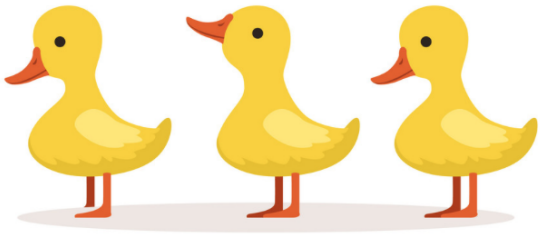
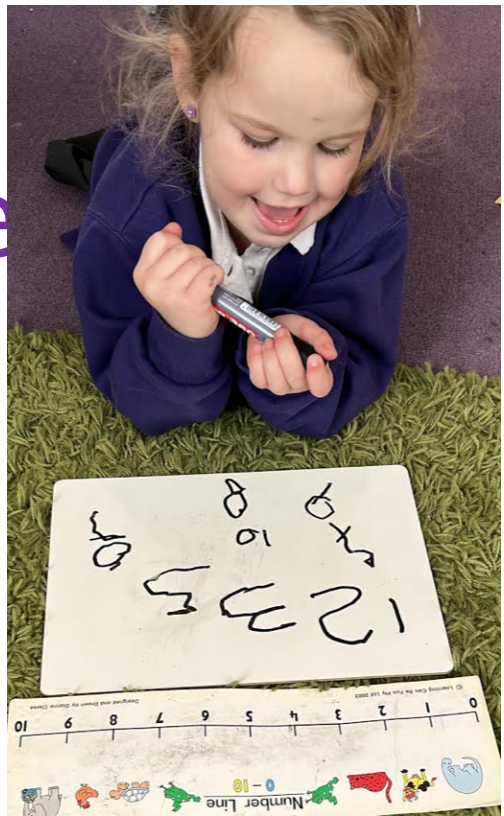
Early Years at Grasmere Academy
Prospectus 2026 – 2027

Grasmere Academy

Learn • Flourish • Achieve



Duckling Class
Little Explore



Contacts

Head Teacher: Mrs Kerry Lilico
Company Secretary: Mrs Laura Lowdon
Head of Foundation Stage: Miss Hannah Girvan

Address

Grasmere Academy
Grasmere Court
Killingworth
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE12 6TS

Tel – 0191 2220259
Email – info@grasmereacademy.org.uk

How to find us



About our School

Our Mission statement: At Grasmere Academy, over time we have carefully crafted a school that embeds a highly inclusive ethos. We believe that no matter what the stage of development of a child, we will ensure that our children make progress. Instead of making children 'fit into' a school system, we will actively look for ways to see how we can change in order to meet the needs of our children. We have adopted a motivational and engaging teaching and learning pedagogy, steeped in research and mastery, which reflects how the working world has changed. It is our moral imperative to prepare our community for this. The world we live in requires innovators, problem solvers, critical and creative thinkers and culturally aware citizens. It is our drive to prepare our children for a life unimaginable.

At Grasmere Academy our ethos statement underpins our vision and values....

'Learn, Flourish, Achieve'

We believe that all children have the right to learn, and therefore we will nurture them as they flourish, in order to allow everyone to achieve their potential. We are dedicated to this commitment.

We pride ourselves in nurturing the whole child and teaching values and morals as the bedrock to building citizens of the future.
We do this discreetly through our PSED (Personal, social, emotional development) curriculum, but it also threads through the fabric of our school, in how we teach our children, our expectations and the activities we organise.

Our Early Years Ethos

At Grasmere we follow the statutory guidance and principles as set out in the statutory framework for the Foundation Stage (EYFS).
We respond to children's individual needs to ensure that each child reaches their full potential. We actively encourage the involvement of parents/carers in their children's learning and organise a variety of opportunities over the year for parents to support and engage in their child's learning journey.
We provide a well-planned, exciting environment which supports children in their learning and encourages them to become independent and successful. We aim to give the children different experiences that enrich their learning and develop their understanding of the world.
Our early years team are all highly skilled, committed practitioners who use their strengths and enthusiasm to create a purposeful, caring, supportive environment for all children to learn, feel safe and reach their full potential.

About Our Early Years

Our Early Years at Grasmere provides education for children aged 2 to 5 years old and runs as a unit where our Nursery and Reception children learn and grow together. Our 2 year old provision, 'Little Explorers' runs in the afternoons and we offer both funded and paid placements which can be discussed with the School Office.
Children can start Little Explorers the term after their 2nd birthday and nursery the term after their 3rd birthday. We offer a September, January and Easter intake. If you are interested please let us know as soon as possible in order for us to allocate your child a place.

Early Years staff

Our Early Years unit is run by a qualified teacher and highly skilled teaching assistants who work closely with parents/carers to provide a home from home atmosphere in which children feel safe, happy and able to flourish. All of the staff have qualifications in early year's education and there is always a qualified first aider on site. Relevant checks are carried out on all staff and helpers.

Key workers

A key worker system is in place where individual members of staff work with a small group during group times and are responsible for making the assessment records for those children. In addition the key worker system provides a familiar point of contact for both parent and child. Key workers are available at the beginning and end of the session if you have any questions or concerns. You will be informed on your initial visit who your child's key worker is. Throughout the year, you will be given opportunities to come into the setting and meet with your child's key worker to discuss how your child is doing.

Seesaw

Your child's learning journey will be documented on the SeeSaw app, which is a secure, online platform that you will be signed up to. Staff will post pictures, videos and notes showcasing your child's learning and you can like the photos and then add comments. You can also send the staff pictures and notes of the things your child is doing at home and these can be uploaded to their journey. We love to see what your children are achieving at home.

Timings of the session/Collecting your child

2 Year old Sessions
Afternoon session 12:15pm – 3:15pm

Nursery Sessions
Morning session 8:30 – 11:30am (gates open 8.30am and close 8.45am)

Reception day
The day begins at 8:35am and ends at 3:05pm.

At the end of the session please come **promptly**. If for any reason you are running late please contact the school office on 0191 2220259. If your child is uncollected we will first contact you and then the other emergency contacts on the list. If we still cannot reach you or any family members we will phone through to Frontdoor at 4pm. At this point we will notify social services and the child may be collected by a social worker.

Please note if someone different is collecting your child please tell a member of staff.

The Curriculum and activities

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by Grasmere Academy helps children to continue to do this by providing all the children with exciting and interesting activities that are right for their age and stage of development. Grasmere Academy provides a carefully crafted creative curriculum based on the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the children's interests. The curriculum is divided into seven areas of learning, which are split into two parts:

The three prime areas – these are for all children and will always be the main focus of our planning and activities for children under 3 years.

- **Personal, social and emotional development**
- **Physical development**
- **Communication and language**

The four specific areas

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the world**
- **Expressive arts and design**

Children will learn through play and adult directed tasks as well as small group times. The different activities that are carried out during the sessions are almost too many to mention but include painting, play dough, cutting & gluing, help with pencil control, singing, maths, reading and playing outside, as well as opportunities for free play.

Nursery extra sessions - Fees and 30 hour funding

Grasmere Academy can provide extra childcare sessions for Nursery aged children providing that we have availability. We are able to provide government funded 30 hours provision and extra sessions for parents who do not meet the Government criteria.

Government funded sessions are based on a set criteria, please see the following website for details. You must check your eligibility monthly, using the online checker and pass on your code to school who will log this with the local authority:

https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare

Additional sessions can also be paid for. You will be asked to sign a parent contract before your child starts. Payments must be made in advance by bank transfer and will be arranged with the school office. Please note that Early Years staff are not able to take cash payments. Failure to pay in advance may result in your child losing their additional sessions.

If you have any questions about the methods of payment, please speak to the school office team.

Children who are eligible for 30 hours government funding please see the timings of the session below. Please note new guidance has come into place from April 2025. This guidance states that the 30 hours runs continuously, there for it run from Monday morning through until Friday lunchtime. Any additional hours must be paid for or your child will need to be collected at 12.10 on a Friday. Lunches must also be paid for via Impact Foods or your child may bring a pack lunch.

Timings are Monday to Thursday 8:30am - 3:05pm
Friday 8:30am – 12:10pm

If you have any questions about paid or funded sessions please contact the school office on 0191 2220259.

2 Year old- Fees and 15 hour funding

Grasmere Academy can provide sessions for 2 year old aged children providing that we have availability. We are able to provide 15 hours provision only for both government funded and fee paying parents. The sessions run in the afternoons only between 12.15 and 3.15pm

Government funded spaces are based on a set criteria, please see the following website for details.

https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/free-childcare-2-year-olds-claim-benefits

Meal times

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are eligible for universal free school meals. Nursery children will need to prepay for their meals via the Hutchison catering. Our meals are provided by Hutchison catering and parents are able to pre-order their children's meals at home with their children.
North Tyneside Council request that ALL parents still complete a 'free school meal application' in order to indicate whether children will become eligible for meals in Year 3 and to allocate additional funding to school, known as Pupil Premium Funding. Please use the website below to register for meals before your child begins Reception.
https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/238/free-school-meals

Children may also bring a packed lunch into school. Packed lunches should offer children a healthy, balanced diet. Please do not send sweets or fizzy drinks into school. Children can get a school lunch through our lunch provider Hutchison. This must be prepaid and pre ordered through the Hutchison parent login.

Please note that we are a 'nut free' school.

Snack time

Children will be offered milk or water at snack time as well as a variety of fruit and toast.

Children receive milk for free up until their 5th birthday and we will register for this on your behalf. After your child's 5th birthday they can continue to receive milk if you wish to pay for it and you must then register via the Cool Milk website: www.coolmilk.com. **If you do not register your child they will not receive milk after their 5th birthday unless they are entitled to benefits led free school meals.**

We have a range of cups at school for your child to drink from to meet all developmental stages. Please also bring in a named water bottle for your child for them to use throughout the day. If your child has any food allergies, please let a member of staff know.

Please note that we are a 'nut free' school.

Dummies and toys

Children are not allowed to have a dummy within the classroom. When children are without their dummies it has benefits for their speech and language as they are able to communicate freely. If your child still has their dummy and you would like support to wean your child off their dummy please ask a member of staff. Children are not allowed to bring toys in from home unless instructed to by members of staff. We do however understand that some children will need a toy as comfort to settle into the setting.

Independent Skills

It is important for every child to learn skills that support them to become increasingly independent, this is part of the early years curriculum. At school we will encourage children to complete the following skills independently. Please make sure you support and teach your child to do these things at home.

- Toileting, children to be able to manage all of their toileting needs including wiping themselves.
- Children should be able to wash and dry their hands, understanding the need for hygiene.
- Children should be able to put their own coats and shoes on with minimal support from adults. Children should be able to dress and undress themselves with very little support.
- To support children with their hygiene needs and reduce the spread of infections children will know how to blow/wipe their own nose.
- It is important for children to be able to use both a knife, fork and spoon correctly and to drink from an age appropriate cup.

It is an expectation that a child will be fully toilet trained before joining nursery unless there are special educational/medical needs. If you would like more information on how to toilet train your child please speak to your health visitor, school staff or visit the NHS website.

What to wear

Uniform

- **Black trousers or a skirt**
- **White polo shirt / white shirt**
- **School logo jumper/cardigan**
- **Black school shoes/black trainers (NO LACES)**
- **Black tights/black socks**
- **Summer dress (purple) with white socks**
- **Please come into school dressed in P.E. kit on your class P.E. day (a white polo shirt, black shorts/joggers/leggings, a purple school jumper/hoodie and black sandshoes/trainers).**

Uniform is from Emblamatic Ltd and more information can be found on their website: https://emblematic.co.uk/longbenton-store/ga/

We provide protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities but sometimes they still get messy. Please provide a spare set of clothes for your child's peg these must remain in school. If

children are wearing wellies to come to school please make sure they have indoor shoes to change into.

No jewellery is to be worn. If your child has pierced ears then small studs only to be worn (no hoops please). Earrings must be removed on P.E. days.

What to bring

Children are required to bring the following items:

- A backpack/bag
- A PE kit
- A full change of clothes (plus extra if toilet training)
- If your child is in nappies you must provide a stock of nappies, nappy bags and wipes.
- Wellies on wet days and indoor shoes
- Hat and gloves for cold days
- Sunhat and named suncream on hot days
- Water bottle

Special educational and medical needs

Grasmere Academy is a fully inclusive school which prides itself on meeting every child's individual needs. We have an equal opportunities policy and are committed to treating the children in our care with equal concern and to make every attempt to meet their specific needs with regard to their religious persuasion, racial origin, cultural and linguistic background, as well as gender or disability.

We have a team of highly skilled and experienced Teachers and Teaching Assistants who have worked with children with a wide range of Special Educational and medical needs. We are very experienced in working with a range of other professionals and frequently welcome visiting specialists into school to work with our children.

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment

free from prejudice and discrimination. Opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Please let staff know if your child has any special educational needs or any medical needs. In some cases it will be necessary for us to meet with you and/or other professionals involved in your child's care so that we are properly prepared to meet their physical or medical needs.

Absence and Illness

Should you need to contact the school in the event of an emergency; to inform the school of your child's absence or if you will be delayed in collecting your child, then please phone the school office on 0191 2220259. If your child has sickness or diarrhoea please note that the schools' policy is that your child should be not in school for 48 hours.

We will telephone you and inform you if your child becomes ill during the session or if their temperature is raised above 38^{o}C. There is always a member of staff present who is trained in paediatric first aid. We will always contact you immediately if your child suffers anything more than a minor injury, or if we have any concerns about his/her health. We will inform you at the end of the session if your child has had a minor accident, bump or graze and you will receive an accident slip.

Please note that due to the short time the children in nursery spend with us each day we will not be able to administer medicines other than inhalers and emergency medicine e.g. epipens. This is due to the fact that they can be given at home before and after the 3 hour session. If prescribed medication is required please complete a form at the school office.

Helping your child to settle in

Children settle into nursery in lots of different ways. Some children will confidently move into school as soon as they come in, for instance if they have attended our toddler group or other settings or have an older sibling in the school. Other children may be nervous and anxious about

leaving their parent. Most children will be somewhere in between.

Leaving children can be quite hard for parents, especially if it is for the first time. Please be reassured and try not to worry if your child experiences difficulties – it is a very normal part of a child's development to be anxious, nervous or angry about starting school. Also children under three years of age often need a little more time for each of the stages. We also recognise that many parents will find this a difficult and sometimes upsetting process. We hope that we can use our experience to support you and your child in whatever way suits you to make it more or less as tear free as possible.

To ease this process, we will do the following for **new** children:

- Initial visit – this will help us get to know your child
- Visit to setting – all children will be asked to come for an hour session with their parent/carer for an informal chat/play
- Phased entry – Nursery children will come for a shorter session on the second day without their parent. At this point some children will be able to do the full 3 hour session however if your child is finding it stressful they can be phased in more gently.

How to help your child at home

All the fun activities that you do with your child at home are important in supporting their learning and development, and have a really long lasting effect on your child's learning as they progress through school.

Even when your child is very young and is not yet able to talk, talking to them helps them to learn and understand new words and ideas. If you make the time every day to do some of the following things with your child it will make a real difference to your child's confidence as a young learner

Sing and tell nursery rhymes

Talk about the numbers, colours, words and letters you see when you are out and about

Allow your child to cut out and stick pictures from magazines

On a trip to the supermarket, talk about all the different packaging



Cook / bake together

Plant seeds or bulbs in a pot or garden patch

Talk to your child at every opportunity – e.g. what you are doing that

Use the weather – shadows, rain puddles, snow, wind, mist and sun – to extend your child's vocabulary

Share a book

Explore the park at a different time of the year – go off the beaten track

