Staff facilitate children (equipment, manual, use of environment) to enable them to succeed. Experiencing success is crucial.

Some of the children in this group have very complex needs and will follow a multi-sensory, immersive curriculum that provides a range of experiences to stimulate engagement, anticipation and participation in the world around them and to help them to make sense of this.

Pathway 2 - Robins

The second pathway is for children whose needs are more in the areas of communication and language, sensory, personal social and emotional development and / or cognition and learning. This includes children with Autistic Spectrum Condition.

A range of multi-sensory, exploratory opportunities with a rich communication focussed environment is provided. The curriculum is immersive and provides a range of experiences to stimulate engagement, anticipation and participation in the world around them and to help them to make sense of this. A visual timetable along with now / next symbols are key to this.

Pathway 3 - Foxes

The third pathway is also for children whose needs are more in the areas of communication and language, sensory, personal social and emotional development and / or cognition and learning. This includes children with Autistic Spectrum Condition.

This group have largely developed some early learning and play skills. They are learning to further develop their concentration skills, co-operative play and communication. Expectations are high and a visual timetable provides structure.

In all pathways, we constantly provide enhancement opportunities to engage learning and believe that childhood should be a happy, investigative and enquiring time in our lives where there are no limits to curiosity and there is a thirst for new experiences and knowledge. We want our children to fly! (C.F. do you let me fly? – New Zealand Curriculum). We use Lennie and his friends to promote positive attitudes to learning which link to the characteristics of effective learning as identified in the EYFS.

Community involvement and learning about the world around them is an essential part of our curriculum. Children at Greenhall are happy and secure with a sense of belonging to our close knit community. They have the confidence and skills to leave Greenhall ready for the next phase of education.

Curriculum Implementation

All children, regardless of the pathway that they are in, follow the **EYFS**, focussing on the prime areas of learning that are often affected in our children's development because of their needs and disabilities (see discreet policies for each area of learning for more information on what and how we teach). We use topics to ensure that we expose our children to a wide range of learning opportunities and experiences, alongside responding to children's interests (do you know me? – strand of new Zealand curriculum).

As the needs of our cohort changes, our curriculum offer is adapted in response to this to ensure each child receives a highly personalised curriculum that meets their needs as

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identified in their EHCP or by staff and other professionals if they are on an early intervention placement. We provide a happy, safe, secure, caring, supportive and nurturing environment where all are accepted, valued, celebrated and encouraged to be the best that they can be.

We provide a **total communication approach**. We are committed to providing our children with a range of tools to support their communication and support the development of an inclusive society e.g. Makaton signing, symbol use, PODD, objects of reference etc. We promote choice-making and recognise all our children have voices that need to be heard. This addresses the 'do you hear me?' Strand of the New Zealand 'Te Whariki' Curriculum.

We support families and believe in **working in partnership** with them. We welcome them into our nursery community. We share our knowledge & skills to equip them to better-support their child. We provide a listening ear and sign-post where needed. Some of the ways we encourage this partnership with parents are;

- Adopting an 'open door policy' so that parents and teachers have the opportunity to chat informally at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Welcoming parents to participate in swimming sessions once a week.
- Involving parents and carers as helpers for regular classroom activities and for special events such as educational visits within the local area.
- Welcoming parents to informative 'coffee mornings' where parents and carers are invited to come, meet and chat with each other.
- Communication via the home-school diary
- Formal consultation meetings held six-monthly (for under 5 year olds) or annually (once the child is 5 years of age) to discuss pupil progress
- Parents evenings
- Whole school newsletter
- School website

The whole day is viewed as a learning opportunity therefore the moment the children arrive until the time they leave, they are exposed to our curriculum offer.

Early Reading

We believe in teaching early reading skills to all, whether it be through developing a child's tracking ability through the use of lights in the sensory room or by using Little Wandle Letters and Sounds to deliver systematic, synthetic phonics to our children who are developmentally ready for this.

Learning Research

Greenhall has recognised the use of clear, focused learning intentions and success criteria as an effective tool in gaining intended learning outcomes. Teachers have had training on the Rosenshine Principles - the small steps principle and providing opportunities to practice skills and firmly embedded within our setting.

ICT

ICT is recognised as being an integral part of the curriculum. It is embedded into all areas of learning and adapted for children's individual needs. The role that this plays in our school in terms of communication is key and therefore children are encouraged to develop their access skills right from the start.

Sensory integration

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We recognise that if a child's sensory needs are not met, they are not in a position to learn. Thus, we have purchased the support of an Occupational Therapist to assess and develop programmes to address children's needs.

Equipment in Paddy's playground together with a hammock in the sensory room along with other resources provide opportunities to meet the sensory needs of some of our learners and help them to self-regulate. The children in Robins class in particular are exposed to this.

Life skills & application of skills

All of the children have the opportunity to apply skills that they have been explicitly taught throughout the daily routine, for example, how to actively transfer from sitting to standing.

The children in Foxes & Robins classes take part in life skills sessions where they work on transferring across a range of gradients or learn how to brush their own hair or teeth.

Sensory room

We have a purpose-built sensory room that we use to develop children's understanding of cause and effect, tracking, hand-eye coordination, choice-making skills. This is very much used as a learning environment.

Soft play

We have a soft-play area where children can learn to fall safely, negotiate obstacles and use play equipment whilst developing their confidence, coordination and social skills.

Library

We love books and believe in the importance of reading with all children! Our library has a range of books for the children to explore themselves, together with a selection of multi-sensory bag books and story sacks. We cater for all abilities and also have a selection of books to develop home-nursery links.

Outdoor Learning

We have a wealth of outdoor facilities and passionately embrace the outdoor learning environment through carefully planned learning opportunities that include using the **mud kitchen, vegetable garden** and **Forest School** activities. We encourage children to explore and look after the environment.

We also have a fully accessible playground – **Paddy's Playground** – and a **sensory garden** and **sensory walk-way**. These were purposefully designed to be accessible areas and provide opportunities for sensory input, develop social skills and communication skills and explore the world around them. All children can encounter different textures and surfaces, whether they are on foot and learning to negotiate uneven surfaces or a wheelchair user and have the opportunity to experience the vibrations as they go over bumps.

Visits and Visitors

In the curriculum we recognise that children's learning is enhanced by different experiences. We offer children a wide range of educational visits which are used to motivate and engage learning and provide real-life experiences. For example, we visit Amerton Farm during a topic on animals.

We also have external visitors such as **Pets As Therapy**, people who help us (Police, Firemen, Ambulance).



Lunchtimes

Children are supported to feed themselves and take an active role. Choice-making is a key skill that is practised at this time as well as developing independence.

RE

Using the Staffordshire RE Agreed Syllabus children are taught knowledge and understanding around a range of religious and worldwide views so that they can: describe, explain, analyse and investigate allowing them to appreciate beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity, meanings and values within and between communities (including their own) and amongst individuals.

Opportunities for social inclusion

Having a Governor-run nursery onsite – **Little Learners** – provides opportunities for the children of Greenhall to mix with a range of children with a range of abilities. It also provides verbal role-models.

Pathway one: for our children with physical needs

Conductive Education is the teaching approach used to enable children to access a highly differentiated curriculum. Physical management is incorporated into the structured daily routine. The furniture is functional and the classroom is organised to enable pupils to be as independent as possible when transferring around the room. Children are shown and taught different ways of moving around using the apparatus set up in the classroom. Children take part in a daily task series where they are taught how to change place and position through motor memory and the use of rhythmical intention. They have opportunities to apply this learning throughout the day.

Pathway two: for our children whose needs are more in the areas of communication and language, sensory, personal social and emotional development and / or cognition and learning. This includes children with Autistic Spectrum Condition.

High expectations, clear boundaries and a structured daily routine are key features of our curriculum as these provide our children with a sense of security and thus supports their development. Children's sensory needs are identified with the support of an OT and programmes put in place to address these needs. Sensory exploration is a key focus of this group.

Pathway 3: for our children whose needs are more in the areas of communication and language, sensory, personal social and emotional development and / or cognition and learning. This includes children with Autistic Spectrum Condition. This group have developed some early play and learning skills.

High expectations, clear boundaries and a structured daily routine are key features of our curriculum as these provide our children with a sense of security and thus supports their development. Children's sensory needs are identified with the support of an OT and programmes put in place to address these needs.

Impact of our curriculum

The impact of the curriculum is evident in the outcomes for all pupils. Our children develop as a whole-child; they develop in confidence, they develop a 'can do' approach

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and they enjoy nursery. They learn to be proud of their achievements, they have a greater level of engagement with others and in the world around them.

In developing their skills, particularly in the prime areas of learning, our children are prepared for the next phase of their learning journey, be that in a Special or Mainstream setting.

This is evidenced as follows;

- Each child has a 'Learning Journey' – an electronic system that is used to share photos and observations with parents
- Each child has termly targets in their Personalised Learning Plan which are tracked and monitored across the term. These link to their EHCP.
- Through levels of engagement using the Engagement Profile
- We use 'Development Matters' and 'Early Learning Goals' (from the EYFS) and Connecting Steps V5 (B Squared EYFS) to track pupil progress throughout the academic year.
- We value input from parents through conversations, photos, Learning Book and Family on their child's experiences and learning.
- A report is written detailing progress every 6 months (when the child is under 5) or annually (once the child is 5 years of age).
- In line with the EYFS Statutory Framework, we complete a two year old progress check on children (between their 2nd and 3rd birthday) and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (at the end of the child's Reception year) (see assessment Policy).