

# Welcome to Nursery!

## Whittle Academy

2023-24



**Whittle**  
Academy



  
**Inspire Education Trust**  
Together we achieve. individually we grow

**Welcome to Whittle Academy!** We are so excited that you are going to be starting our Nursery and cannot wait to get to know you and to help you make lots of new friends. Being in Nursery is the most wonderful adventure where you will play and learn new skills every day. By the end of the year, you will be able to do so many amazing things. You will have explored the world around and most importantly had so much fun!

This book is to help you understand what being in Nursery at Whittle Academy will be like. It is written for you (with a few bits of extra information for your grown-ups).

We hope you enjoy looking at the pictures and that this helps you to get as excited about school as we all are!



## Our school Vision and Ethos



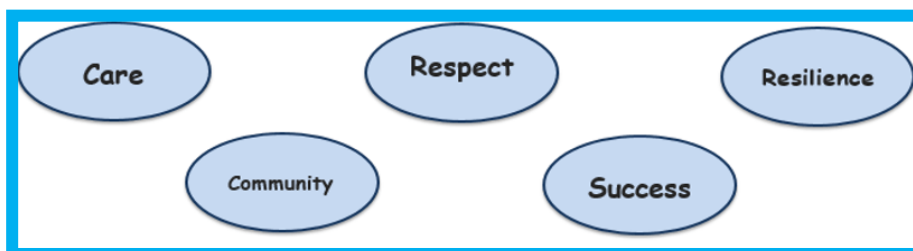
**At Whittle we soar beyond what we image possible.**

**At Whittle we give you the power to take flight.**

**At Whittle everyone will achieve.**

Our school vision is inspired by the famous engineer and aviator 'Sir Frank Whittle', who our school is named after. Our whole school vision is linked to the power of flight and children 'soaring' in all aspects of their development.

These are our core values at Whittle Academy.



***Underpinning all that we do is:  
Our Culture of Care***

We encourage children to show **care for themselves, care for each other** and **care for the world** around them.

## Our Staff

These are the names of some of the teachers who help make sure that everything at school is as brilliant as it can possible be.

CEO of Inspire:	Mrs L Whitehouse
Head of Primary:	Mr R Darling
Headteacher:	Mrs M Harris
Assistant Headteacher:	Mrs D Morgan-Smith (EYFS & KS1 Lead)

## **These are the grown-ups who will be helping you in Nursery...**



**Mrs Morgan-Smith**  
*(Class Teacher, EYFS/KS1 Lead & AHT)*



**Mrs Le Marquand**  
*(Class Teacher)*



**Mrs Tanner**  
*(TA & Nursery Nurse)*

You will notice our classes at Whittle are named after birds.

Our Nursery class will be called 'Ducklings' class.



**How will we get to know you?**



## **Home Visits**

For children starting Nursery in September or January, we will arrange a time with your grown-ups when we can come and visit you first. You can show us your favourite toys and tell us about what you like to do.

When we come to visit you, we will ask you and your grown-up some questions that will help us find out lots of information about you.

Before we come to visit you please help your grown-up to fill in the 'All About Me' booklet that we will share with you.

(If your child is already attending our Nursery, we will not need to arrange another home visit, but you may wish to fill out another 'All About Me' booklet with your child, as things may have changed a lot since they joined us last year)



## **Your first day**

On your first day at Nursery, you will come with your grown up for a short session. You will be able to meet some new friends and explore Nursery together. You will carry on doing shorter sessions for a few days and when you are happy and settled your grown-up will say goodbye and you can stay by yourself for the whole session. Don't worry though your grown-up always come back at the end of Nursery for big cuddles and to find out all that you have been doing up to!

Home visits will take place during early September. If you were not able to come to our open evening on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June, we will be in touch with you before the end of the school term to arrange a suitable time that we can come and meet you and your child.

Following the initial session if your child is ready, happy and settled you may leave them on their own from the second day. However, if your child is still needs your support, please feel free to stay with your child and use the Nursery activities to help him/her to settle.

## Our School Day

The first few weeks can be tiring and bewildering even if your child is used to playgroup or a childminder.

*Please try not to worry if your child becomes upset, we are used to dealing with this situation. Children usually stop crying quickly and we will always aim to phone you or contact you via Tapestry to reassure you later on in the session.*

### Timings of the day:

Our Nursery morning sessions run from **8.30am–11.30am**.

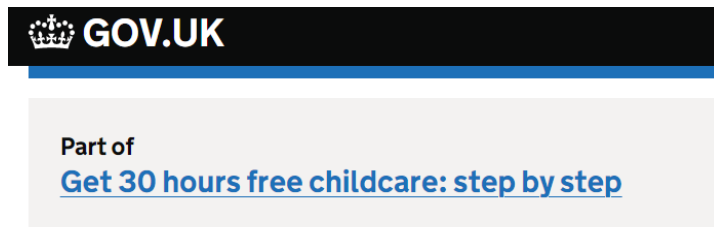
Our afternoon sessions run from **12.30pm–3.30pm**.

If you are entitled to 30 hour Nursery provision (you will need a 30 hour code), this runs from **8.30am–2.30pm** (with the option to pay for an additional top up hour **2.30pm–3.30pm** if needed)

### Is your child entitled to the full 30 hours in Nursery each week? How to find out if you are eligible and sign up...

Visit: [30 hours free childcare - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

You should see the image below if you are on the correct webpage. From there you can find out all the information you need, check to see if you are entitled to 30 and sign up!



If your child is currently signed up to 15 hours and you find out you are entitled to 30, we may still have a full time space available so please get in touch with us.

### Drop off and Collection Times

The Nursery gates will open at 8.30am (for morning session) and 12.30pm – (for afternoon session). If your child is late then you will have to sign them in at the main office. At home time (11.30am for morning session and 2.30pm/ 3.30pm in the afternoons), the gate will open once more and we will dismiss your child from the Nursery classroom door. Please let us know in advance if anyone else will be collecting your child and add their name to the collection form. It is important to note that **if we do not have your permission we will not release your child to anyone else.** If you are running late or have a problem picking up, please phone ahead and let our office team know.

### **Snack Time**

Free milk and fruit is available and we encourage all children to access this each day. If your child is not able to have milk for whatever reason, please let us know and we will speak with you about alternative arrangements. We also encourage children to bring in a water bottle from home to keep in school to access throughout the day. Please make sure this has your child's name on.



**Lunchtime** *(Only for children who are eligible for the 30 hour provision)*

**Packed Lunch** - Children may bring a packed lunch and drink which should be in a named container/lunch box. This will be stored in the Nursery Class during the day. Please do not send in fizzy drinks, anything with nuts or unhealthy snacks or sweets.

**School lunches** - Our meals are prepared on the premises by Catering Academy. Menus are displayed on the school website and run on a three weekly cycle. If you would like your child to receive a hot meal they will have a choice of a few options including vegetarian. There is a help yourself salad bar and filled jacket potatoes are also available. The staff in the kitchen will be made aware of any allergies you have informed us of.

**The cost of a hot meal is £2.20**



## **Absences and illness**

At Whittle Academy, attendance is a key area of priority. Absence, particularly in early education, has a considerable effect on children's development. If your child is away from Reception because of any illness please notify us as to the reason on the first day of absence. We strongly discourage parents to book holidays in term time.

If your child suffers from a medical condition requiring treatment such as an inhaler, we will require up to date medication to be kept in school.

It is important that we can always contact parents in cases of emergency.

Please inform school immediately if your telephone number changes.

## **Safeguarding**

All schools take the safety and well-being of the children in their care very seriously. Our safeguarding policy is on our website and we would be delighted to talk to you further about this. Our Pastoral Manager is Luke Harris. You can contact him via the class teacher or the school office.

## **School Uniform**

We are keen for the children to wear full school uniform (which must be clearly named) as uniform provides smart, practical clothing which is not too expensive. Our uniform can be purchased at [www.myclothing.com](http://www.myclothing.com) and just type in 'Whittle Academy' or CV2 2LH.

### **Our uniform consists of:**

- Grey or black bottoms (trousers/shorts/skirts)
- White polo shirt or blouse
- Blue cardigan or sweatshirt (school logo optional)
- Sensible, black shoes (Velcro fastenings please!)
- Blue and white checked summer dress



We cannot emphasise enough the importance of **naming** everything.

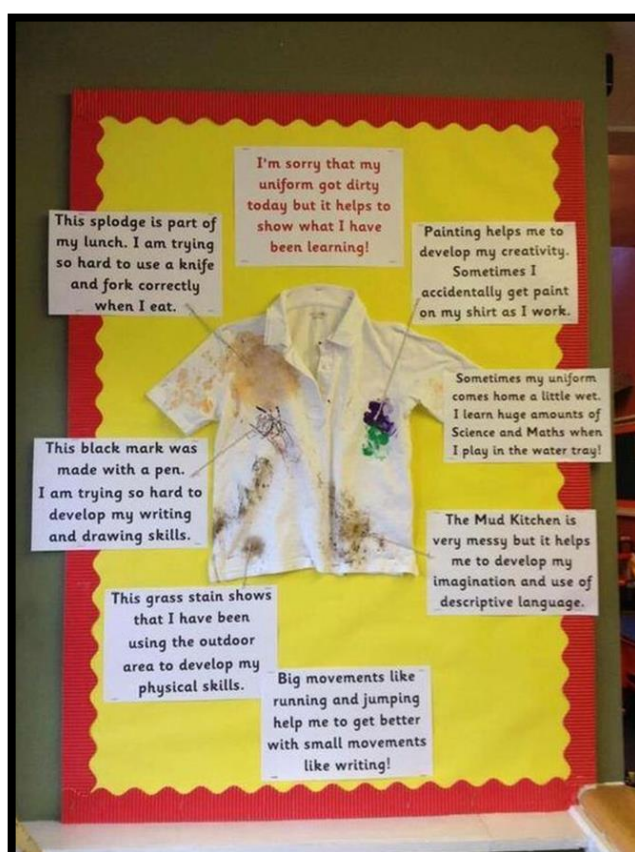
We do our best to help the children put their things away, but it is far easier to locate a missing jumper in the classroom if it is named. Also remember to put a name label in shoes and coats as many children often have similar ones!

## **What does your child need to bring with them to school?**

Lots of the fun activities that your child will be able to explore are very messy. We do have aprons for them to wear but it's sometimes hard to stay clean when they are having fun. Please can provide a named bag with some spare clothes in which include a change of underwear and socks, a top, some bottoms and a jumper or cardigan. Please can you bring your child's bag to Nursery every day, they will be able to hang it up on their peg just in case we need it.

We play outside in the outdoor area **every day**.

- In winter your child will need to wear a coat, gloves and a woolly hat.
- In the summer you child will need to wear a sun hat, bring in some sun cream and wear clothes that keep their neck and shoulders covered.



## **What should you leave at home?**

Your child does not need to bring any of their own toys in to Nursery. We have plenty of fun things to play with here and we don't want their toys to get accidentally lost or broken.

*We encourage children not to wear jewelry to Nursery for safety reasons, but understand that this may not always be possible for all for faith based reasons.*



## The Early Years Curriculum

In September 2021, a new Early Years Statutory Framework and curriculum guidance was introduced. For us at Whittle this felt like a big opportunity modify our practice and continue to develop all the things that we believe are so brilliant about Early Years at Whittle.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is organised to take care of and develop the whole child and not just their academic learning. Our EYFS curriculum is split into 7 areas of learning, 3 prime areas and 4 specific areas.

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

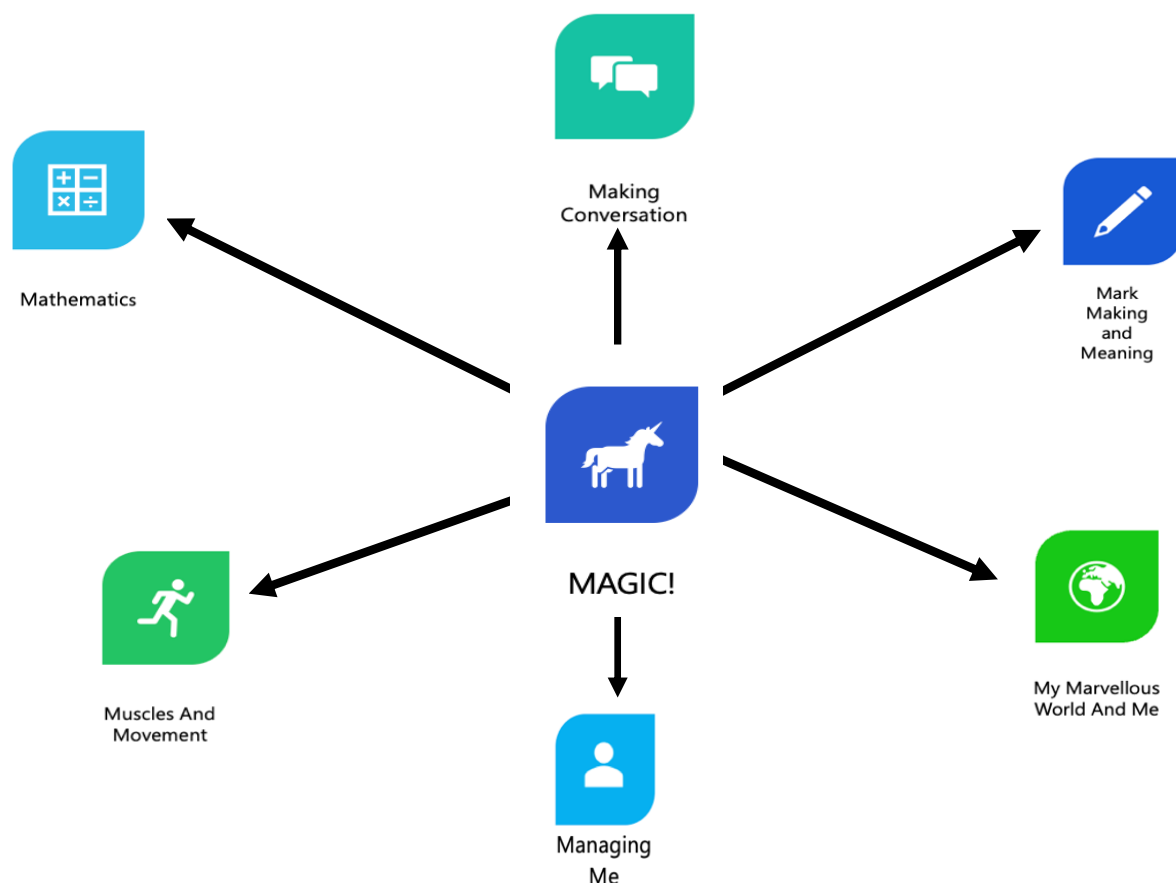
Our EYFS curriculum also includes the **Characteristics of Effective Learning**. These focus not on what children know but **how** children learn.

- **Playing and Exploring** – our children investigate and experience things and events around them and ‘have a go.’
- **Active Learning** – our children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – our children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different and experiences and develop strategies for doing things.



## The 5 Ms

At Whittle this is just the start. We have designed our own bespoke curriculum that encompasses the 7 areas of learning and the characteristics of learning in an engaging and exciting curriculum that we call **The Ms**.



We prioritise **making conversations** and learning to communicate, teaching and supporting children to **manage** themselves and their friendships, **mark making** and understanding the **meaning** of marks, developing secure early **mathematical** skills, exploring the **marvellous world** around them, and giving children the opportunities to use and develop their **muscles and movement**.

**Magic** is at the heart of all we do, making sure that our children are engaged and excited in all their learning. This does not mean we will be teaching your children card tricks but that we find engaging and exciting ways to introduce topics and themes to your children. This could be anything from building Superhero dens in Nursery to finding a beanstalk has grown in one of the Reception classrooms as part of their learning about Jack and the Beanstalk.

## How will your child learn by playing?

You are going to be very busy at Nursery and you will spend a lot of your time playing. That is because playing is one of the best ways you can learn! Playing helps you to develop your talking, to manage and understand how you are feeling and to help you make new friends. You will be able to practice new ideas and skills, to take risks, show imagination and solve problems. At Nursery you will get the chance to play inside and outside! Here are a few examples of how the toys and activities we have in Nursery will help you to learn:

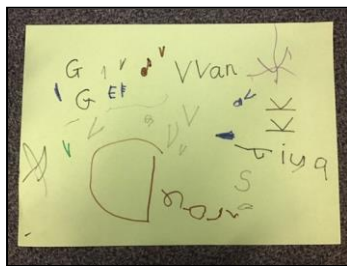
- Sand and water play can be an early introduction to science and maths.,Eg learning that water is fluid, not solid, and that it can be measured in different sized containers.
- Playing with dough, drawing and painting pictures, dressing up, playing with dolls can encourage creativity, imagination and expression of feelings.
- Building blocks, jigsaws and shape sorters can help with recognising different shapes and sizes, putting things in order and developing logic.
- Playing ball games, dancing, running, climbing all help to develop body movement, strength, flexibility and co-ordination skills.
- Games help with turn taking, sharing and mixing with others.
- Singing, playing simple music instruments help to develop rhythm, listening and hearing.
- The role-play area is a wonderful place for make-believe, dressing up, trying out different roles. It provides scope for developing imagination, language, sharing, co-operation and mathematics.
- Through cooking the children are able to discover the properties of different types of food as well as developing language, mathematical and scientific skills.
- You will have the opportunity to play outside every day. It is important that children of nursery age develop their climbing, sliding, and jumping skills. The children have an opportunity to play in the mud kitchen as well as riding bikes and scooters.



## Will I start to learn to read and write

Early Reading – Phonics: In Nursery we are always learning and using lots of new and interesting words and listening to the sounds and rhymes in them. In the Spring Term, we will start to learn some of the letter sounds and how to form the letters. To do this we use a phonics and reading scheme called Read, Write Inc which is packed full of rhymes, movement and sound games.

Recognising and writing my name: Every time you come in to Nursery you will have to find your name card. You will then stick this up on our registration board – this lets us know who is in Nursery. From January we will start putting big pieces of paper out along side your name cards. This is so you can practise writing your name as well as recognising it This can be quite tricky at first – this is why we will practise it everyday.



*When you are helping your child to write their name at home please encourage them to use a capital letter for the first letter of their name and to write the remaining letters in lower case.*

Writing and Mark Making: You will have lots of opportunities to develop your writing skills in Nursery. Using a variety of writing equipment, you will be able to make marks and symbols and tell us what they say.



What is Carpet Time? In Nursery we have carpet time every day. During carpet time we do lots of fun things such as reading a story, singing Nursery Rhymes to learning about our topic. During the first few weeks, carpet time will be very short. As you get more and more grown-up, we will start to make carpet time a little bit longer. This will help you get ready for when you start Reception.

When you sit on the carpet you will try to sit on your bottom, with your legs crossed and your hands in your lap. Maybe you can practise that at home before your start Nursery?



## Tapestry – Online Learning Journals



In Nursery and Reception we will share your child's learning with you via their online learning journal. We do this via an app called 'Tapestry'. This is free for parents to download and access and you will be able to see photographs, videos and messages from your child's class teacher, updating you on your child's progress in school. We also encourage families to upload photos and videos of what their children get up to at home. We then share this with their friends during 'Tapestry Talk Time'. This is a brilliant way of supporting your child with their speaking and listening skills, boosts the children's confidence and is a great way of helping staff learn more about your child on a personal level.

We will also use Tapestry posts to communicate any upcoming important dates, little reminders and more general information about school that parents/carers will need to know.

Here's some more detailed information...

*An easy-to-use and secure online learning journal helping staff and families celebrate their children's learning and development*

Tapestry builds a very special record of a child's experiences, development and learning journey through their early years and primary education. Using photos, videos, and diary entries, a teacher or early years educator, along with the child's parents or carers, and the child themselves if they're ready, 'weaves' the story of the child and how they are growing and developing. The Tapestry platform then works seamlessly to enable these memories to be kept as a permanent record of each child's unique journey. All information held in the platform is stored securely and can be downloaded and shared as required. Parents or carers are able to view their child's progress, the activities provided for them, and how much fun they're having, whilst also uploading their own comments and media.

Our School Website:  
[www.whittleacademy.org](http://www.whittleacademy.org)

We also have Facebook and Twitter pages. Just search 'Whittle Academy' and look for our logo.



## Moving on to Reception

When the children leave the Nursery class they will move to Reception. **Unfortunately, a place in our Nursery does not guarantee a place in our main school.** Nursery admissions are not based on catchment criteria where Reception is. You can find out what your catchment school is by looking at the Coventry Council website. During the Autumn Term we will send out a booklet from the Local Education Authority. This will give you all the details you need to apply for a place at any school in Coventry. The deadline to apply for a school place is in January. We will send out lots of reminders, so you have the best chance of securing a place for your child at your school of your choice. Around the beginning of April, you will receive an email from Coventry Admissions detailing your child's school place.

## **What can you do to make sure that you child is ready for Nursery?**

There are also lots of other things that you can do to support your child with the transition to Nursery. Here are a few ideas...

- Talk to them and listen to them
- Sing songs and Nursery rhymes together
- Play games with them – practise taking turns
- Read books to them
- Visit your local library.
- Teach them to take care of books – how do you turn pages carefully?
- Count regularly  
E.g. How many buttons on this dress?  
How many cups on the table?
- Recognise different sizes  
E.g. Large/small

## Thick/thin

- Talk about shapes and colours.  
E.g. Sort and match objects.
- Give your child the opportunity to write and draw and scribble using pens, crayons, felt tips and pencils.
- Practise self-care skills
  - Go to the toilet and wash and dry hands?
  - Put on/take off coats?
  - Put on/take off shoes?
  - Hold and use scissors?

There are some fantastic books and resources that you can use with your child to begin talking about starting school.



This is a lovely game that can be found on the **BBC Bitesize website**. You can create your own character and choose what school uniform they are going to wear.

Below are some lovely books that you could use to start talking about starting school...

- Lulu's First Day by Anna McQuinn
- Harry and the Dinosaurs go to school by Ian Whybrow
- Topsy and Tim start school by Jean and Gareth Adamson
- Starting School by Janet and Allan Ahlberg
- Come to school too, Blue Kangaroo by Emma Chichester Clarke



## **It is good to talk...**

For some of you your child's first day of school cannot come soon enough! For others the thought of your child starting Nursery may make you feel worried and anxious. However you may be feeling, one thing that we ask of you is that you talk to your child about starting school. Let them talk to you about any worries that they may have or what they are looking forward to. Show them that you are excited about the new adventure that they are about to start and use this booklet to talk about what the school day will look like for them.

We are not only here for the children, but for our parents and community too. If you ever need help, advice or support please do come and chat to us and if there is anything at all we can do to help, we will.




Thank you for reading this booklet. We hope it has given you all the information you will need before your child starts with us. If there is anything else you need to know, please do not hesitate to come and speak to us. We really are looking forward to working with you to make sure that your child has the best possible start to their time at school!

**We cannot wait to welcome your child to Nursery!**



*Mrs Morgan-Smith,  
Mrs Le Marquand  
& Mrs Tanner*



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COMMUNITY	<p>At Whittle we soar beyond what we imagine possible.          At Whittle we give you the power to take flight.          At Whittle everyone will achieve.</p>	
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