



CARLINGHOW
ACADEMY



**GREAT
HEIGHTS**
ACADEMY TRUST



Little Explorers Booklet

2025/2026

Welcome to
Carlinghow Academy
Achieving excellence together

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Welcome

I would like to welcome you to Carlinghow Academy.

I hope that you find this booklet interesting and full of all the information you need to know about your child starting school.

Carlinghow Academy is a safe, warm, welcoming and inclusive school where all stakeholders have the children's best interest at heart.

The children at Carlinghow Academy are amazing! They have shown resilience through change and have always put 100% into everything they do. They are well mannered, caring, inclusive and have a real love of learning.

As Head of School, I am immensely proud of this school and hope that the website gives you an insight into all of the work that we do.

If there is anything that you are not sure about, or you have any questions that this booklet or our website does not answer, please don't hesitate to contact us and we will try to answer your query.



Mrs M Fishwick
Principal

Smooth Transition

Starting Little Explorers is an exciting time but we also appreciate that it can bring with it feelings of worry and anxiety for both children and parents/carers. In light of this, we strongly believe that successful transition begins by building strong relationships between the staff, the child and their families.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Inviting your child to attend at least 1 transition session for an hour. This will allow your child to become familiar with the staff in the setting and experience the provision they can play with.
- Carrying out a home visit, whereby 2 members of staff will visit your child at home. During this visit staff will spend time talking to yourself and your child and they will observe how your child plays/interacts in a familiar environment. The staff will find out about your child's interests and likes so that they can prepare the classroom environment to accommodate these. This ensures your child feels as settled as possible.
- Spending the first 4 weeks carrying out baseline assessments in school.
- Allocating your child a key worker so they can form a close relationship with a familiar adult.
- Sharing assessment information through reports, parents' evenings and an online learning journey.



Baseline Assessment

When your child starts in Little Explorers, their teachers will spend the first 4 weeks getting to know them through a baseline assessment. The baseline assessment builds a 'picture' of your child looking at: well-being, characteristics of effective learning, prime areas and specific areas.

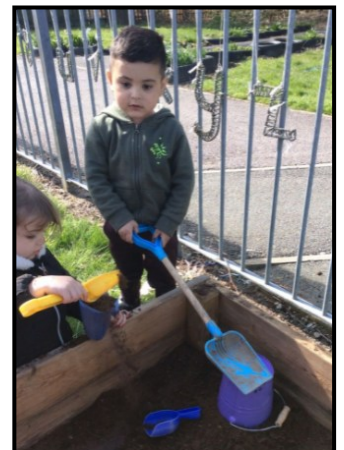
Teachers will capture the baseline assessment through:

- Observations of children's play and interactions
- Planned activities in provision
- Speaking to parents and carers
- Home visits
- Discussions with previous settings

Children will only be assessed when they are displaying high levels of involvement and well-being as we recognise that the most important job at the start of the year is to ensure that your child makes a happy and settled transition into Little Explorers.

During this time we will support children to establish positive relationships, understand routines and become familiar with the adults in the class.

Once children are happy and settled at Little Explorers the staff can then use the information from the baseline assessments to carefully plan and prepare an engaging and stimulating learning environment filled with exciting opportunities for your child to play, interact, learn and explore. For this reason, it is important that you share as much information with your child's teacher as possible: especially about your child's interests and the things that excite them.



Curriculum

In Little Explorers the children help to decide the curriculum. It is extremely flexible in order to cater for the needs and interests of the children within the setting and is planned in response to children's individual next steps in learning.

When children are engaged and excited they learn best, so we encourage you to share with your child's key worker the things that they love doing and are interested in.

Early Years Outcomes (September 2021)

Throughout the year children's progress is reviewed against the Early Years Outcomes. Children who are working within 'typical' expectations for Nursery will be achieving objectives within the 'Birth to Three' section of each of the Areas of Development. The Characteristics of Effective Learning describe key dispositions which play a central role in your child becoming an effective learner.

| Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning |
|--|
| Playing and Exploring Children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'. |
| Active Learning Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements. |
| Creating and Thinking Critically Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things. |

| Areas of Learning and Development | Aspect |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Prime Areas | |
| Communication and Language | Listening and attention |
| | Speaking |
| Personal, Social and Emotional Development | Self – regulation |
| | Managing self |
| | Building relationships |
| Physical Development | Gross Motor Skills |
| | Fine Motor Skills |
| Specific Areas | |
| Literacy | Comprehension |
| | Word reading |
| | Writing |
| Mathematics | Number |
| | Numerical Patterns |
| Understanding the World | Past and Present |
| | People, Culture and Communities |
| | The Natural World |
| Expressive Arts and Design | Creating with Materials |
| | Being Imaginative and Expressive |

Further information about the Early Years Outcomes can be found on the following website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-early-years-foundation-stage-cyfs-framework/changes-to-the-early-years-foundation-stage-cyfs-framework>

Play-Based Learning

In Little Explorers children learn largely through child initiated activities and play-based experiences. Staff carefully plan indoor and outdoor provision to capture your child's imagination, promote independent learning and encourage interactions with peers across a range of contexts.

There are carpet sessions timetabled throughout the day where the children come together to learn about songs, rhymes, stories as well as understanding of the world and expressive arts and design. Focussed activities are then planned to provide the 'next steps' to support your child's progress and development.

Similar to the baseline, staff will dedicate time to observing your child as they play, interact, problem-solve and choose their own activities.

Areas of continuous provision include:

- Construction
- Water
- Play Dough
- Creative
- Sand
- Outdoors
- Role-Play
- Small-World
- ICT
- Library



Wow Moments

At Carlinghow Academy we like to work in partnership with parents and we encourage you to take an active role in your child's education.

We love hearing about the exciting experiences your child has outside of Nursery, including special visits and outings as well as day to day activities such as sharing a book at bedtime, learning to ride a bike, playing a game, visiting family etc...

WOW slips are available from the Little Explorers members of staff.

Whatever the Weather!

Part of our curriculum in Little Explorers is 'Understanding the World', so please be aware that we like to play out in all weathers!

Children absolutely love exploring their natural environment and what better way to do this than to experience the changing seasons first hand?

During the wet months we ask that you provide your child with a hooded, waterproof coat, a pair of wellies and a spare pair of socks.

We also like to get hands-on so please be aware that, on occasion, your child's clothing might not be as clean as when they first came to school in the morning!

Wherever possible we will provide children with aprons but we ask you to understand that children generally have a way of getting messy no matter what and if it's only a little bit of dirt or paint it should come out in the wash!

Sessions

All Little Explorers children are entitled to receive 15 funded hours.

From September 2023, we will be offering the following sessions:

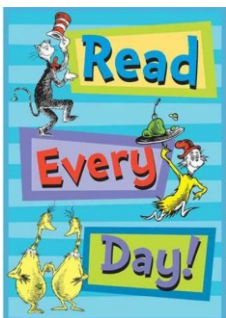
| |
|--|
| Every Morning |
| Every day Monday - Friday (8.45am - 11.45am) |

Reading

Reading at home is **THE** best way you can support your child's learning! We encourage you to share books **EVERY** night whether they are home reading books or picture books.

Sharing books has significant benefits including:

- Enjoyment
- Strengthening bonds between parent and child
- Improving speaking and listening skills
- Promoting a love of reading
- Giving your child the best start to their education



School Library and Story Sharing

Once you have signed a library agreement, your child may borrow books from our school library. Throughout the year we will offer story sharing sessions where parents/carers are invited into class to share stories with children.

Parent Participation

At Carlinghow Academy, we view your child's education as a partnership between home and school. In order for your child to reach their full potential it is important that we work as a team. At the beginning of the school year, parents are asked to sign a contract; The Carlinghow Academy Home/Academy Agreement. This identifies what we will do together, what we as staff will do, what we expect you as parents to do and finally what we ask of the children. A copy of the agreement terms can be found on the last page of this booklet.

Keeping Informed

To ensure parents are kept informed of up and coming events, a calendar on our website shows all our diary events. We also publish all letters which are sent home on our website, so it is worth checking our web page at regular intervals to keep yourself informed.

Texts

In order to keep our parents updated with school life and any last minute changes such as closure due to snow we use a text/email service which will send a text to mobile phones or an email depending on the urgency of the message.

Seesaw

At Carlinghow Academy, we use an app called Seesaw throughout school as an interactive learning platform. It is a simple way for teachers and pupils to record and share what's happening in the classroom. Seesaw gives pupils a place to document their learning, be creative and learn how to use technology. Each child gets their own online journal which follows them up through school. Children are encouraged to take ownership of their learning, they and will add and create photos, videos, drawings, or presentations independently. When there are new Seesaw posts, families can be notified via app notification, email or SMS. Parents are only notified about their own child's work, and all data is safe and secure.

Seesaw is also used to share letters and important information from school.

Arbor

We use an electronic payment system 'Arbor' - where parents can pay for school dinners and trips online. Once your child has started school you will receive information on registration.

Snacks

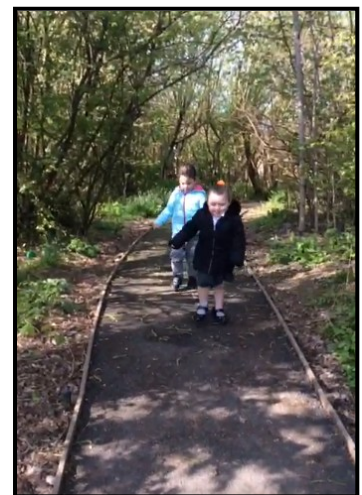
At Carlinghow Academy we strive to promote a healthy lifestyle. Children are offered fresh or dried fruit and vegetables, provided by a government scheme to encourage children to eat five a day. This includes a different choice each day e.g banana, carrot, pear, apple or orange. Children are encouraged to peel their own fruit to assist their self-help skills.

Milk

Milk is available to all children in Foundation Stage, including Little Explorers. For all our under 5's this is free. Carlinghow Academy will automatically register your child to receive school milk each day.

Water

Children are encouraged to drink water to keep well hydrated during the school day. To promote a healthy lifestyle this must be water and not juice. Please can you provide your child with a named water bottle for this purpose.



School Uniform

Grey skirt / trousers

Blue sweatshirt / cardigan (ideally with the Carlinghow Academy logo)

Pale blue polo shirt

Black shoes - no boots please

In the summer, many girls wear blue / white check dresses.

All children may wear grey shorts in warm weather.

Children should not come to school wearing fashion trainers, jeans, tracksuits, sportswear or beachwear.

Please ensure all items of uniform are clearly labelled with your child's name.

Change of clothes

Please ensure your child has a bag with a change of clothes in.

This should include:

Trousers/leggings, t-shirts, pants, socks, shoes/pumps.

This is in case of accidents or they may get wet during water play, etc.

Jewellery

For health and safety reasons we do not allow children to wear jewellery. The exceptions to this rule are ear-ring studs in pierced ears, and small objects of religious significance. Hair bands, ribbons/bows or 'scrunchies' should be plain and either blue, white or black. Hair bands should not have large flowers attached. Make up and nail varnish should not be worn to school unless for an out of school hour's function, for example a school disco. Extreme hairstyles are not appropriate for school. The use of styling products should be kept to a minimum and children should not have decorative patterns cut into their hair or have hair coloured or dye

Preparation

Many parents ask what we want children to do before they come to Little Explorers.

Whilst reading, writing and maths are important areas of learning, please remember that in Little Explorers they only form part of the curriculum. Here is a list of ways that you can support your child's learning at home:

- *Read books*
- *Make up stories*
- *Sing songs*
- *Dance to music*
- *Insist on good manners*
- *Teach your child how to dress themselves (including fastening their coats)*
- *General hygiene (including washing hands)*
- *Healthy choices*
- *Junk modelling*
- *Play dough*
- *Exercise*
- *Get outdoors*
- *Counting objects*
- *Mark making*



We hope that you have found the information in this booklet helpful.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school office or arrange a meeting with a member of staff.

We look forward to the year ahead getting to know you and your child!

Building a partnership between Home and the Academy

TOGETHER WE WILL:

- Help our children to feel happy, confident and valued at Carlinghow Academy.
- Promote in them a clear understanding of good manners and right and wrong.
- Share common expectations to enable everyone to reach their maximum potential.
- Create a safe and secure environment where our children can flourish.
- Establish open and respectful communication between all members of The Academy community.
- Develop a shared understanding of the behaviour policy expectations.
- Celebrate, share and praise successes.

THE ACADEMY STAFF WILL:

- Work within all policies, values, aims and visions set by the Governors.
- Provide an open and welcoming environment where you and your child will feel valued.
- Recognise and build on your child's unique strengths.
- Set accurate and helpful targets for you and your child to work on.
- Keep you informed of your child's progress and offer encouragement and support.
- Be available to discuss your child's progress formally annually and informally by mutual arrangement.
- Endeavour to arrange Academy events and meetings to meet the needs of families.
- Ensure respectful communication by providing appropriate lines of communication which are accessible, regular and considered.
- Have available on request information about the complaints procedure.

IN RETURN WE ASK THAT PARENTS:

- Support and respect the Academy's policies, values, aim and visions.
- Support the staff in their care and education of your child.
- Ensure that your child is punctual and attends The Academy regularly.
- Avoid taking holidays during term time.
- Attend and support Academy events, meetings and celebrations wherever possible.
- Create a sense of belonging by ensuring children wear the requested Academy uniform.
- Ensure respectful communication by liaising with the appropriate Academy Staff.
- Notify the Academy of any changes of circumstances that might affect the child.
- Let us work together to make our partnership one of confidence, enthusiasm and respect.

IN RETURN WE ASK THAT CHILDREN:

- Take care of everyone and everything so that:

The Academy is a happy place, we can all learn, nobody gets hurt, we are all safe, nothing gets spoilt or lost. And we take care of ourselves so that we can stay fit and healthy.

Getting in touch

Carlinghow Academy
Ealand Road
Batley
WF17 8HT
01924 326371
office@carlinghow.ghat.org.uk