



Whitehouse Foundation



Whitehouse Primary School
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Early Years Education is at the very heart of our growing school. We are passionate and dedicated to providing your children with the very best start to their education journey.

Our Early Years is made up of three Foundation classes and a Nursery class offering places to 3 and 4 year olds. We are committed to providing an exceptional quality early years' education delivered by experienced and highly qualified staff. Working closely with parents and carers, our aim is to provide the very best platform to enable children to fulfil their potential in a secure and caring environment, immersed in the core values, ethos and aims of Whitehouse Primary School.

Aims and Ethos

At Whitehouse school our vision is central to planning for the achievements of our children.

Aspire, Believe, Achieve.....together

At Whitehouse Primary School, high expectations of learning, behaviour and respect for each other underpin everything we do. Our teachers strive to create independent, articulate thinkers and learners who have the confidence to achieve their ambitions. This drives us in our pursuit for excellence every day.

Our Vision

"Our vision is to create a school where everyone is welcomed, efforts are valued, ambition is nurtured and where the potential of every child is realised. We aim to create a school that offers an irresistible invitation to learning."

"We wish for every child to become a successful, resilient life-long learner; a responsible, active member of our community, who can achieve and grow in a nurturing and creative environment. We want them to aspire to high standards of achievement in all areas of their life and be equipped with the skills to make a positive impact in our ever changing world."

At Whitehouse Primary:

- We aspire to ignite a passion for life-long learning.
- We are committed in our pursuit for excellence.
- We are committed to give our children the best possible future life chances, without limits on learning, attainment and achievement. We have a genuine belief



that, given the opportunities, every child can succeed.

- We aspire to develop great thinkers, who are independent, resilient and embrace challenges and new experiences.
- We encourage co-operation and collaboration, everyone taking responsibility for all that they say and do.
- We provide exciting but safe and secure spaces, indoors and outdoors, where children can explore, discover and experiment.
- We value everyone as an individual and encourage respect for others and their opinions.
- We aim to develop a strong community spirit in our children that helps them to become positive, active, responsible citizens in the future.
- We celebrate and respect the diverse community in which we live and appreciate our responsibilities as global citizens.



We aim to create an ethos where:

- A welcoming atmosphere is created in school, where children, staff, parents and visitors feel valued.
- Our children are happy, feel safe and supported and enjoy coming to school.
- Our children demonstrate good manners and show consideration to and for others.
- Our children are keen, enthusiastic and totally engaged in their learning.
- There is a growth mind-set. We stay positive, we value learning from mistakes and we keep going when things become tough.
- Our children are reflective and thoughtful about their experiences.
- Our children are motivated and have the confidence to challenge themselves as learners.
- Our school environment supports children's learning and values their achievements.
- Teaching is creative, exciting and stimulates and extends children's thinking.
- Our children have a genuine pride in themselves, their efforts and achievements. Talents and creativity are nurtured and encouraged.
- Our staff are committed professionals who demonstrate a love of teaching, a passion for their own, as well as children's learning and development, and genuine care for the children they teach.
- We have high expectations for all within our community to ensure that we demonstrate the very best standards of conduct, moral purpose and integrity.

Learning and Assessment

Purpose and Aims of the EYFS

The Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage states:

‘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) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It 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.’

At Whitehouse School we follow the EYFS Framework. We use the document for essential advice and guidance to evaluate the practice and quality in our setting to ensure every child makes age appropriate progress. We will work with you to carefully document the progress of your child through their home and school experiences.

Overarching Principles

The EYFS principles guide the work of all practitioners and are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes;

These are:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**;
- children **develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**.

In planning and guiding children’s activities, we reflect on the different ways the children learn and we ensure that our practice reflects the three **characteristics of effective learning**:

- **playing and exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’
- **active learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.



The Early Learning Goals and Educational Programme

The EYFS promotes effective practice through each of the seven areas of learning to support children through various stages of maturity and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three prime areas are:

Communication and Language Development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical Development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

The four specific areas are:

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

Understanding the World involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive Arts and Design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.



Each of the seven areas of learning are seen by our practitioners as being equally important with each area being connected to each other and underpinned by all of the principles in the EYFS.

Planning

Staff plan activities which enable your child to progress and experience all aspects of the EYFS curriculum. Children learn best when they are actively involved in something they enjoy. We plan using a child led approach. This means that although themes are loosely planned, the learning is driven by your child's interests and needs. If you spend any time in our setting it will become obvious that the children spend a great deal of time "playing". Play has a serious purpose for each child: it is his or her main learning tool. Play offers a child a means of exploring and understanding the world and his or her place in it. Our play activities are carefully structured and tailored to meet each child's individual needs.

Assessment and Observations

During their time with us, observations are made on your child and recorded in a variety of ways including personalised learning journeys and photographs. Our observations help us to understand your child's level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to shape learning experiences that reflect our observations. These are collated by your child's teacher and your child's progress will be discussed regularly with you.

At the end of the year, your child will be assessed using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. For each area of learning your child will be assessed as 'emerging' or 'expected'. Throughout the year we will update you on your child's progress, whether this be formally, such as at a parents evening, or more informally, during stay and play sessions or catch ups at the end of the day.



Foundation Class

Placing your child in a school environment for the first time will of course raise lots of questions for you. We hope some of these may be answered on the following page. For any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact us!



Frequently Asked Questions

How will my child transition into full time school in September?

Your child will begin their first week attending only part time sessions. This will include staying for a couple of hours on their first day to staying for lunch the next and finally staying all day as the week progresses.

How can I be sure my child will settle and get used to the routines?

Before your child starts school we will arrange a 'time to talk' home visit with you. These visits give you an opportunity to share with us any useful information which will help us support your child as they start their educational journey with us. During the first few days of your child's time in their new Foundation class we spend a lot of time supporting them with learning the routines, helping them to know where to find things (such as the toilets or their coat peg) and just simply by getting to know them.



Do you have a curriculum? What kind of activities do you provide?

We use the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and Development Matters statements as the foundation for our play and learning. We incorporate this with our children's interests to form the basis of our activities. We provide a range of activities to support every area of development and the children have access to the outdoor area daily. We have open ended and exploratory play invitations set up every day and opportunities for large and small group work to enhance social skills.

What does the timetable look like for my child each day?

Below is an example of how your child's timetable will mostly look each day.

8.30-9am - registration and morning tasks (we will practice anything at this time varying from name writing to conversation skills and checking our well being levels). Children will also participate in the whole school 'Daily Mile' initiative.



9am-9.15am – Literacy whole class session. We use 'The Write Stuff' as a literacy scheme across the whole school. It centers around early writing skills and the children using different 'lenses' and senses to enhance their writing.

9.15am-11am – 'Own Learning'. This is the time when your child will be learning through play. During this time, your child will also have access to a snack and drink. Within this slot, your child will take part in 'Busy Book' activities. These are small group sessions led by your child's class teacher. During this time, your child will learn and practice key skills from the Early Years Maths and Literacy curriculum. Your child will take part in one or two of these activities each week.

11.10am – 11.30am – Whole class Phonics session – We currently use the Read, write Inc scheme. This supports the children to embed their initial sounds, before moving on to their diagraphs, diagraphs and alternative spellings of sounds. This enables your child to have a secure knowledge of sounds in order to begin writing and reading.

11.45-12.45pm – Lunchtime

12.45pm-1.00pm – Well-being session

1.00pm-1.20pm – Whole class Maths session. We use the Whiterose scheme of learning, which encompasses the Maths Mastery approach. This focuses on ensuring children have a clear and strong number sense to begin their school life.

1.20-2.30pm – 'Own Learning'. Again, this is the time where your child will be driving their learning forward through play. Also during this time, the adults in the room will be visiting your children and supporting them to move their learning forward. We regularly monitor your child's progress and know each one of their next steps. We believe that addressing these next steps through your child's interests and play is the best way to achieve the best possible outcomes and achievements. As practitioners we know how Literacy, Maths, Reading and all other areas of the curriculum can be taught anywhere and everywhere without the need to pull children away from their play to an adult led activity every time.



2.30pm-3.00pm – Skills based topic session (science, music, PSHE, IT etc)
PE will be taught on set days by a PE coach.

3.00pm – Home time

Will my child integrate with the older children at Whitehouse Primary School?

Yes, Whitehouse Primary school is a family and many activities include all children.

What if my child has an accident?

We have an accident policy in place and all staff are aware of the procedures to follow. The majority of our staff have paediatric first aid qualifications, which are updated every three years. We inform you of any accident involving your child and, if necessary, text messages are sent during the day to inform you of any head injuries. In the unlikely event of a serious injury you would be advised immediately if medical attention is/was required, and if necessary an ambulance will be called.

What if I can't get to school in time for the end of the school day? Can I send someone else?

If you can't get to school in time to collect your child at the end of the day you may send someone else but they must be over 16 years old. This person must have consent to collect your child and must know your four digit pin number for collection (you will have submitted this to the office during the registration process). You must inform the school office who will be coming and give us a full description of the person and what time they will be arriving. Unauthorised persons will not be allowed to collect your child without confirmation from yourself.

What is the uniform for the Foundation Class?

Please visit our school website or see main school handbook for information about your child's school uniform. We promote the 'Active Wear' uniform each day if preferred or 'Formal wear' can be worn with the 'Active Wear' just being worn on PE days.

We provide aprons for use during 'messy' play; however, we cannot accept liability for damaged or stained clothing. We will also provide waterproof trousers for the children to wear if conditions / activities require this. When choosing clothing please consider articles which the child can manage. This develops their self-esteem and helps them to become independent. Belts, braces, dungarees, trainers and high laced boots are difficult to master. Open-toed sandals are not permitted for Health & Safety reasons. We appreciate any clothes loaned by the school being returned as soon as possible, freshly laundered and ironed.

Children also have the opportunity to play and learn outside throughout the whole year. Please ensure they have a water-proof coat, hat and gloves as appropriate. During the summer it is essential that suitable footwear is worn; no flip flops, open-toed sandals or bare feet. Please supply a named sun hat and apply sun cream prior to arriving in school.

School Readiness

As your child begins their first year at school there are some things that you can do to support your child at home. If your child has previously attended a childcare setting then these are many of the things they will have already been learning.



- Do I recognise and respond to my own name?
- Can I speak to an adult politely?
- Can I talk in full sentences?
- Am I developing a rich and detailed vocabulary?
- Do I know when to ask for help?
- Am I aware and respectful of my friends around me?
- Can I sit still and listen when asked?
- Can I take turns and share nicely with my friends?
- Can I visit the toilet without the help of a grown-up?
- Can I take my coat off and get dressed and undressed on my own?
- Can I open and enjoy a book independently and with a grown-up?
- Have I begun learning how to write my name or mark making any other letter shapes?
- Can I count to 10 and recognise some of the numerals? Can I match amounts of objects to numerals to 5?

For advice and support on any of the considerations above, please do not hesitate to speak to any member of staff at Whitehouse School.

We are so excited to meet your child and to support them through their first year of school education. We pride ourselves on our close relationships with our parents and would like to remind you that our school operates an open door policy and your feedback is greatly valued. We understand that starting school can be a huge milestone for both children and parents and we will strive to provide the best possible educational experience for all.

