



THE COTTAGE NURSERY
ST HUGH'S



SHS A05: EYFS Policy

Introduction

It is so important to give children the best possible start to their school career. They have many years ahead of them in formal education and we want to begin this exciting, but challenging process in a sensitive and caring manner. We want them to view school from the beginning with eagerness, to enjoy their time in and out of the classroom, and to begin to develop a true love for learning.

Aims and Objectives

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop emotionally, socially, physically, creatively, and intellectually to their full potential and at their own pace. Each child is unique and valued as an individual.

Our objectives are:

- to make the transition for each child from home to pre-school, and from pre-school to full time education, as smooth and as enjoyable as possible.
- to provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning, which meets the individual needs and interests of the children and enables each child to develop their full potential.
- to develop warm and secure relationships between children and adults.
- to develop a strong working partnership between home and school by fostering positive home/school links and sharing a common sense of purpose with parents.
- to provide a high-quality curriculum in line with the policies of the school and the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework - [EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers 2026](#)
- to encourage active learning through first-hand experiences both in indoor and outdoor play, and through both verbal and non-verbal communication.
- to encourage the children in an awareness of moral and social values.
- to identify and support as early as possible, any child with special educational needs (SEND/EAL & MAP).

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- to encourage children to become self-motivated and independent learners with a positive attitude to learning and self-discipline.
- to encourage the children to value and respect the cultural diversity within school, the local community and in the wider world.

Planning and Organisation

Planning is carried out carefully and thoroughly to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum that fosters the intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children in EYFS. It also ensures that all children have access to the curriculum, make progress commensurate with their developing abilities and are given the skills, attitudes and understanding that will prepare them for their continuing education.

Early Years Curriculum

The curriculum for the Early Years is integrated into the schemes of work followed throughout the school.

The content of the curriculum includes:

Prime Areas

- *Personal, Social and Emotional Development*
- *Communication and Language*
- *Physical Development*

Specific Areas

- *Literacy*
- *Mathematics*
- *Understanding the World (which includes Science, History, Geography, Religious Studies, ICT and French).*
- *Expressive Arts and Design (which includes Art, Craft, Music, DT and Drama).*

Characteristics of Learning

- *Playing and Exploring*
- *Active Learning*
- *Creating and Thinking Critically*

In the Nursery each term, a broad theme is adopted to include the seven Areas of Learning. Planning is carried out on a half-termly basis to take into account the children's interests and

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experiences, and weekly 'continuous provision' ensures a stimulating nursery environment is provided.

In Reception, a whole-term thematic approach is also used, alongside the planning of key literacy and numeracy skills to be taught.

In both Early Years departments, however, response to the immediate interests of the children (child-initiated) is considered crucial for an appropriate, relevant and inspiring curriculum for all children, and this is factored into planning.

The value of quality play experiences is recognised in the school and much thought and planning is undertaken to ensure that this aspect of the Early Years curriculum remains a high priority.

The children move into Year 1 at the end of the Reception year. The Year 1 teachers are informed on children's level of progress and development within the EYFS to create a strong transition. This is met by transition meetings between the class teachers and observations of the children by the Year 1 staff in the term before they move up to Year 1. Any children who have not met ELGs will continue to work on these at the beginning of Year 1.

Organisation in EYFS

A team of experienced teachers and teaching assistants staff the EYFS department. Each child has a 'key person' who, in this setting, is fundamentally the class teacher. He/She is the first point of contact for the child and his or her parents and is supported by a team of practitioners who also contribute towards the child's care and learning. The key person's role is to ensure that every child's learning is tailored to meet their individual needs and provide specialist support where appropriate.

Within the Early Years department, the Nursery is set in a cottage adjoining the Reception classroom. The cottage has been sympathetically renovated to retain the homely ambience and still has many of its original features. The main teaching area is a large, light, open-plan extension to the front of the building with bi-fold doors opening out onto covered decking containing a sunken sandpit. This veranda leads to a well-equipped garden and outdoor play area. The ground floor includes two additional teaching areas with IT provision and a home corner, and purpose-built toilets and handwashing facilities. There is a well-equipped kitchen which can be

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used for children to carry out cooking activities. Gated stairs lead to a bathroom, staff room and a rest room.

In Reception, there are two learning pods, where morning activities and focused teaching happen. These are linked by a large central area where the children come together for child-initiated learning, snacks and many other activities. There is a well-equipped outside play area, to which the children have access during the day. They are also able to use the Nursery garden, during EYFS free flow sessions.

All the EYFS children have access to the well-equipped playground, large woodland area and covered sand-pit, to the front of the main Pre-Prep building. Each class has a weekly Forest School session, and opportunities to visit the Natural History Museum, full of artefacts and objects of interest. Nursery also have a Wonder Woodland, for further outdoor learning opportunities.

The Nursery day is split into two sessions. Parents may choose morning or afternoon sessions or full days with the opportunity to increase attendance during the year, to prepare for Reception. There are spaces for 24 children in both the morning and afternoon sessions. The children may join the Nursery from their 3rd birthday.

All pupils in Nursery are able to transfer automatically into Reception and at this point there is also an intake of external pupils. All the children are then organised into two main teaching groups. There is, however, flexibility in grouping to meet the needs of the children.

The style of teaching and organisation of the curriculum changes gradually over the year, as the children develop. The teams meet weekly to plan in the short, medium and long term.

Wrap Around Care

Larks: 8-8:15am

Larks is a free session supervised by Pre-Prep Staff and is available each morning in the Pre-Prep Hall for children who are dropped off before the normal school hours. To ensure appropriate staff ratios are in place, parents are required to book by the end of the previous week by emailing - wraparoundcare@st-hughs.co.uk. The children are registered as they arrive.

Robins: 3:30-4:40pm

Nursery - If required, wrap-around childcare until 4.40pm can be booked at an additional cost of £8 per session (to allow for extra staffing ratios to be in place). Termly bookings can be made at

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the end of the preceding term and are allocated on a first-come-first served basis. Ad hoc bookings are also accepted though are dependent on the places available.

Reception - Robins is a free session supervised by Pre-Prep staff and is available after school and is held in the Pre-Prep Hall/ PP Classroom. To ensure appropriate staff ratios are in place, parents are required to book by the end of the previous week by emailing – wraparoundcare@st-hughs.co.uk. The children are registered at the start of the session and are signed out as they are collected.

Owls 4:40 – 5.30pm

Owls is a free session supervised by Pre-Prep staff and is available after Robins, held in the Pre-Prep Hall. To attend, each child must have been booked in by the Friday of the previous week by emailing – wraparoundcare@st-hughs.co.uk. Children are registered at the start and are signed out as they are collected. During Owls the children are provided with a sandwich, fresh fruit and drinking water. Owls is only available for Reception-Year 2 children; however in exceptional emergency circumstances, staff ratios will be altered to accommodate Nursery-aged children.

Admissions Policy

Pupils are admitted to school in accordance with our Admissions Policy (full details may be found on the school website).

Preliminary school visits

Parents are invited, with or without their children, to tour the school and to see displays of work across the entire Key Stage.

Entry into Nursery

Parents of children joining Nursery are invited to a tour of the school and to see the Nursery provision. They are given joining information with links to the Nursery Handbook and 'All About Me' questionnaire. The children are invited to visit before they are due to start in Nursery for a 'settling in' session with their parents. At this visit, there is ample opportunity to discuss any questions parents may have with the Head of Nursery.

A greeting card addressed to the child is also posted before the child starts.

Parents and children are invited to 'pop in' to Nursery the day before term starts, to familiarise themselves with the surroundings and meet the staff again.

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In September, parents are also invited to a Pre-Prep Curriculum Information Evening.

Early Years Funding Scheme (15 Hours): Children aged 3 and 4 are eligible for up to 15 hours per week of government-funded early education. Nursery places are allocated on a termly basis and delivered through our core Early Years programme. Early Years funded hours form part of this programme. Families may choose to extend their child's attendance with optional early wrap-around care, lunch and afternoon sessions, supporting continuity, routine and a rich educational experience within the school day. Children attending Reception who are under compulsory school age (below 5 years old) remain eligible for Early Years funded hours. Places are offered on a full-time, full-term basis only. Early Years funding is applied across the total termly invoice.

Entry into Reception

Our aim is to establish a smooth and successful transition from home, Cottage Nursery or pre-school to full-time education. This is facilitated by:

Taster Morning

Any new children are invited to visit before they are due to start for a 'taster' session with their parent(s). At this visit, there is ample opportunity to discuss any questions parents may have with the EYFS staff. If helpful, staff can also visit home or pre-schools to observe children in a familiar setting.

Teddy Bears' Picnic

The children are invited to visit the school for a Teddy Bears' Picnic in the preceding summer term, to allow them to familiarise themselves with the classroom, members of staff and other children. A 'home learning' bag is sent home, which includes provisions and activity ideas to share at home before children start in September.

New Parents Welcome Coffee

This is held during the Teddy Bears' Picnic in the PP Hall. On this occasion, parents are introduced to the Reception teachers and other members of EYFS staff, and they are invited to see the Reception classroom. They are also given the opportunity to ask questions. In September, parents are invited to the Pre-Prep Curriculum Information Evening, where they find out more about the Reception routines and curriculum.

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New Parent Welcome Pack

The parents are provided with a comprehensive joining pack including a link to the Pre-Prep Handbook, which includes information on the start of term, our aims in the first few weeks of the child's schooling, the daily routine, lists of policies and procedures available, uniform lists and permission forms, etc.

Pop into Reception

Parents and children are invited to 'pop in' to school the day before term starts, to familiarise themselves with the surroundings and meet the teachers again.

Parent Questionnaires

During the summer term prior to their child's start at St Hugh's, the parents are invited to complete an informal questionnaire, to share general information about their child with the EYFS team.

School website

There is an informative St Hugh's website containing all the above information and, in addition, offers a virtual tour of the school site, general information about St Hugh's and the latest news.

Moving towards full-time education

It is our policy to admit all children to Reception in the autumn term of the academic year in which they reach the age of five years. However, we do provide an optional Wednesday afternoon in the autumn term when the children can go home after lunch (unless children are already 5yrs old and/ or out of year group). A Form is sent out for parents to opt in or out. All children are expected to attend five full days a week from the spring term.

Health & Safety in EYFS

We follow our school's guidelines on health and safety. Children remain in their classrooms at the end of each day until they are collected by a parent or similar person authorised by the parent.

Staffing, Equipment and Resources

The EYFS staff team ensures that the correct adult:pupil ratio is maintained throughout the day and that the area in which the children work, and play is a safe and secure environment. They also ensure that appropriate equipment and resources are provided that inspire children and

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support the curriculum, and that these resources are monitored and updated or replaced as necessary throughout the year.

First Aid

As good practice, all EYFS staff are fully trained in Paediatric First Aid.

Personal Care

Please refer to the school's Personal Care Policy (ref: SHSB12)

Mealtimes/Snacks - safer eating

Staff are conscious of the EYFS safer eating guidance ([EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers 2026](#)) and complete regular training on different food intolerances and how to deal with any choking incidences. Lunch/ snack tables are carefully supervised, and children are always in sight and hearing of staff. In addition to all EYFS staff being Paediatric First Aid trained, the lunchrooms are situated near the school medical centre where our school nurses are stationed. There are also Risk Assessments in place that are regularly reviewed by the school.

Nearly all the school food is home-made in our school kitchen so free of preservatives and E numbers. We also aim to provide a reduced sugar and salt diet to all EYFS children (following the [Early Years Foundation Stage nutrition guidance](#)). Please see our school menu on the website for further sample menus.

Role of the EYFS staff

It is the role of the EYFS staff, under the guidance of the Assistant Head: Lower School including EYFS to:

- organise the delivery of EYFS Curriculum to ensure progression and development.
- monitor planning and quality of delivery within the curriculum.
- keep abreast of developments within Early Years and undertake INSET when required.
- monitor and update resources.
- carry out risk assessments as and when needed to ensure the safety of all children and EYFS staff.

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- liaise with and support outside pre-school establishments linked to the school.

Equal Opportunities

All children have equal entitlement to a good Early Years Curriculum regardless of gender, race, culture, religion, disability and special or medical needs.

Assessment and Record-keeping

All assessment and observations inform our planning, enabling us to complete the profiles and to deliver a curriculum that is specific to the children's needs. All EYFS children complete a school Baseline Assessment within the first 3 weeks of the term they join. In the final term of Reception, an EYFS Profile is completed for each child.

Our meetings with both parents and the children in the summer term preceding their first term with us are an important part of the assessment process, and we also make use of information provided by feeder pre-schools.

The children in the EYFS are continually assessed through interactions and observations. Each child has an individual online Learning Journal, which contains evidence of the child's achievements and progress over the year and next steps in learning. At St Hugh's, we use *Tapestry*. (www.tapestryjournal.com).

The timetable ensures that the EYFS staff in the classroom are given as many opportunities as possible to observe all the children over a period of time and respond appropriately by supporting and extending learning. This ongoing assessment informs the teachers of the individual needs of the children and supports the medium and short term planning.

Reporting: We formally hold Parents' Evenings twice each year: a Pastoral Parents' Evening in October and an Academic Parents' Evening in March. As children may join the Nursery at any point during the year, the Head of Nursery is also available to arrange additional meetings with parents as needed.

Written reports are issued for Nursery children in July, and for Reception children in both December and July. In addition, we operate an open-door policy, ensuring that parents can

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communicate with staff at any time and that lines of communication remain open throughout the year.

Safeguarding

Please refer to the school's Safeguarding Policy (Ref: STSB01) . It is important to reiterate here that - *In the EYFS setting mobile phones and personal cameras must be stored away in the staff room/ staff cupboards, and staff should not wear 'electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities'.*

Children with special education needs

We recognise that all pupils have different learning styles, however where it is identified that extra support or challenge is required then the appropriate provision can be put into place after consultation with parents, members of the EYFS team and the Learning Success Department. In consultation and agreement with the parents, the child may be included in the school's SEND /EAL & MAP (More Able Pupils) registers.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The EYFS includes:

- regular appraisals by the Assistant Head: Lower School including EYFS, staff development review meetings and Supervision Meetings
- learning walks and lesson observations of EYFS teaching staff to ensure effective teaching and learning
- monitoring the seven Areas of Learning through subject tracking, in order for assessment of early learning goals to be consistent
- weekly planning meetings to ensure continuity of provision
- EYFS action plans to identify key areas of development within the EYFS, monitored and reviewed regularly
- work scrutiny carried out regularly by Assistant Head: Lower School including EYFS and subject heads
- Children's progress also monitored through individual and class tracking sheets.
- Weekly staff meetings to share good practice and discuss pastoral / academic development of pupils

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