Developing Independent Learning in a Caring Environment



Ellison Primary Academy

Welcome to Ellison Primary Academy





Foreword: Nicola Gibson, Headteacher

It's a privilege to welcome you, and your child, to Ellison Primary Academy.

Enjoyment

We place great emphasis on children enjoying their learning experience, as well as reaching the highest possible standard of achievement. It's not just about remembering dates and facts… it's also about igniting an interest in learning that will last a lifetime!

Dedicated staff

This would not be possible without our wonderful teaching and support staff. They are dedicated to making sure that your child enjoys their time here and reaches their potential.

Caring

I am very proud indeed that our school is a highly supportive and caring environment, where children feel safe to make mistakes, learn from those mistakes…and work independently using their initiative.

Parent partnership

Another important part of our school, and your child's learning journey…is you, the parent! And you will see, by reading the many parent and pupil stories within this prospectus, that you and your child are very important to us. We champion the link between school and parent and work very hard to involve you in every step of your child's time here, further increasing your child's enjoyment of learning.

Get in touch

I would urge you to visit our amazing school. I am truly confident you will find this a welcoming and supportive school, with staff that listen, consult and actively encourage your involvement. I know that you will be impressed by the quality of education and care we can offer your child.

To make an appointment to visit, or to simply ask me a question, please contact the school office on 01782 613674.



Children always have someone to play with

Isaac and Lucas are both thriving in the caring, nurturing atmosphere of Ellison Primary Academy

Lily and Adam live in Porthill with their children, Isaac, aged eight, and Lucas, aged four.

Friendly school

Lily and Adam had looked at a few schools in the area when Isaac was about to start but said they knew straight away that Ellison Primary was the right one. It just felt right and everyone was really friendly. Isaac had attended a private nursery and when he started in Reception at Ellison Primary, he had no trouble settling. He just waved to me and went off. He enjoyed playing with cars and construction blocks and liked being with his friends. He enjoyed sports, particularly football and table tennis, and he loved playing outdoors.

Supportive staff

Lily and Adam are grateful for all the care and support their eldest son, Isaac, received from the staff at Ellison Primary after he became anxious and withdrawn as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. Lily says: "Isaac still went into school because I am a key worker, but a lot of the other children weren't there and it wasn't the same as before. When things got back to normal, he didn't want to join in as he had done before and he had difficulty expressing himself.

Quick response

"He felt that no one wanted to play with him and became so anxious, he didn't want to eat. We raised our concerns with the school and they invited us to a meeting. They offered to try him with small amounts of different foods to encourage him to eat and said they would give him extra support to stop him feeling anxious. We have now seen a huge improvement with his social interaction. The school were very prompt in taking action and Isaac has now started to enjoy school again and stopped saying that he doesn't want to go."

Good progress

"Like a lot of children, his wellbeing was impacted by Covid and It was hard for him to express his feelings about it to begin with. However, from the academic point of view he is now doing well at school. His teacher told us at parents evening that he is very satisfied with his progress."

Enjoying learning

Lucas started in Reception in September 2021 when he had just had his fourth birthday. Lily says: "I was concerned about him being young in the school year, but he has always been fine. He really enjoys going to school and being with his friends. At the weekend, he always asks me if he is going to school the next day. He is naturally inquisitive and interested in lots of things. He likes being challenged by the teacher to work out problems with numbers. They are now starting to learn phonics and he seems to be coping with it well. He also loves doing outdoor activities."

Happy environment

Adam says: "I always find the school a happy place to visit and I like the way they display the children's work in the corridors. I have found all the staff to be approachable and friendly. You are warmly greeted by the reception staff and nothing is ever too much trouble for them. When you drop the children off at the school you are always greeted with a smile and a good morning. You get the feeling it is a nice, safe place for the children. It is a big thing for parents to leave their young children at school to be looked after by someone else. However, we feel it is a caring, nurturing place where they will be well looked after. We would have no hesitation recommending Ellison Primary to other families."

Children say

Isaac says: "I like my school because I am learning new things and making new friends."

Lucas says: "I like going to school to play with my friends."



School Day



The School Day

Children are welcomed each morning and collected each afternoon from the playground. We ensure that parents and carers have opportunity to meet the class teacher daily.

Before and After School Care

Our Five Star Care Club runs before and after school. We have holiday clubs running throughout the year.

Uniform

A simple uniform is helpful in establishing good standards of appearance in school and by wearing it children quickly feel part of the community. School uniform lists can be obtained by contacting the school office. School sweatshirts, cardigans, polo shirts and PE shorts can be purchased from local uniform suppliers; please ask at the school office for further information.

The school day



School meals and snacks

As a healthy school, we are passionate about encouraging children to live a healthy lifestyle. At lunchtime children can choose from a range of freshly prepared, healthy and nutritious meals. Free lunches are available to all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Children can also bring in a packed lunch.

Break-time

We are part of the National Fruit Scheme, where all children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 have free fruit each day. All children are also able to bring fruit or have a drink of milk and a slice of toast or crumpet, payable in advance.





Behaviour

Ellison Primary Academy helps pupils to recognise the rights and responsibilities of others and to regulate their own behaviour. We endeavour to support pupils in their ability to contribute to a caring community where effective learning can take place, where mutual respect is demonstrated, and where there is concern for the environment.

Up to date facilities

Curriculum

The curriculum is divided into three stages:

Early Years Foundation Stage: from ages 0-5
Key Stage 1: from ages 5-7
Key Stage 2: from ages 7-11

Reception

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is made up of three prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

and four specific areas:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design



Key Stages 1-2

Areas of the curriculum are:

- Mathematics
- English
- Science
- Computing
- Design and technology
- History
- Geography
- Art and design
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- Modern foreign languages (KS2)
- Relationships and Health Education

Rich and Ambitious Curriculum

The curriculum is carefully designed to equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital to succeed in life. We immerse the children in a language rich environment as a Royal Shakespeare Associate school and encourage children to develop their caring, collaborative, critical and creative thinking.

Joseph and Milo are enjoying all the exciting learning opportunities offered by staff at Ellison Primary Academy

Kimberley and Matthew live in Hanley with their sons, Joseph, aged six, and Milo, aged four.

Philosophy and Art

Kimberley and Matthew are delighted that both Joseph and Milo are enjoying learning at Ellison Primary. Kimberley says: "Joseph has become fascinated with the big questions of life thanks to his lessons in Philosophy for Children (P4C). He loves his P4C lessons, which help children develop their critical thinking and engage with complex global issues. Joseph loved learning about democracy and likes to talk to us about democracy. Milo is much more creative and enjoyed going into the Victorian garden recently to sketch the daffodils."

Good impression

Kimberley and Matthew chose Ellison School for Joseph because they had heard great things about it. "We were in the catchment area and we had friends with grown up children who had gone there and done well, so I went to an open evening. I thought the staff were very attentive and they really seemed to care about each child and their families.

Interesting lessons

"Joseph started in Reception and loved it from his first morning. The staff were really good with him and he enjoyed school so much he would wish the weekend away so he could get back there. He used to tell me that he learned through play and that he loved the discovery tables and doing Maths. They did interesting things such as studying the life cycle and had eggs in Spring so that the children could watch the chicks hatch out."

Help for parents

Matthew says: "Everything was going really well and then along came Covid 19 and Joseph had to stay at home during the first lockdown. The staff were really helpful and we were given access to resources so we could teach phonics to Joseph. It gave us a new appreciation for what the teachers do. The parents set up a WhatsApp group so we could stay in touch and we made videos to send to the teachers. The school would send films of teachers reading stories so the children could see their teachers' faces."

Happy return

Joseph went back to school for the last three weeks of the summer term before the school broke up for the holidays. Kimberley says: "This was optional and some children didn't go back, but Joseph was really keen to return. After the summer he started in Year One. The staff were mindful of the fact that it had been a strange time for the children and were very supportive. They had sent out a picture and a write up about Joseph's new teacher. Despite the interruption to his education, Joseph was assessed as being where he should have been academically."

Kind teacher

Milo started in September 2021 and his experience was different from Joseph's, Kimberley says. "He was excited about starting school and had met the teacher and liked her, but when it came to his first day, he didn't want to actually go in. When he came out in the afternoon, he always said he had enjoyed school, but for a while was reluctant about going in each morning. His lovely teacher used to come out and walk in with him holding his hand and now he absolutely loves school and thinks the world of his teacher.

Fun activities

"Ellison Primary put on lots of activities for the children. Joseph loves football and enjoys training with Stoke City when they come into school and he enjoys the singing club after school. Milo enjoys the wellbeing club where they do mindfulness and yoga and the science club. They both love school dinners and think very highly of the school cook. We think the secret of Ellison Primary's success is that every teacher knows every child and try to get them involved in everything."

Children say:

Joseph says: "My favourite thing is playing tag in the playground with my friends and running round the play equipment."

Milo says: "I like playing with my friends at school."



Enriched Curriculum



Enriched and extended curriculum: trips and visits

To extend and enrich the curriculum, and make learning memorable and exciting, we offer a variety of opportunities and activities including:

- instrumental tuition
- local visits reflecting our cultural heritage
- links to our resident and other authors
- a wealth of after school sporting and creative opportunities
- links to places of worship

Children have a say!

Through a wealth of opportunities, children get to have a say in the running of the school and in their learning. We have a School Council, Class Ambassadors, Science Ambassadors, Eco Heads, Trust Representatives (RUGS) and opportunities to take responsibility for a variety of tasks.

Communicating with parents and carers

It is important to Ellison Primary Academy that parents are kept fully informed of their child's progress during the academic year. The progress of all children is monitored by class teachers and reported to parents by means of a termly parents' evening. We also have a comprehensive home/school diary to support effective communication.

We have a fortnightly newsletter, and keep our website up to date with all letters, policies etc. We also hold regular parents' workshops where parents can find out about the life and work of the school and how they can support their child's learning. Annual reports are also sent to parents.

Noah is becoming more independent and developing new skills in the caring environment of Ellison Primary Academy

Lisa and Paul Hitchen live in Newcastle-under-Lyme with their son, Noah, aged nine, and daughter, Florence, aged six.

Bright start

Lisa and Paul chose Ellison Primary for Noah because they felt it had a more nurturing environment than other schools they had visited. 'We felt Noah would thrive in the atmosphere at Ellison and we are pleased he is happy there. There have been no tears when we have left him in the mornings and he always comes out full of beans in the afternoon,' Lisa says.

Kind teachers

Noah joined the reception class in September. 'The settling in sessions definitely helped Noah before he started,' Lisa says. 'It is a big school with a two form entry but the atmosphere is very homely. All the staff are welcoming in the morning and a teacher will take Noah by the hand to lead him to his classroom. We are pleased with how well he has settled.'

Enjoying new things

'In reception the children are learning through play. They don't really know they are learning, but a lot of the activities cover things they need to know at this stage. Noah absolutely loves the discovery table. It is a round table where they put things of different textures for the children to explore, such as shaving foam. The children are asked simple questions to get them to describe in words what they are touching and feeling.'

Healthy lifestyle

'I am pleased Ellison promote healthy eating by providing a varied lunch menu. Children can always choose the salad option, which is good for Noah because he is always keen to have salad. The school also provide healthy snacks for the children in the mornings. Until they are five they are entitled to free milk and after they are five parents can pay if they want them to continue having milk.'

Learning through dance

As a dance teacher, Lisa runs after school classes for the children between Year One and Year Six and also goes into the Reception class during the school day to give the younger children dance classes. Lisa says: 'The children can achieve many of their learning goals through dance. It is creative; it is a way of developing their fine motor skills and it helps their coordination. Dance can cover a lot of areas of the curriculum.'

Friendly atmosphere

'Going into the school each week, I have been able to see what it is like during the day and I have been very impressed. The teachers are all friendly and welcoming and the children are all very polite. You can tell it is a happy school because the children are always smiling.'

Improving skills

'At parents evening Noah's teacher flagged up a few things we can work on at home to develop his skills. For instance, this weekend we have to make a party hat for Noah to wear for the school Christmas lunch and it will help him practise his cutting skills.'

Working at home

'If there is ever any question you want to ask or anything you need to talk about, the teachers are always available to talk to you at the end of the school day. You can also pop a note into the child's book bag and they will send you a reply. They send home worksheets to do and a book to read with your child each week,' Lisa says.

Good partnership

'The school are working to make the children more independent, encouraging them to put their coat on the right peg and put their book bag down in the right place. It is different from the way the children live at home, but school and home are both working towards achieving the same end result.'

Children say

Noah says: 'I love the discovery table and seeing all the different things on there.'



Inclusion: a Curriculum for all



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

We pledge to:

- continually consider how well the school ensures equality of opportunities for all pupils
- identify individual needs and support all children to achieve their full potential
- provide opportunities to support and narrow gaps in learning for all vulnerable children.
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Extra help

Where children need support to access their learning, we provide this in the classroom with individual learning programmes and with targeted small group or individual support where needed.

Accessibility

As an inclusive school, we respect and value the diversity of the community we serve as well as the wider community. Our school site complies with the Equalities Act 2010 and enables access for all.

Dyslexia

We are recognised as a Dyslexia Friendly school.

Gifted and talented children

We recognise that all children are individuals with their own specific needs, gifts and talents. Children who are identified as being exceptionally able or talented, are monitored and provided with stimulating and enriching lessons appropriate to their needs.

Cultural diversity

We feel that it is important for children to be aware of, and understand, other cultures. Such variety within school brings great enrichment to the teaching and learning that takes place. In our school:

- there is a mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs
- the learning environment reflects a sense of fairness and justice for all
- opportunities are provided for learners to develop a positive attitude as part of their preparation for life within a multi-cultural society.

Alexa enjoys learning and is progressing well in the happy atmosphere of Ellison Primary Academy

Hazel and Joe Hirst live in Wolstanton with their children, Alexa, aged nine, and Xander, aged seven.

Enthusiasm for learning

Hazel and Joe love the way Alexa comes home from school full of enthusiasm and tells them about what she has been doing. Hazel says: 'Alexa particularly enjoyed learning about Remembrance Day recently and told us about what she had learnt. She has just designed a poster for Kindness Week and has drawn a picture with some words about what kindness means to her. She has written about listening to others and helping others. It is always lovely to hear her talk about what she has been learning.'

Welcoming atmosphere

Hazel and Joe liked Ellison Primary straight away when they visited it while they were looking for a school for Alexa. Joe says: 'We had looked at two other schools already, but from the moment we walked into Ellison we had a really good feeling about it. We liked seeing all the artwork on the walls. It seemed colourful and inviting. We were impressed when we talked to the head teacher, Mrs Gibson, about all the different subjects they cover.'

Playing roles

'When Alexa started in the reception class she enjoyed it straight away. She was really keen to go to school every day and used to love coming home full of stories about what she had been doing. She particularly liked role play when she was in the reception class. The school would set up an improvised flower shop and the children would play the part of the shopkeeper or the customer, or they would be in the play kitchen pretending to cook.'

Moving up

Hazel says: 'Alexa made the transition from the reception class to Year One really well. She found it a bit different because there was less play and more academic work but she quickly got used to it and started to enjoy it. She has liked both her teachers so far and they have been really good with her and she has made a nice group of friends who she plays with in the playground.'

Helpful teacher

'This year she struggled a bit with her phonics to begin with but the teacher took her under her wing and helped her during the lessons, which gave her more confidence. She also gave her extra work to do at home and now Alexa is coming on really well with phonics.'

Fun lessons

Hazel and Joe have just been to a parents evening where they were told Alexa is on target in every subject. 'She particularly enjoys English and writing and doing PE, where she says they have been learning about balance. They seem to make learning fun, which is why the children can remember it all,' Joe says.

Extra activities

'Alexa also enjoys the after school clubs. Since she has been in Year One she has done a dance club, an arts and crafts club and a wellbeing club, where they have been learning yoga. She really enjoys the after school activities and is always keen to stay on at school and do something else rather than come home.'

Crafts after school

'She is very creative and so she has particularly enjoyed the arts and crafts club. She has brought home a Christmas tree she made and pictures she did using chalk paints. They can do more with arts and crafts after school than they have time to do during the school day.'

Happy place

Hazel says the whole atmosphere at the school is welcoming for both children and parents. 'I have just joined the PTFA and when you go into the school it seems a really warm and friendly place. The teachers know all the children's names and there is a lovely, happy atmosphere.'

Children say

Alexa says: 'I love writing stories at school.'



Clubs

There are a wide variety of clubs that children can join, during class, lunchtime and after school. Options often include:

- football
- singing
- instrumental
- dancing
- golf
- cross country
- netball
- gardening and nature
- Police Cadets
- First Aid

We give children leadership opportunities as much as possible and also engage regularly in events and competitions with other schools.









Olivia and Alice are flourishing thanks to the kind staff at Ellison Primary Academy

Laura and Robert Wright live in Wolstanton with their daughters, Olivia, and Alice, aged eight.

Strong support

Laura and Robert are grateful for all the wonderful support Olivia has had since starting at Ellison Primary. Laura says: 'Olivia has hemiplegia, a mild form of cerebral palsy, but she is making good progress because of all the help she has had from the staff. Her physio visited the school recently and told me she was amazed by how much support Olivia gets and that she doesn't see the same level of support in other schools she visits.'

Kind staff

Laura and Robert are glad Olivia was offered a place at Ellison Primary and was not given a place at the school that had originally been their first choice. 'Going to Ellison is the best thing that could have happened to Olivia although we didn't realise it at the time. It is a lovely school and all the staff have been amazing with her,' Laura says.

Daily exercise

Olivia started in the reception class just before her fifth birthday and settled in straight away without any problems. Laura says: 'Olivia has been helped daily to exercise her left hand to improve its dexterity and staff have also helped her work on a balance board. She has definitely improved her mobility as she has progressed up the school.'

Caring teacher

'I have complete confidence in the staff. Her teacher recently came and told me Olivia was becoming self-conscious about having to wear a splint on her leg. I can see they are looking after her emotional well being as well as her physical well being. Fortunately, because she has made such good progress she doesn't have to wear the splint every day now and I am well aware that the school have played a big part with that.'

Fun with friends

'Olivia really loves going to school. She misses it when she is on holiday because it means she can't see all her friends. She has made a lot of friends at Ellison Primary and always has a nice group of children to play with. She really enjoys Maths and likes to bring work home with her to do,' Laura says.

Activities after school

'Olivia has done numerous after school clubs and particularly enjoyed street dance and cross country. She doesn't let anything stop her joining in and completed a cross country run one afternoon, even though it was dark and cold and wet. She has enjoyed all the school trips she has been on. They have just been to see Treasure Island at the theatre and she absolutely loved it.'

Voluntary work

Laura is training to be a Teaching Assistant and works every Monday and alternate Wednesdays at the school as a volunteer to gain experience. 'I absolutely love working at the school and enjoy it far more than my main job. The school has a lovely atmosphere and I am always happy to be there,' Laura says.

Exceeding all targets

'Olivia has loved all her teachers and they have all been very supportive and kind. All the teachers and the head teacher, Mrs Gibson, are very approachable and are around for the parents to talk to them at the beginning and end of every school day. We have just had parents' evening and were pleased to be told that Olivia is exceeding her targets. They told us she had made significant progress since starting in Year Four at the beginning of September, both physically and educationally.'

Children say

Alice says: 'I enjoy school because I like history; especially finding out about the Kings and Queens of England.'



Applications

Visit our school

Parents and carers who are thinking of applying for a place at our school are invited to visit and look around at any time. Children start at Ellison Primary Academy in the Autumn term of the academic year in which they will have their fifth birthday.

Getting used to school

Prior to admission, parents and children are invited to spend time in school. You can also register your child by ringing 01782 613674

Applications

The Local Authority Admission's Office deals with all new admissions to Ellison Primary Academy. Contact details for Local Authority Admissions are:

Tel: 0300 111 8007

Email: admissions@staffordshire.gov.uk

Web: www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/admissions-primary/home.aspx

Attendance

Good attendance is vital to enable your child to fulfil his/her potential. School holidays are published well in advance and children are normally expected to take their holidays during that time.









Getting Involved



PTFA

We have a very active PTFA. They hold regular events to support the school by facilitating social and fundraising events.

Governance

The academy is part of The Societas Trust. There is also a Local Governing Board that consists of representatives from the multi-academy trust, parents/carers and staff. They work alongside the Senior Leadership Team and staff to ensure that the academy is highly successful in meeting the needs of all.

Do you want to be a Governor?

Vacancies for parent governors are advertised when available and all appointments are aligned to the skills and knowledge required to ensure a strong board of governors.







HOW TO FIND US

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