

Early Years and Key Stage One

The EYFS and Key Stage One curriculum is a developmental programme. We encompass all aspects of the EYFS and make it meaningful, relevant, accessible and aspirational for all students. Within our pupil's first years at school, nurture, support and getting students ready to learn are critical elements of our practice for both our students and their parents and carers.

Early Learning Goals (ELG)

At Hollywater School we aspire to meet each ELG however, we are realistic that many of our students will never meet any of the criteria to be 'expected' in each goal. We follow our developmental Early Years Curricular Goals pathways that encompass each ELG and each lesson follows a topic or theme to creatively bring the learning to life. All students are assessed through the EYFS profile at the end of Reception year.

Engagement model

Teachers at Hollywater use the engagement model to assess students alongside the Curricular Goals assessment framework. The engagement model encompasses five areas of engagement: exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence and initiation.

Each area enables teachers to assess students' engagement in developing new skills. The engagement model facilitates teachers to measure each students' progress independently, according to their individual profile of engagement. 2

Reading

Reading is embedded into lessons, daily routines and the school community. Early on students experience the stages of reading as prereaders and pre-verbal students. Reading can look different, for example, Little Wandle Phonics sessions, opportunities to explore books and their functions in reading areas, use of objects of reference, symbols, PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), ALD boards, switches, applications, songs and intensive interaction. Students follow the Little Wandle programme that encompasses reading and develops the skills at the pre-reader and pre-verbal stage. Students will experience phonics through a range of classroom activities following the Little Wandle programme.

Cultural capital

Part of our ethos at Hollywater is ensuring that all students have the opportunity to participate and enjoy a range of experiences. We do this by providing a range of learning experiences that bring the outside into school, and by ensuring the students have opportunities to explore the outside world and community. This critical part of school life starts within the early years and our students experience cultural capital, which enhances their learning, exposes them to the world and encourages engagement. This can take place through trips, visitors, topics, fun days, sports days, parent engagement stay and play sessions and whole school events.

Continuous provision – explore time

At Hollywater, ensuring our students have a method of communication to make choice in their learning is critical to their learning and development. Our students take part in continuous provision – explore time throughout the week. Student's use their individual method of communication to choose what activity they would like to partake in. These include; auditory scanning, ALD boards and objects of reference. Continuous provision includes activities such as; fun with food, art, ICT/maths and early reading skills (such as sensory stories). Within these activities, the students work on their Curricular Goal targets. The continuous provision activities are based around the topic we are studying to ensure the learning is engaging and contextualised. Staff make informed observations on the student's targets, ensuring all steps of progress and engagement are monitored. The activities are similar for each student; however, they are adapted and scaffolded to ensure each student is working at a level appropriate to them.

Outdoor learning

We have created an outdoor environment next to our classrooms that is designed to be accessible to all of our students. We have created an area for our students that supports their sensory integration and offers activities that can support their fine and gross motor skills. The students have access to this area during their play and lunch time. When it is safe and appropriate, teachers take lessons outside to explore topics such as the changing seasons, the community, and plants and growth.

Where possible, we create an inside-outside learning environment for our students, and although we understand the role 'risk taking' plays in students' development, due to the physical and developmental needs of many of our students, this is not always possible. Therefore, we have adapted our curriculum to ensure students have access to outdoor learning in the safest way possible and this sometimes means we bring the outside in!

Our outdoor area is an ongoing work-in-progress.

Play

Play is fundamental to our students at Hollywater school. We use play through all of our learning as it supports students in developing their cognitive, physical, communicative skills within their milestone and EHCP targets. We adapt our play to meet the developmental needs of our students, therefore, it looks different for each individual. Our students work on very early cause and effect using toys, ICT equipment, and sensory stimuli.

Some students will access 'identiplay' which allows them to work on their play skills and access play with a play partner. Being a play partner is an important role for our staff, we offer appropriate scaffolding and prompting and create an engaging interaction to support shared focus.

Parent engagement

Working in partnership with parents and/or carers is central to Hollywater. Having an effective dialogue about children's early experiences supports planning for effective learning and helps support parents in continuing their children's learning

development at home. All contributions from parents are encouraged, welcomed and Hollywater School ensures communication with the school is accessible for all. Through the use of home link books, email, phone calls, parents' evenings and stay and play sessions parents / carers have daily opportunities to communicate with staff.