

GRIMSDELL

MILL HILL PRE-PREPARATORY SCHOOL



CURRICULUM POLICY

Revised and amended Autumn Term 2011
To be reviewed Autumn Term 2013

GRIMSDELL MILL HILL PRE-PREP

Curriculum Policy

THROUGH CURRICULUM

The Mill Hill School Foundation provides its pupils with a through curriculum throughout its three schools, ages 3 to 18. This continuity of education is made possible by annual meetings of heads of each curriculum subject that ensure a broad and balanced curriculum that provides challenge and support.

The academic curriculum at Grimsdell is divided into two stages: Foundation Stage (comprising Nursery and Reception) and Key Stage One (comprising Years 1 and 2).

GENERAL AIMS

We aim to provide a full-time supervised education for pupils, which gives them experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. We also provide subject matter that is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils.

We ensure that all pupils are able to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy. All pupils will have a curriculum that enables them to have the opportunity to learn and make progress.

The Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage One years of formal education are of the greatest importance as a foundation for future learning. During these early years children acquire knowledge and understanding, develop attitudes and learn social and personal skills. We aim to make the years the children spend at Grimsdell challenging, fulfilling and happy so that, by the time they move onto the next stage, they will be competent, confident learners who take pleasure and pride in their achievements.

We offer the children a broad and balanced education in all the major areas of the Early Learning Goals and the National Curriculum. These include the traditional skills of reading, writing and mathematics as well as science, geography, history, design technology, information technology, art, drama, music, religious education, physical education, and personal, social and health education. In addition to these areas French is taught in Year 2.

The curriculum offered at Grimsdell will begin the process of adequately preparing children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of adult life.

A broad outline of the curriculum is shown below. Detailed information for each subject is contained within the subject policy documents with further information in the Termly Plans produced by each year group.

FULL-TIME SUPERVISED EDUCATION

For Nursery and further information on Reception supervision, please refer to the Early Years Foundation Stage policy

Our full time pupils, Reception to Year 2, begin their day at 8.30 a.m. and end at 3.05 p.m. (Reception) and 3.15 p.m. (Years 1 and 2). The school week, excluding break and lunch, consists of 26.25 hours for Years 1 and 2; 23.30 hours for Reception. During this time the pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum and are supervised in line with current regulations, as detailed below under each subject area.

SUBJECT MATTER

ENGLISH

EYFS – Communication, Language and Literacy

Speaking and Listening

We aim for our children to become confident speakers, attentive listeners and effective communicators. This is done through a range of activities – telling stories, imaginative play, reading aloud, describing events, exploring ideas, listening to each other and to adults, listening to recordings. Developing oracy is essential as from oracy comes literacy.

Reading

We aim to develop fluent, confident readers who can understand what they have read and discuss their reading. The reading programme comprises mainly of the Oxford Reading Tree scheme supplemented with other reading schemes such as Spirals, Sound Start and New Way and a wide range of real books colour coded to fit in with the main reading scheme. During the initial stages Reception children are taught their sounds using the Jolly Phonics scheme. They begin reading using story books relating to this scheme before moving onto Oxford Reading Tree. Each child advances at his or her own pace. Teachers hear the children read aloud in individual sessions in order to help them develop effective strategies and to monitor their progress.

Throughout the day children engage in different activities designed to help them learn to read with pleasure, understand what they have read and so attain fluency and expression. They learn to use information books and dictionaries. The school possesses a non-fiction library which is used by all classes.

Writing

We aim to develop children who write confidently for a range of purposes and a variety of audiences. From the start, children are encouraged to express themselves in written language. Both creative and factual writing is encouraged and developed.

Great attention is paid to the development of handwriting skills; each class has regular handwriting lessons. We teach cursive handwriting from the start. Each letter has a lead in and lead out stroke. This system ensures handwriting flows much better leaving children free to focus on content and sentence structure.

Understanding the phonetic structure of words is an important strategy for reading and writing. Spelling is taught systematically, using Jolly Phonics in Reception and Jolly grammar in Year 1 and 2. Children use a range of resources, including computer

programmes, to help them master vocabulary. Each week children in Years 1 and 2 take home lists of related words to learn; they are tested on these in school the following week.

MATHEMATICS

EYFS – Problem Solving, Reasoning & Numeracy

The children are introduced to basic mathematical concepts through a practical approach that involves individual and group activities. We aim for the children to have confidence and skill in the use of numbers, shapes, patterns, measurement and data handling. In doing this we encourage them to develop and use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and interpret data in a variety of forms, both numerical and graphical. We use many different resources to achieve our goals: these include a published scheme (Abacus Evolve), maths games, mental arithmetic sessions and computer programmes to practise and reinforce what has been taught. Abacus Evolve often uses an Interactive ICT starter to introduce and practise concepts. The children are taught to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in real life situations.

SCIENCE

EYFS – Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Science is a fostering of the children’s enjoyment of exploration, manipulation, comparison, observation and testing. These “finding out” activities are the roots of science and such good primary practice serves as our approach towards science.

The children investigate the world around them and full use is made of the resources both within and around the school. By undertaking simple experiments, they develop skills and understanding in the basic principles of science. We generally follow the LCP Primary Science Scheme, with ideas also taken from other teacher resources available in school. The study of science in the Foundation Stage is presented, wherever possible, in the context of topics which are carefully selected to cover the Early Learning Goals in early years, leading into National Curriculum Levels.

Reception	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
	Journeys Ourselves	Dinosaurs Animals	Space Beaches and Seas

HISTORY and GEOGRAPHY

EYFS – Knowledge and Understanding of the World

In the Foundation Stage the Nursery follow a two year topic cycle and Reception follow a one year topic cycle (with two topics each term). The topics are carefully selected to cover the Early Learning Goals leading into the National Curriculum levels, which allows for the study of History and Geography. In Years 1 and 2 the children follow QCA guidelines thus ensuring that all areas of the Programme of Study in History and Geography are covered throughout the year.

Nursery	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
	Shapes	Nursery Rhymes	Pets
	Colour	Weather	Exploring Stories

Reception	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
	Journeys Ourselves	Dinosaurs Animals	Space Beaches and Seas

History	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Year 1	What were homes like a long time ago?	Children in the past	How are our toys different from those in the past?
Year 2	Famous people and events	How do we know about the Great Fire of London ?	What were seaside holidays like in the past?

Geography	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Year 1	Around Our School	Where in the world is Barnaby Bear?	How we make our local area safer
Year 2	An island home	A contrasting locality overseas: Tocuaro	Going to the seaside

PSHE and Citizenship

EYFS – Personal, Social and Emotional Development

PSHE and Citizenship is taught throughout the school. We feel that it permeates the whole curriculum. It is taught as a subject in its own right, Circle Time and across the entire curriculum. Many aspects of our Science curriculum also lead into PSHE. On Thursday mornings, between 8.35 and 9.00 a.m. each class takes part in 'Circle Time', also part of the PSHE and Citizenship Curriculum. The Grimsdell Way and The School Council, detailed in the PSHE and Citizenship Policy, are also considered part of the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum.

PSHE and Citizenship permeates the Nursery curriculum on a daily basis. It is a subject that the Nursery staff work hard to promote through continual support and guidance. PSHE contains vital lessons that young children need to learn early on in their education so as to provide good foundations for their continued development and learning.

In Reception and Key Stage One, PSHE and Citizenship continues to permeate the curriculum but is also taught formally through the LCP PSHE and Citizenship scheme of work. The topics have been divided into nine different areas for each year group to explore throughout the year. The nine areas are as follow:

- Fairness
- Feelings
- Responsibilities
- Choices
- Communities
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Feelings and Relationships
- Right and Wrong
- Rules

Through these topics the pupils will learn

- To develop self esteem, confidence, independence and responsibility and to make the most of their abilities
- About themselves as developing individuals and as members of their communities
- The basic rules for keeping themselves healthy and safe and for behaving well;
- To take some responsibility for themselves and their environment;
- About their own and other people's feelings
- To become aware of the views, needs and right of other children and older people
- social skills such as: taking turns, playing, helping others, resolving simple arguments

The PSHE and Citizenship Policy and Scheme of work is attached to this Policy.

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

EYFS – Knowledge and Understanding of the World

The school has a wide range of materials which can be used for various projects within each individual classroom. The children are given opportunities to explore and investigate the various properties of materials such as clay, wood, paper, card and fabrics. We encourage the children to use skills, knowledge and understanding from other curriculum areas especially art and mathematics.

Pupils are taught how to plan, design and make products, which they can then take home. They are also given focused, practical tasks which encourage use and development of particular skills and knowledge. These tasks include activities in which they investigate, disassemble and evaluate simple products. It is essential that children know how to use any equipment in the classroom properly and safely. A particular project may start off with a skill based lesson showing all the children the correct way to use newly introduced tools and materials.

ART

EYFS – Creative Development

At Grimsdell we wish to promote an enjoyment of art in all its forms. We aim to develop every child's ability to work with competence throughout a range of skills and methods from drawing and painting to sewing, from collage to pottery and from 3D models to printing. We have a progressive structure of desired outcomes to enable each child to experience the enjoyment of using different media, to gain knowledge and ability and to enjoy the satisfaction of achieving a high standard of work. We recognise that art can play a major part in conveying information and expressing ideas in a truly personal and original way.

Naturally, the greatest compliment we can pay to a child's work is to praise and discuss it. Prominent displays allow us to promote the pride and enjoyment we experience from our art activities. Our display boards' themes are rotated regularly to allow contributions from all classes and age groups to be seen by as many people as possible; children, staff and visitors alike.

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

EYFS – Knowledge and Understanding of the World

The school has a computer suite equipped with ten networked computers each with a CD/DVD ROM drive and a networked printer. This facility allows children to work individually and at their own pace, developing skills in keyboard awareness, mouse control, word processing, computer graphics and data handling. The children also have the opportunity to use a variety of software to support learning in many other curriculum areas. There is a computer in each classroom and all have interactive white boards so that the internet can be used as a whole class.

Children in Years 1 and 2 use the Internet to support their learning across the curriculum. Our access to the World Wide Web uses a filtering mechanism provided by Dell. This ensures that any unsuitable materials are blocked.

MUSIC

EYFS – Creative Development

Our aim is to develop a love and appreciation of music that enriches the children's daily lives and to provide the basic musicianship skills necessary for the children to develop further. The children enjoy a wide range of musical experiences from the Nursery through to Year 2. Each class is timetabled for music lessons with our specialist teacher.

Every class has a singing/musicianship lesson once a week (Reception has two) where emphasis is placed on acquiring the skills and knowledge of all the elements of music in a step by step process. In addition to this Year 1 receive a recorder lesson in half classes, while Year 2 receive keyboard lessons in half classes.

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 have Hall singing sessions once a week where the whole year group has a chance to sing together. This gives the children an opportunity to experience singing in a larger choral group and also a broader range of musical styles.

In Assemblies the children listen to recordings of music as they enter and leave. A wide variety of music is played from classical, world music, jazz and popular repertoire. This time is often used to focus on a particular composer, country, musical instrument or historical period.

There are major performances at Harvest, Christmas, at the end of the Spring Term (Reception), midway through the Summer Term (Nursery) and at the end of the Summer Term (Year 1, Year 2). One of these will be the School Play which, in addition to the musical presentation, provides an opportunity for dance and drama.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

EYFS – Physical Development

The PE curriculum at Grimsdell provides opportunities for children to experience a broad range of activities across the five areas: Dance, Gymnastic activities, Games, Athletic activities, Swimming. Each class is taught PE by our specialist teacher.

Through participation in a broad range of activities the children have the opportunity to

- develop stamina, strength and a wide range of physical skills
- develop physical and mental co-ordination, self control and confidence
- express ideas in dance form
- develop and appreciation of the aesthetic qualities of movement
- learn how to co-operate with each other and play in a fair and honest manner

We aim to motivate each child so that they retain a lifelong interest in all aspects of physical activity and recognise the importance of living and maintaining a healthy life.

PE is timetabled such that each child in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 have two sessions per week, while the Nursery children have one session per week. In addition to this, Year 2 have a swimming lesson each week over the three terms and Year 1 have a swimming lesson each week during the Summer Term.

FRENCH

French is taught in Year 2 by a specialist teacher; each class receives an hour of French teaching per week. The children are split into half classes, therefore each child receives half an hour per week.

French teaching at Grimsdell is deliberately not undertaken in an overtly academic manner. The emphasis is on speaking and listening. Pupils are introduced to France and an interest in France and its culture is fostered. By the time they leave, pupils have a solid empathy on which to base their academic study at Belmont. This has been done via flashcard, singing, listening, role play, quizzes, competition and games. They are also familiar with set situations such as greeting people, shopping, eating out, school life and family routine.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Grimsdell has a Christian foundation and the Christian ethos is the basis of its way of life. However there are no presumptions made as to the religious backgrounds, beliefs and values of the children and the staff. We value the religious background of all members of the school community and hope that this will encourage individuals to share their own experiences with others freely. Within Religious Education sessions children may discuss their ideas, hear stories from religious writings, learn about and possibly handle religious artefacts, hear religious music or taste food from a religious tradition. A basis of understanding of many religions is thus built up.

Our Assemblies tend to be very general in nature and generally not specific to the Christian teachings. The Head, the Chaplain for the Foundation and the teaching staff conduct Assemblies following an agreed list of topics, which reflect events and ideas in

the Christian and other major faith calendars as well as PSHE topics. Parents are invited in to share their knowledge as appropriate in order to complement the Assembly themes.

LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND/OR DISABILITIES (LDD)/SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS (SEN)

Where a pupil has a Statement careful attention is paid to ensure that the Statement is complied with. Our LDD/SEN Policy, held in the Curriculum Policy Folder in the School Office, gives detailed information.

Some children on our LDD/SEN Register have IEPs and termly meetings take place between the parents, the Head Teacher, the SENCO (LDD/SEN Co-ordinator) and any support staff to review the IEPs.

Our SENCO is in school three days a week, Mondays to Wednesdays. Our Learning Support Teacher is also in school three days a week, Tuesdays to Thursdays. This ensures comprehensive extra support for any Grimsdell children that need such support.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL PUPILS TO LEARN AND MAKE PROGRESS (EVERY CHILD MATTERS)

All Grimsdell pupils are given the opportunity to learn and make progress. Where special education needs or learning difficulties or EAL has been identified, the curriculum is adapted as appropriate and relevant. This ensures that each child learns and makes progress at his or her level and, importantly, feels that they are achieving goals and targets set for them.

We try to personalise the curriculum to suit every child's needs to ensure that each individual's needs are catered for.

Please also refer to our Equal Opportunity Policy.

ADEQUATE PREPARATION OF PUPILS FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPERIENCE OF ADULT LIFE

This is not directly applicable to Grimsdell, but pupils are of course given responsibilities appropriate to their age which lay the foundations that can be built on during the next stage of their school career.

CONCLUSION

As stated in the General Aims the broad outline of the curriculum detailed above shows that at Grimsdell a broad and balanced curriculum is offered to the children thus creating a happy, secure and rich learning environment which enhances the achievements of all our pupils.