

Widford Lodge

PREPARATORY SCHOOL



3a

Teaching & Learning, Marking and Assessment Policy

**This policy applies to all pupils at Widford Lodge School including those in the
EYFS**

Reviewed and approved by the Proprietor and teaching staff: September 2023
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Philosophy

At Widford Lodge we aim to provide all our pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the needs of individual pupils. We aim to ensure that all pupils make good progress according to their ability and reach their full potential, being presented with a curriculum that reflects their experiences, backgrounds and abilities, and enables them to increase their understanding and develop their skills. We believe that children are taught and learn at all times during the school day and therefore see the hidden curriculum as an integral part of a child's overall education. We believe that providing a good all round education during their formative years will equip them with the skills and confidence with which to face the challenges of the wider world. We understand that staffing, curriculum content, pedagogy, staff training and development, resources, parents and the Proprietor of Widford Lodge all have an important role to play in meeting the teaching and learning policy statement of Widford Lodge School.

All teachers and those that learn should be striving to evaluate and improve their practice. This means understanding both the teaching and learning process and building on pupils' knowledge and understanding. It is our aim that our pupils develop ownership of their learning and are aware of the learning process and that our staff promote a growth mindset culture throughout the school and that it is embodied in our teaching and feedback.

It is our aim that teaching actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Furthermore, teaching will not discriminate against pupils or others on account of their age, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation or other protected characteristics. Any issues identified involving unconscious bias or possible discrimination will be addressed proactively.

Principles

As a result we intend that:

- Children will experience a broad and balanced scaffolded curriculum.
- Curriculum content and delivery will be closely monitored.
- Children will have access to suitable and sufficient quality resources and materials.
- New ideas and approaches to teaching and learning will be put into place and monitored.
- Staff will have the expertise to support children's learning and will have a good understanding of pupils' needs.
- Teachers will use a variety of teaching styles taking into account different pupils' methods of learning and plan lessons according to pupils' aptitudes, needs and prior attainment.
- Staff will be aware of children's personal, social, health and emotional development.
- Pupils will receive regular, useful written and verbal feedback, which is age appropriate and linked to the lesson criteria.
- Teachers will use a variety of formative and summative methods to assess pupils' progress, ranging from observations to formal exams.
- Pupils' progress will be regularly monitored and reported to parents.
- Pupils will appreciate the important role they have to play in their own educational development and be able to evaluate their progress and understand how they can make further improvements.
- The role of parents will always be valued and appreciated.
- Pupils will begin to understand the concept of growth mindsets and will be open and honest about their learning and their mistakes.

Effective learning means that pupils are motivated, take responsibility for their learning, develop valuable life skills and understand the implications of social learning.

To facilitate effective learning, teachers aim to:

- Create a safe and orderly environment, manage classes efficiently and develop productive working relationships with pupils, rooted in mutual respect
- Make lessons purposeful, interesting and stimulating using effective planning, activities and time management and provide opportunities for higher order thinking and hypothesising
- Ensure lessons are accessible and challenging for all pupils by appropriately scaffolding and using Quality First Teaching strategies, while minimising the use of worksheets
- Demonstrate good subject knowledge and understanding
- Use formative and summative assessment effectively to monitor pupils' progress

Our Learning Environment

Widford Lodge School aims to educate its pupils through a broad and balanced curriculum so that they can meet the challenges of the wider world.

Children of all abilities are educated in a purposeful, safe and secure environment where emphasis is placed on the traditional values of honesty, courtesy and respect of self and others.

In order to achieve this we aim to promote a learning environment in which pupils are sufficiently motivated and have the self-confidence to raise questions and evaluate their own work and attainments. This atmosphere will ensure that the pupils show their highest levels of achievement through a positive response to the tasks set in a variety of contexts, including their application of intellectual, physical and creative effort.

The children's books should be a reflection of their own work and achievements and therefore should be their own, independent work. While this will therefore not look perfect, teachers are discouraged from asking children to rub out work and start again: rather, there should be a note written by teachers to reflect any conversations or corrections and the child can make the necessary improvements below. Teachers are encouraged to focus less on the structure and presentation of the work in terms of its appearance to another adult, for example children should be cutting out and sticking in as far as possible, even if this is not as neat as if completed by an adult. These skills are important for children's development. We are mindful of the importance of pupils' progress and how this is best demonstrated through the work in their books. See the marking and feedback section below for further details.

Planning the Curriculum

Pupils in the Pre School and Reception follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. In the Preschool, activities are planned to enable the children to explore and develop their understanding. A half termly planner incorporates ideas for the seven areas of learning, daily plans are themed and led by the children's ideas. In Reception, learning opportunities are planned around termly topics that incorporate the seven areas of learning together with the children's interests and ideas.

Pupils in Forms 1-6 broadly follow the National Curriculum framework, with units of study/topics clearly structured. We also pay due regard to the requirements for those children who intend to sit the 11+ and other independent school examinations early in Form 6 and include thinking skills, problem solving and

reasoning into our timetable. Forest School sessions are timetabled each half term. We recognise the huge importance of the hidden curriculum and also of our Tuesday activities sessions, which include swimming, philosophy, cooking, gardening, drama, Forest School and languages on a rota.

From September 2023, we have introduced a new topic led curriculum for English, history, geography and Art/DT. Teaching in MFL, music, RE and science will be linked to the topics where possible. The topics for each year group from Forms 1 to 6 are set out in our curriculum information booklets which are updated annually and made available to parents on the school website. For subjects other than English and maths, half termly planners set out the learning question and resources for each weekly lesson. Detailed weekly plans are produced for English and maths which identify learning questions, activities, differentiation, resources and adult support for each daily lesson. All teachers are required to plan in advance of their lessons and to keep accurate records. Teachers in parallel year groups may share the responsibility for planning but liaise regularly with regard to the content and expectations.

Teachers ensure that their plans make provision for children with Special Educational and Disability needs, as well as able and talented children. Teachers adopt the Quality First Teaching framework and scaffold appropriately, while being fully aware of and involved with the targets and details of pupils' Learning Enhancement Plans.

Summative and Formative Assessments

Assessment is key to developing a child's self-esteem and motivation and is used to identify next steps and so improve a child's chances of learning. It is integral to curriculum planning and is based upon clear and agreed criteria, thereby measuring progress and helping to provide information to pupils, teachers and parents. We understand the impact that teachers and feedback/assessment can have on pupils and therefore the need for teachers to set high expectations and to involve pupils in the learning process, helping them to understand their successes and that progress is not always continuous but can occur in stages. By involving pupils in a positive way, we aim to build their confidence and growth mindset. We use a combination of summative and formative assessments as outlined below.

EYFS Summative Assessments and Reporting to Parents

During the first month in the EYFS, preschool key workers and Reception class teachers and Learning Support Assistants carry out a baseline assessment with all children. The Reception teachers use the CEM baseline programme and also assess the children's 'Language Acquisition and Reading Readiness' using the LARR test which gives a raw and age standardised score for each child at the beginning of their Reception year.

When a child is aged between two and a half and three, preschool key workers carry out a progress check, this is a short written summary, given to parents, of the child's development in the prime areas of learning – Personal, social and emotional development, Physical development and Communication and language. Key workers discuss with parents and/or carers how the summary of development can be used to support learning at home.

During the academic year, preschool key workers write a short summary of development at the end of the child's first term showing how the child has settled into the preschool routine. A formal parents' evening is held in February where keyworkers and parents can discuss the child's overall development. At the end of

the academic year, key workers write a formal report covering each area of learning and parents are encouraged to respond with their views in writing.

The EYFS profile is formally recorded and shared with parents at the end of the Reception year. This assesses pupils against the Early Learning Goals and the assessments are made through observations, photographs and examples of work that are documented in the children's Learning Journeys and work books.

Reception teachers formally report progress to parents via two parents' evenings in each academic year, a progress report in November and an end of year report in June/July. At the parents' evenings in November, parents look at the children's Learning Journeys and discuss how their child is settling into school. In March, a more formal parents' evening discusses the prime and specific areas of learning and how the children are progressing towards the Early Learning Goals. Next steps are formally recorded in the end of year report alongside the EYFS profile. Parents are offered the opportunity to discuss their child's EYFS profile with the Reception teacher at the end of the academic year.

EYFS Formative Assessments

Through observations and working alongside the children, next steps in learning are planned for in order that children progress towards (and in some cases, beyond) the Early Learning Goals. Formative assessment is continuous and is often formally recorded in observations using the Evidence Me observation app and assessment folders, and at other times shared anecdotally with other EYFS team practitioners so that concepts can be reinforced or next steps planned for.

EYFS Marking and Feedback

In Reception, classwork such as number work or writing is always marked with the child present and verbal feedback given. Marking in EYFS is much more visual, using stickers, stamps, smiley faces etc as well as written comments. Areas of strength are highlighted in green and next steps in pink on our visual *criteria for success* in writing. Areas of writing that are focused on are finger spacing, spelling, letter formation etc.

Form 1-6 Summative Assessments and Reporting to Parents

We formally report progress to parents via two parents' evenings in each academic year and an end of year report in June/July. At the parents' evenings in November, parents are provided with a written summary of their child's progress in English and maths and a form teacher comment, as well as targets for the remainder of the academic year.

From Forms 2 to 6, pupils' reading ages and spelling ages are assessed annually and reviewed by staff but not reported to parents.

Form 1 sit end of year nfer English and maths tests and the phonics assessment, the results of which are reviewed by staff but not reported to parents.

Form 2 sit English and maths nfer tests in February and Key Stage 1 SATs tests in English and Maths in June. These results are for internal use only and are not reported to parents.

Forms 3-6 take mid year and end of year examinations. In Forms 3 and 4 parents aren't sent mid year exam results but are shown the papers at parents' evenings. They are sent their child's end of year exam results

for English and maths as well as the standardised year average. Parents of pupils in Forms 5 and 6 receive their child's results in English, maths and VR/non VR as well as the standardised year average. The exams include nfer papers in maths and English as well as some internally written exams at the end of the year for science, history, geography and RE. Nfer Verbal and non verbal reasoning tests are taken in Form 4 and CAT tests in Form 5; these results are not reported to parents.

All of these reports and the results outlined are made available to parents via our parent portal on the school website, access to which is controlled by a unique password.

Form 6 take the SATs exams in May each year and once the externally marked scores are received, these are reported to parents and to the child's senior school.

Other tests, for example baseline, reasoning or end of unit tests, are used primarily by teachers as tools to inform future planning and to check progress. They may be informally reported to parents if it is thought necessary. Children will have regular spelling and times table tests.

Parents are encouraged to speak to a member of staff if they have any concerns about aspects of their child's progress and staff will also contact parents to request a meeting if they wish to discuss any concerns.

Form 1-6 Formative Assessments

Clear learning intentions are identified at the planning stage: teachers' use of schemes and skills ladders ensure continuity of learning and progression.

The learning intentions are shared with the children at the start of each lesson and children are involved in identifying the success criteria and self-evaluating their work. See the marking section below for details of the process for marking and feedback.

Teachers use appropriate questioning to support and challenge children.

Teachers in each subject record children's progress against the National Curriculum statement ladders on track twice each year. The codes used match those for marking, as detailed below.

Marking and Feedback for Forms 1 to 6

Teachers are aware that the learning question must relate to what the child is learning in each lesson. This will be recorded for each lesson and the teacher will then highlight it either during the lesson or afterwards when marking, using the colour code outlined below. Teachers must differentiate the learning questions appropriately so that all children make progress over time: if a child is regularly seeing pink or yellow feedback, this will have an impact on their confidence and teachers recognise that similar skills can be addressed in lessons but at different levels. A discussion with a pupil during the lesson about their work is of huge benefit to the pupil and can be recorded by the teacher writing the letters VF (verbal feedback) next to, or at the end of the work discussed. The letter S is recorded where a child required support with the task.

Some live marking in the lesson is helpful to identify any issues as they arise. Any comments written by teachers on work will be in red pen, other than the highlighting of the learning question. Stickers and stamps may also be used, especially with younger children. The colour coding and teacher action for feedback is as follows:

Attainment	Colour highlighter	Teacher action
Mastery	Blue	Sometimes provide a challenging question to encourage critical thinking
Secure	Green	Sometimes provide a challenging question to encourage critical thinking
Developing	Yellow	Sometimes provide a target (T written with a circle around it) for the child to work on next time that particular skill is revisited
Emerging	Pink	Sometimes provide a target (T written with a circle around it) for the child to work on next time that particular skill is revisited
Unable to access	Leave blank	Provide the child with a scaffolded approach to the learning criteria. If, despite differentiation and Quality First Teaching approaches, the child cannot access the learning question and the pupil is not already on the SEND register, this should be escalated via the completion of a SEND form and discussed with the SENDCO.

Teachers are aware that highlighting the learning question is only part of the whole feedback picture. They will ensure that over a short period of time, they speak to each pupil about their learning and discuss progress, targets and challenges. Written feedback will also be provided regularly to the pupil about their approach to the work, including comments about their effort, perseverance and growth mindset. Where a pupil's work was highlighted in yellow or pink, the next time that skill is revisited the teacher will directly link their comment on the most recent piece of work to any improvements from the previous one. Marking directly informs teachers' planning and enables them to identify areas that may need to be revisited. Teachers will endeavour to mark work before the next lesson in that subject.

At the start of each lesson, teachers allocate a few minutes for the children to look at the most recent piece of marked work, check the highlighted colour and read the teachers' comments. During that time, pupils will initial next to the teachers' comments to show that they have read and understood them, complete any challenge questions set, correct any spellings/mathematical errors identified and record their targets on their target sheets. At the end of each lesson in maths, English and science, pupils will themselves record their self-assessment of their achievement of the learning question, either by highlighting in the appropriate colour next to the date or by writing in words either pink, yellow, green or blue. This is important for the teacher when they are reviewing the work.

Homework will be marked in line with the criteria set out above.

Each half term, one English and maths lesson is dedicated to the pupils reviewing their work in those subjects, assessing how they have made progress and considering the targets they still need to work on. This is recorded on the dedicated pages in their planners and signed by their teachers as evidence of a discussion.

Role of the School Leadership Team

The School Leadership Team act as leaders for teaching and learning within the school in various ways including:

- Developing a forward thinking and up to date curriculum to meet the needs of all those involved with teaching and learning.
- Ensuring that where applicable the National Curriculum and Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum are implemented.
- Developing the school's Continuing Professional Development programme to meet the needs of the teaching and learning programme.
- Discussing and putting into action innovative ideas to improve teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Making decisions as to how best to utilise the budget and resources.
- Ensuring that teaching and learning and marking is monitored effectively throughout the school and points raised are acted upon.
- Analysing formal assessment data and identifying trends within and across year groups to support a focus on successful teaching and learning in individual subjects within the curriculum.
- Organising effective communication channels between parents and school.

Role of the Subject Leaders

The Subject Leaders act as leaders for learning and teaching within their subject area in various ways including:

- Providing a model for effective teaching in their curriculum area.
- Supporting other teachers with their planning and lesson delivery.
- Monitoring planning and feeding back to year groups.
- Monitoring the quality of learning, teaching and marking in their curriculum area.
- Attending courses to develop their skills and expertise further and providing school based INSET.
- Reviewing and developing policies and curriculum planning.
- Managing their curriculum area within the School Development Plan.
- Managing the expenditure and resources of their curriculum area.

Role of Prep, Pre-Prep & EYFS Leaders and SENCO

These teachers act as leaders for teaching and learning within their areas of the school in various ways including:

- Providing a model for effective teaching in their classroom.
- Supporting other teachers with their planning and lesson delivery, particularly for those children with additional needs.
- Ensuring that feedback from subject leaders is utilised in planning and delivery within the year group.
- Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and marking in their phase.
- Leading discussions and decisions made to ensure further effectiveness of their phase.
- Managing new initiatives through supporting staff within their phase.
- Ensuring that support teachers and assistants are able to work effectively.
- Inviting parents and outside agencies, where relevant, to come into school and share expertise.

Role of Parents

In order to ensure a coherent and consistent approach to teaching and learning parents are asked to support their child's learning by:

- Talking to their children about their learning.
- Ensuring that any tasks set for homework are completed and returned on time.
- Ensuring that their children attend school every day on time.
- Ensuring that their children bring appropriate equipment and resources to school as and when asked.
- Attending Parents' Evenings and Information Evenings.
- Keeping the school informed of any issues that may affect their children's learning.