

High Grange

Adaptive thinking, Communication, Emotional wellbeing, Independence

Supporting learning & growth

Primary Department Policy

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Responsible: **Principal**

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This policy promotes ACE because;



This policy promotes ACE because High Grange School provides a specialised, individualised environment for pupils with ASD, promoting adaptable thinking, communication, and emotional wellbeing. Through high expectations and personalised support, pupils develop independence, life skills, and social understanding. Lower school offers a structured, play-based curriculum enabling enriched learning and preparation for adult life.

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1. Aims

Our Lower School Division aims to provide our youngest students with access to a play based; objective led curriculum in a safe and nurturing environment. Students are encouraged to challenge themselves using their own interests whilst achieving National Curriculum outcomes.

At High Grange we recognise that students develop rapidly during their lower school years – physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. We ensure the students are ready to learn by placing their sense of wellbeing and interests high on the agenda. This is paramount when many of our students have experienced failed placements.

To support these aims we have created a small lower school community that is separate from the main school buildings and allows children from age of 5-12 to play, learn and interact away from our older students.

2. Approaches to Learning in Lower School.

Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who are skilled in delivering and enhancing the curriculum in a way that is interesting to the child. We have agreed to adopt the principles and objectives from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework and The National Curriculum (NC) for KS1 and 2. Both these curriculums are broken down further in 'Progression Steps' by B-Squared, to account for the needs of a child with SEND. PSHE is provided by our PSHE specialist.

See Appendix 1 for the steps covered if following the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.

See Appendix 2 for the areas covered if following The National Curriculum.

To ensure good coverage of these curriculums we have developed mapping in three, two-year cycles, thereby covering the six years of primary. We combined the mapping into six, not the seven years of primary due to our children often having missed significant years out of education. This system ensures they leave lower school with best possible core knowledge of the primary curriculum linked the number of years they are with us.

For each half termly cycle we create a scheme of learning that maps out the sequence for the teaching and learning that will be covered. We ensure the objectives from the scheme of learning are linked to the child's interests, for example, if the objective was to understand the structure of a letter, the weekly plan might have a letter arrive from their favourite wrestler if that was an interest of theirs.' The practitioner would build and extend their learning from there. A record of learning is completed on the scheme of learning for the class. Practitioners make notes on achievements and next steps on the scheme of learning document to inform them for future lessons/learning.

Pupil timetables plan times for subject based learning, stories, swimming, personal therapies, group therapy sessions, keyworker, forest school, physical development, offsite education, and assemblies. Specialist lessons such as food technology, music, design and technology and photography can be accessed from secondary specialist if students have particular interests.

Once a child has a place at High Grange School, we begin the highly personalised transitioning process. This could be through home visits, home packs, multi-disciplinary inputs, specialist teaching, staged transitions, or personalised timetables. Our parent liaison officers, assistant heads, class teacher, teaching assistants, keyworker and therapists work together with families to ensure first experiences of High Grange are successful. Transitions are an important part of the learning approach used throughout High Grange as we recognise, we need to be sensitive to previous experiences of education and often high levels of anxiety.

Parents and practitioners should work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect. At High Grange we recognise the value of parent partnerships and encourage parents to be fully involved in their child's learning. We do this through regular contact with parents through informal chats, our parent liaison officer, emails, and electronic learning updates.

The impact of this is an environment in which children feel safe to explore, experiment, extend and evaluate their learning. In turn, this creates a learning cycle that is high on respect and challenge for the child as a learner, where their needs are met both personally and academically. Lower School takes pride in providing sustained opportunities to develop resilience, perseverance,

independence, creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking. These vital skills will ensure they have great attitude to become life-long learners both in school and the wider world.

3. Cultural Capital

At High Grange School we believe that Cultural Capital promotes social mobility and success, helping pupils achieve goals, become successful, and rise the social ladder without necessarily having wealth nor financial capital. High Grange School strives to afford pupils the desire to aspire and achieve social mobility whatever their starting point.

At High Grange School we believe that Cultural Capital is the accumulation of knowledge, behaviours, and skills that a child can draw upon and which demonstrates their cultural awareness, knowledge, and competence; it is one of the key ingredients a child will draw upon to be successful in society, their career and the world of work.

(Refer to HGS Cultural Capital Policy)

4. Cross Curricular Links

Lower 1 and 2 generally operate as a play based cross curricular environment where the children naturally cover a multitude of subjects within their play. Within these houses you will find a;

- Classroom, each with free access to a Maths station, book area, mark making station, enhancement areas, workstations and a SMART interactive whiteboard.
- Kitchen and Dining Room where they can eat, bake, cook, and prepare food.
- Messy Room with sink areas for water play, dough table, science table, creative area, and free choice malleable experiences.
- Playroom with block play, games, small world, and craft.
- Soft-play room or sensory room.
- Outside area with swings, climbing frame, slide and balance equipment. There is a shed with outdoor equipment for the children to freely access. This area is secured with a fence and gate to provide a safe area to extend their cross curricular learning.

Lower 3, 4 and 5 embeds learning through lessons that are taught as stand-alone subjects. Pupils are ready at this stage for short lessons of 30-40 minutes. In Lower 3, 4 and 5 you will find;

- Classroom with access to a Maths station, Literacy station, work areas for each pupil and a SMART interactive whiteboard.
- Kitchen and Dining Room where they can eat snack. Children have a food technology lesson in school so tend to use the main school facilities for baking and cooking.
- Messy Room with sink areas for water play, dough table, science table, creative area, and free choice malleable experiences.
- Separate area for reading and quieter individual activities.
- Outside area with swings, climbing frame, slide and balance equipment. There is a shed with outdoor equipment for the children to freely access. This area is secured with a fence and gate to provide a safe area to extend their cross curricular learning.

In Lower School pupils can also access a sensory room, small world rooms, soft play, and small age-appropriate libraries. Each lower school class has high staffing ratios to provide a highly individualised and flexible approach in order to meet pupils individual EHCP outcomes and SEND.

5. Community Links

High Grange optimises its links with the local community through regular trips offsite. We visit local parks, shops, farms, stables, and other attractions such as museums, galleries, and places of worship.

People within the community are invited into school to talk to the children these include, the police, fire officers, ambulance technicians, nurses, dentists, and the clergy. Artists, actors, and musicians are also invited to work with the children to enrich the curriculum.

6. Assessment, Monitoring and Recording

Practitioners use extensive recording systems to make daily, weekly, and half termly assessments. Each day observations of engagement and behaviour are recorded on our schemes of learning and in workbooks. This allows us to see patterns of behaviour and support our students promptly and specifically. We create records of work through workbooks, Wow folders, photos, and comments on our scheme of learning documents. At the end of each term we record attainment and progress on our lower school tracking system.

All Lower school pupils have planners that are age appropriate to help and support achieving and recording their ACE targets – clearly setting out termly ACE targets whilst monitoring progress through children's keyworkers on a weekly basis. Termly targets are broken down into weekly outcomes and keyworkers and form tutors assess progress made. During the formulation and ACE weeks each term the schools MDT team, keyworker and, where possible the child meets to review the termly ACE targets and set new termly targets for the following term. High Grange Schools ACE targets incorporate each individual child's EHCP outcomes, and it is the school's intention to focus upon EHCP outcomes through the whole school ethos 'ACE.' Formulation week is also a time where therapy support is reviewed for each child.

7. Resources

Primary is well equipped with high quality, fit for purpose, modern resources. All resources are stored in suitable containers and are kept clean. Outdoor apparatus and larger indoor apparatus are inspected regularly for signs of wear and tear. Damaged or broken items are repaired or disposed of safely.

8. Health and Safety

All reasonable measures are taken to ensure the safety of all children in Lower School. These have been completed with and signed by our Health and Safety Officer. Key card, key and coded entry ensure maximum security throughout all of School.

The Lower School community is separate from the main school. This ensures that older pupils in key stage 3,4 and 5 do not have direct access to our primary units without the permission or direction of school staff.

9. Equality & Diversity/ Equal Opportunities

Lower School is an inclusive department which incorporates movement, imaginative play, sensory experiences, and problem-solving skills within all curriculum subjects, either The Early Years Foundation Stage or The National Curriculum.

All areas of provision will be made accessible to all children regardless of age, sex, gender, creed, race, ethnicity, or ability. Please refer to the separate Equal Opportunities Policy.

10. Appendix

Appendix 1

If working on the Early Years Curriculum children will complete through Progression steps 1-3 in the subject areas in Appendix 2.

Appendix 2

If working on National Curriculum objectives through Progression Steps the subjects covered are;

- English: Split into reading, writing, spoken language.
- Maths: Split into number, measurement, statistics, and geometry.
- Science: Biology, Physics and Chemistry
- Art and Design
- Design and Technology
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Computing
- World Studies
- Physical Education
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSHE)