

Teaching and Learning and Curriculum overview at GLPA

Ethos

Every pupil in this Academy has an entitlement to fulfil his or her potential. All pupils have the right to a broad, balanced and progressive curriculum, which engages them and prepares them for secondary school. At GLPA we follow the aims of the National Curriculum programmes of study and the EYFS framework.

English

We aim to develop children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, in order to use language to learn, communicate and reflect on ideas, views and feelings, and evaluate the work of others. Children learn how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. We hold parent workshops to help parents understand the teaching methods so that they can best support their children at home.

How we teach English:

Phonics is taught from EYFS to the end of KS1 using letters and sounds through the Letterland scheme and a range of materials that are selected to best suit the needs of our children. LKS2 pick up phonics with individual children through interventions.

In reading, we use a trust wide approach through whole class reading of the same text from Y1-Y6. All pupils are exposed to age-appropriate, challenging texts, which are rich in vocabulary. The texts focus on core reading skills of fluency and develop depth in pupils' understanding of what they read. In addition, some children are listened to read on a 1:1 basis by either the teacher or TA to increase progress and/or attainment. In EYFS we aim to hear every child read every day through both guided reading and a 1-1 approach to build fluency.

Even though children's decoding skills may be poor, they should still be, *'Hearing and learning new vocabulary and grammatical structures, and having a chance to talk about all of these', (Upper key stage two programme of study).'*

In writing, it is clear that children need to be exploring a variety of sentence structures and drawing on this learning when composing their own writing across all areas of the curriculum.

'Teachers should therefore be consolidating pupils' writing skills, their vocabulary, their grasp of sentence structure and their knowledge of linguistic terminology... Teachers should make sure that pupils build on what they have learnt, particularly in terms of the range of their writing and the more varied grammar, vocabulary and narrative structures from which they can draw to express their ideas,' (Lower Key Stage Two programme of study).'

Approaches used at GLPA include Alan Peat's 'exciting sentences' and Jane Dallas's 'It's only Words'. These enable the children to explore and use to good effect a variety of sentence

structures. Spelling and punctuation are taught throughout KS1 and KS2 using the 2014 curriculum expectations and the No Nonsense Spelling Programme. Pre cursive handwriting is taught in EYFS and cursive from Year 1.

We make cross-curricular links between English and the rest of the curriculum, as part of the Academy's long-term plan. Word processing is used for writing particularly in upper KS2.

We use support staff to follow up teaching and learning and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals who need additional input. Children have regular homework to support skills covered in class in the form of reading, comprehension, spellings and writing.

Maths

How We Teach Maths:

The mastery learning model forms the basis of our approach to teaching and learning. This means spending greater time going into depth about a subject. We focus on all children achieving what is expected of their age group. Evidence shows that children need to be able to understand a concept, apply it in a range of situations and then be creative to secure understanding.

A maths lesson begins with clear examples of the 'basic' conceptual knowledge that we want the children to understand presented in different ways, we use an 'I do, you do' approach.

Children then complete five or six questions independently that use the basic concept taught, presented in different ways. The teacher then marks the questions over break time and decides whether children move onto bronze, silver or gold. Bronze means a same day intervention (SDIB), the teacher will go over the concept with children and present more questions along the 'I do, you do model'. Silver (ATS – assessment task silver) means that the children move onto to problem solving questions applying the knowledge they learnt in the first part of the lesson to different style of questions. Gold (ATG – assessment task gold) means that the children move onto reasoning questions – children may only attempt one or two of these questions as they are extremely challenging and thought provoking.

Arithmetic skills are very important and at GLPA we expect children to be fluent in all times tables by the end of Y4. All children have a log in to Times Tables Rock Stars, which they can access at home and school.

Science

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Scientific enquiry is at the heart of science teaching at GLPA, and all children are given regular practical opportunities in order to develop their scientific knowledge and understanding. Children are supported to articulate scientific concepts clearly and precisely, using appropriate scientific vocabulary.

Where appropriate, the academy's outdoor environment is used to enhance teaching and learning in Science. Science is taught weekly either as a discreet subject or as part of the cross curricular topic.

PE and Sport

GLPA has a well-deserved positive reputation in PE and sport. At GLPA, physical activity is very important and we have many past students that have gone on to careers in sport. We have a member of staff that has additional responsibilities for PE and sport and employ a sports coach. We use all of our Sports Premium Grant to give as many opportunities as we can to as many children as possible.

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In PE, all children have the opportunity to be active, have fun and achieve their personal best. . All classes have two 1-hour blocks of timetabled PE per week, except Early Years who have one block (their outdoor provision contributes to children's daily physical activity). Talented children are identified through PE and challenged through encouragement to participate in school sport. Open trials are offered to all children before each squad is chosen for inter-school competition. Our calendar of intra-academy sport allows us to choose as children as many children as possible to access competitive sport. Children are taught both indoors and outdoors, depending on the activity and the weather. Teamwork and sportsmanship are at the heart of every session.

We have many extra-curricular sports clubs and we enter many competitions; we continue to have success at local, city and county level.

Children in Y4 go swimming at Kippax swimming pool; top up swimming is offered to children in Y5 who cannot swim 25metres.

Foundation Subjects Curriculum – Art, DT, Spanish, RE, PSHCE, History, Geography, Music, Computing.

When designing and developing the wider curriculum, GLPA wanted a curriculum that was meaningful and relevant for the children, linked to their interest and relating to real life experiences.

We want children to:

- problem solve and work things out;
- investigate and find out for themselves ;
- collaborate and work as part of a team;
- organise themselves and their work and
- decide how they will communicate and present their work.

We have framed the approach using Green Lane Missions that are posed in the form of questions that the children work together to answer for example 'How can we prepare for a natural disaster such as a flood?' Answering this question over a half term or a term would cover many aspects of the National Curriculum such as rivers, water cycle, habitats, classification, map work, looking at other countries that flood. The children will present their work to each other and a wider audience at the end of each topic.

