

Attachment & Trauma Sensitive School Award (ATSSA)



We are delighted to have been recognised for our culture of compassion and nurture in April 2025. The report highlighted many areas of expertise, in particular our individualised approach to children and families, and that one size does not fit all. Please refer to our Parents Zone for more information on our approach.

ECO Schools Accreditation



We are delighted to have been awarded Eco School as we embed of environmental education in early years settings which allows children to make sense of the world around them and their role within it. Congratulations to the Eco Committee of children & staff for their hard work towards this wonderful accreditation.

The Committee reported "It's wonderful that you have appointed such a representative Eco-Committee, this shows your school's excellent commitment to both the programme and the eco-cause. It's great to see that you had such a group of eager, enthusiastic volunteers. It was also wonderful to see that they were supported by two members of staff and that a key member of the SLT was kept informed. We love that you kept minutes from your meetings and that they helped to track, guide and prompt your activity, and thank you for including the excellent example. It was unfortunate that your pupils were too young to be responsible for completing those meeting minutes – but we were delighted to see them so interested and engaged. This helps them develop new skills and is a real mature and professional approach. Great work!"

Speech & Language Support for 3-5s



This course links research on early language development with best practice to give you up to date theoretical knowledge and practical tools to promote and extend communication. We have studied

1. What is communication? • Identify the processes involved in communication • Demonstrate the wide range of communication difficulties.
2. Communication Friendly Settings, Adult-child interaction and working with families • Consider what a Communication Friendly Setting is and how to achieve it • Understand the effect of adult-child interaction on the development of communication skills • Reflect on how to engage families to support their child's communication skills.
3. Listening, looking and understanding spoken language • Understand the development of listening and attention and how to support this • Explore the importance of non-verbal communication behaviours • Reflect on the use of visual information to help children learn and understand.
4. Promoting the development of vocabulary • Explore how children learn words and the typical pattern of vocabulary development • Discuss strategies to help children develop a rich and varied vocabulary.
5. Modifying adults' speech to help a child understand language • Practise modifying the adult's language through an understanding of information carrying words. • Consider how to use information carrying words to develop all aspects of communication.
6. The Blank Language Scheme (or Language for Thinking) • Discuss supporting verbal reasoning skills, including why & how questions, inferencing, sequencing, predicting • Practise modifying the adult's language accordingly.
7. The language journey - Developing expressive language skills • Develop strategies to encourage the use of sentences and expressive language • Discuss how to support children learning additional languages • Share ideas to develop narrative skills.
8. Play for language • Explore the link between play and language development • Know how to support language and communication through play • Identify skills required for successful social communication and share ideas as to how to promote these.
9. Supporting children with unclear speech and developing phonological awareness skills • Know the development of speech sounds. • Discuss strategies to support children with unclear speech. • Consider the link between speech, reading and writing. • Review phonological awareness and the four main components.
10. Management of stammering, sharing information with parents and course reflection • Explore the appropriate management of children who stammer. • Consider a model of communication to share with parents. • Reflect on what has been achieved through attending the course.

Centre of Excellence



Becoming a Centre of Excellence is an opportunity for schools to build on the success of being one of the very special schools which holds the Inclusion Quality Mark award. A Centre of Excellence brings schools together to share and build on their existing good practice in inclusion best practice.

Centre of Excellence Criteria

Centres of excellence determine for themselves who will be involved and the direction in which they choose to make progress. There is no upper limit to the number of schools in a cluster group, so this can fit with existing cluster arrangements and local geographical proximity or it can allow schools to twin over distance with the specific aim of making further progress in this very important area of school life.

Criteria for Centre Excellence

- Committed to sustaining the Inclusion Quality Mark ethos through collaborative activities.
- Have demonstrable plans to sustain and develop internal inclusive practice.
- Have good mechanisms to disseminate and share good practice between the schools.
- Have, or are able to develop, the capacity to share and disseminate good inclusive practice across a broader cluster of schools.
- Are willing to engage in classroom level research activity that explores inclusive practice.
- Agree to have an annual IQM visit to ratify or validate the progress and develop an annual plan for development.
- Agree to contribute an annual written update of progress against the eight elements as the basis for the annual review.
- Are prepared to contribute to the overall development aims of IQM, supporting the need for expertise or trialling practice.

SchemaPlay Accreditation



SchemaPlay: When we can identify, value and respond to the unique ideas and concepts children are exploring during their schematic play pursuits, we are able to nourish their thinking and support meaningful learning continuities through free-flow play. Through our case studies and submissions, we have clearly evidenced how our provision and curriculum offer is influenced by the noticing, resourcing and responding to children's schematic interests

Healthy Minds Chartermark



We are thrilled to have been recognised for our work with the whole community on mental health & well-being. This was also an opportunity to showcase the development of our whole school ethos and policy with regard to mental health and emotional wellbeing based on a foundation of relational practice. This means the implementation and learning of rules and boundaries is within a safe and secure relationship based approach for children and staff. The Chartermark is based on eight key principles for mental health and wellbeing as recognised by Public Health England. (Criteria for participation is to have undertaken the DfE Approved Senior Mental Health Leads Training).

Our report noted "Hirst Wood Nursery School places a strong emphasis on mental health and wellbeing. The school has implemented various strategies to support both children and staff. They participate in the Emotion Coaching programme, which is designed to help children understand and manage their emotions effectively. They have also received the bronze award for Attachment and Trauma Aware. This has ensured that staff are equipped to support children who may have experienced adverse childhood experiences."

Sun Safe



Developed by national skin cancer and melanoma UK charity, SKCIN, a specialist skin cancer awareness charity. We have reviewed our procedures and produced a Sun Safe Policy alongside information for children, parents and carers to manage our time in the sun safely. The Sun Safe Nurseries accreditation programme has been developed by national skin cancer and melanoma UK charity, SKCIN, a specialist skin cancer awareness charity. We have reviewed our procedures and produced a Sun Safe Policy alongside information for children, parents and carers to manage our time in the sun safely.