

Our Vision

Diamond Hall Junior Academy aims to provide an inspiring, inclusive, challenging and real-world curriculum that the children will enjoy. Inspiring future thinkers, innovators and problem solvers in an environment that stimulates and supports high quality learning. To ensure that all learners exceed their potential academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually with their families, in their communities as well as the wider world ensuring they become ambitious lifelong learners.



Principles and Purpose

Our curriculum has been customised, personalised and structured so that the development of knowledge, skills and vocabulary is completed in a systematic and logical sequence, with big ideas being reintroduced throughout Key Stage in a variety of projects, making links between subjects and content. The curriculum is organised to support pupils growing depth of learning using a project based, thematic approach, it provides children with a range and breadth of rich and memorable learning experiences which promotes SMSC and British Values.

When designing our curriculum, we have ensured a well-planned program which recognises the knowledge and skills, pupils will need for later life taking into consideration our diverse community and local ship building, pottery and coal mining heritage.

Diamond Hall Junior Academy places the community at the heart of all it does, we strive to leave a legacy of future learners for generations to come.

Aims

- Understand the purpose and value of their learning and see its relevance to their past, present and future
- Opportunities to enrich children's lives through a broad and diverse range of exciting experiences
- Make meaningful links between subjects.
- Develop children's skills, knowledge and understanding of a range of themes and concepts.
- Develop a rich and deep subject knowledge
- Make effective connections to the real world.
- Help children to think both systematically and creatively to solve problems.
- Develop children's capacities to work independently and collaboratively.
- Enable children to make informed choices about their learning. Taking into account children's interests and fascinations.
- Make a positive contribution to the school and local community.

Our approach:

- To learn within a coherent and progressive framework
- Helps children to find their passions and interests
- Facilitates children's acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding

- Helps children to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically and morally
- Assists all children in becoming resilient, independent, responsible, useful, confident and considerate members of the community
- Promotes a positive attitude towards learning, so children enjoy coming to school
- Helps children to acquire essential knowledge and skills to become lifelong learners
- Creates and maintains an exciting and stimulating learning environment
- Ensures that each child's education has continuity and progression
- Enables all children to contribute positively within a culturally diverse society
- Promotes innovation and entrepreneurialism
- Opportunities to learn in different environments.

Depth, Balance and Breadth

Our curriculum at Diamond Hall Junior Academy is carefully designed, organised and planned for depth of learning:

Our definition of progress is; the widening and deepening of essential knowledge, skills, understanding and learning behaviours. We have designed, organised and planned our curriculum to ensure that children are not merely covering content but achieve depth to their learning which enables them to use their skills and understanding in all areas of the curriculum and the within the wider community.

Our careful curriculum design and planning means that we build in many opportunities for repetition and practise opportunities for essential knowledge, skills and understanding in every subject. This ensures that children are able to revisit previous learning, which allows them to gradually develop a deeper understanding of the skills and processes within subjects, at their own pace and in the best possible way for each individual child.

Our curriculum is meticulously designed and planned to move the nature of children's thinking to a higher order, deep level of understanding rather than just the acquisition of new facts and knowledge.

At Diamond Hall Junior Academy we carefully design, plan and implement a curriculum to provide balance for every pupil:

It is our underlying belief that every child should feel valued and experience the feeling of success in a wide range of curriculum areas. We believe that through the curriculum we can impact on how they feel about themselves, so that they feel clever, confident and ready to tackle any challenge they may face.

We have designed, organised and planned our curriculum to ensure every child receives an appropriate mix of academic and personal development which means that in practice our curriculum places equal importance on core and foundation subjects.

At Diamond Hall Junior Academy, we place high priority on ensuring children's physical and mental wellbeing are met. We understand that children will not be successful learners unless they are emotionally secure, therefore we carefully design our curriculum and adopt a flexible approach to timetabling to ensure that we can meet and respond to any issues which may arise. Children's physical and mental wellbeing are as valued and important as academic development.

We carefully monitor children's progress with their personal development and our well planned and thoughtful approach to SMSC helps to ensure that every child is well cared for and supported.

Our balanced approach to the curriculum is not at the expense of high standards in core subject areas. High standards and enabling children to reach national expectations and above is of vital importance if they are to succeed at the next stage of their education and go on to achieve full and happy lives and careers.

Our full and rich curriculum, with its excellent range of experiences, ensures that every pupil at Diamond Hall Junior Academy makes good progress both academically and personally. Our unique curriculum ensures that every child is given the opportunity to shine and flourish.

At Diamond Hall Junior Academy we carefully design, plan and implement a curriculum which provides breadth for every pupil:

Through careful discussion and analysis of our pupils' backgrounds, cultures and learning behaviours, we have prioritised the following areas which drive our curriculum design with the intent that children must have the building blocks to become successful adults in terms of being able to gain employment, live healthy lifestyles, be moral citizens and to take opportunities to extend their horizons.

1. **Aspirations** – for some children they have lacked a determination to succeed and they do not have an appreciation of the range of opportunities and possibilities available to them in later life. Therefore, in every topic we teach we plan in opportunities for children to see first-hand the range of employment and careers available to them.
2. **Learning** - providing a highly inclusive environment where children enjoy their education. All children are challenged to expand their knowledge and skills through varied curriculum opportunities, encouragement and targeted support to embed skills, to develop at their own pace and to learn in a style that best suits their individual needs. Working with children and parents / carers we aim to offer experiences which help them to become independent and resourceful learners.
3. **Community** -We want our children to feel a connection with the world in which they live and a sense of place. We believe this builds a sense of belonging and identity, develops cooperation and friendship, a belief that all people are of value, enhances an appreciation of

the natural world, encourages participation and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active, responsible and contributing citizens with the belief they can make a difference.

Entitlement and Enrichment:

Our rich and engaging curriculum takes into consideration all that children are taught and experience. This includes those activities and learning experiences that take place outside of the classroom and outside the National Curriculum. At Diamond Hall Junior Academy our pupil offer:

- Provides on and off site subject or topic related activities
- Ensures opportunities for children to learn outdoors
- Develops partnerships with external providers that extend children's opportunities for learning
- Welcomes parents and carers to participate in children's learning experiences
- Holds specialist curriculum days or weeks
- Uses quality resources in and out of the classroom.

Our broad and balanced curriculum takes into account the range and frequency of these activities and experiences and we ensure they are planned for in a rigorous and meaningful way.



Structure of Our Curriculum



Our curriculum is built on The Four Cornerstones of Learning – Engage, Develop, Innovate and Express. These are four distinct stages that actively promote children’s learning and thinking.

The Four Cornerstones of Learning link explicitly to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. The focus for teaching and planning in each Cornerstone is as follows.

Engage

Getting children engaged in a concept is the first step to learning. We endeavour to hook learners in with a memorable experience. Each memorable experience sets the scene and provides the context for future learning. During the engage stage teachers ask questions to find out children’s interests and spark children’s curiosity using interesting starting points.

Children:

- Take an active part in memorable first-hand experiences
- Begin to read and research about their new theme using a range of source materials
- Ask their own enquiry questions
- Develop spoken language skills in different situations and with a range of people
- Take part in sensory activities
- Identify possibilities for future learning

Teachers:

- Hook learners in with a memorable experience
- Set the scene and provide the context
- Ask questions to provoke thought and interest
- Use interesting starting points to spark children’s natural curiosity



“What we learn with pleasure we never forget.” Alfred Mercier

Develop

In the develop stage, children explore themes, concepts and subjects in greater depth. Teachers give children the opportunity to gain new skills and knowledge from a range of challenging activities. This enables children to make progress and develop confidence across a range of subjects.

Children:

- Delve more deeply into a theme
- Develop an understanding of new concepts and skills
- Acquire new knowledge
- Practise and master new skills
- Make links between subjects across the curriculum
- Re-visit previously learned skills
- Compose, explore, make, do, build and investigate
- Use transferable skills in different subjects and contexts
- Read and write for different purposes and audiences
- Follow pathways of enquiry based on their own interests
- Explain and describe their learning and understanding
- Complete homework activities to support their learning

Teachers:

- Teach knowledge to provide a depth of understanding
- Demonstrate new skills and allow time for consolidation
- Provide creative opportunities for making and doing
- Deliver reading, writing and talk across the curriculum



“When educating the minds of our youth, we must not forget to educate their hearts.” Dalai Lama

Innovate

In the innovate stage, children are offered a range of rich and stimulating scenarios. These scenarios act as provocations, encouraging children to think creatively. During this stage, children have the opportunity to work both independently and in different groups.

Children:

- Apply skills, knowledge and understanding to real-life and imaginary contexts
- Show enterprise in solving problems and resolving situations
- Use their thinking skills to explore possibilities
- Build on their self-esteem and confidence
- Reflect upon and identify their own needs, skills and understanding
- Work in pairs, groups, as a whole class and independently
- Take on different roles and responsibilities

Teachers:

- Provide imaginative scenarios for creative thinking
- Enable and assess the application of previously learned skills
- Encourage enterprise and independent thinking
- Facilitate group and independent work to solve problems



“Education is a once in a lifetime opportunity to open children’s hearts and minds to the unbelievable wonder of the universe.” Sir Anthony Seldon

Express

Finally, in the express stage children reflect on their learning through talk and opportunities for shared evaluation. Children are given opportunity to explain their learning in different ways and identify next steps. The involvement of parents and carers in this stage of learning enables a shared understanding of progress and achievement.

Children:

- Perform, present and become the experts
- Evaluate finished products, processes and progress
- Link what they have learned to starting points or initial observations
- Reflect on their own learning
- Share their achievements with parents, classmates, the community and beyond
- Celebrate their achievements

Teachers:

- Encourage reflective talk by asking questions
- Provide opportunities for shared evaluation
- Celebrate success
- Identify next steps for learning



I believe that education is all about being excited about something. Seeing passion and enthusiasm helps push and educational message.” Steve Urwin

Memorable Experiences

Each project / theme begins with a memorable experience that stimulates children's curiosity and prepares them for a new theme. A memorable experience often involves an educational visit out of school or a visitor coming into school to share their expertise with the children.



Animal Antics helping to introduce us to exotic animals!



Cooking up a storm in our Creative Arts Room



Visits to Broomhouse farm, Kielder Observatory and Beamish Museum!



Local history studies



Bring It On – Stem Workshops

Curriculum design for KS1 and KS2

Our curriculum design gives each year group the opportunity to cover a broad range of themes and subjects. Projects last either a half or full term depending on the amount of content and the children's interests. In some cases, projects may be taught for a shorter period, for example during a science or art week.

Knowledge, skills and vocabulary linked to each theme / project / subject are also planned for to show clear progression and age related expectations.



Timetables

Each year group has a set of non-negotiable allocations for various aspects of the curriculum, including English, mathematics and PE. Teachers are free to arrange their afternoon timetable to make the most of cross-curricular opportunities and the needs of pupils. Sometimes subjects and activities might be 'blocked' or run over successive afternoons.

Subject coverage

English

English is a core subject and is at the heart of our curriculum. Each project covers a range of reading and writing genres and, where appropriate, links to other areas of the curriculum.

Spoken language is promoted throughout the curriculum and across all subjects.

Spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation are promoted throughout all writing opportunities, with each year group following a specific programme.

Mathematics

Mathematics is also a core subject and is taught discretely using Maths No Problem. Incorporating the use of resources, problem solving and group work, the Primary Series is child-centred and fun to teach and was assessed by the DfE's expert panel, which judged that it met the core criteria for a high-quality textbook to support teaching for mastery. However, where relevant, mathematics is linked to ongoing project work.

Science

Scientific enquiry is delivered through the Cornerstones Love to Investigate scheme. Some curriculum projects also have a science focus.

Foundation subjects

The foundation subjects – history, geography, design and technology, art and design, PE and music – are integrated into each project and provide enrichment across the curriculum.

Religious education

RE is a statutory part of the curriculum and follows the locally agreed syllabus. The RE curriculum is enriched using the Cornerstones Love to Celebrate scheme.

PHSE and citizenship

PHSE and citizenship are important aspects of our curriculum and are taught both discretely and within our curriculum projects.

ICT and computing

The core skills of ICT are taught as a discrete programme across school. However, other elements of the computing curriculum are integrated into the curriculum as part of project work. These include e-safety, digital publication and presentation, research, data handling and the use of digital media.