

Widford Lodge

PREPARATORY SCHOOL



2a

School Curriculum Policy

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

Reviewed and Approved by the Proprietor: January 2024
Next Review January 2025

Introduction

At Widford Lodge School, we believe that all children (irrespective of age, aptitudes, needs, gender, race, culture, language, religion or belief or lack of, sexual orientation or disability) should have equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum which enables them to acquire the appropriate skills to develop their academic potential, as well as developing their personal, social and moral values in preparation for life at senior school and beyond.

The school follows its own wide-ranging academic curriculum tailored to the needs of its pupils. The curriculum follows the EYFS Statutory Framework and has regard for the National Curriculum for English and Mathematics and includes a wide range of learning experiences appropriate for the ages, abilities and needs of the children. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum' – what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave; this also aims to help them develop a range of character attributes such as tenacity and grit. The Widford HEART values of honesty, empathy, acts of kindness, respect and tenacity are embodied throughout the academic and wider curriculum. The curriculum is further enhanced by a varied range of extra-curricular activities.

The school will take all reasonably practicable measures to take proper account of the needs of all pupils in terms of ability, need and aptitude, including the most able. We aim to fulfil the requirements of any pupil's special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or support guidelines, with reference to their Learning Enhancement Plans. In the event that a pupil has English as an additional language and needs specialist teaching to develop appropriate fluency, parents will be guided and supported in finding such support outside school, as well as being advised of the support the school can provide. See our policies on SEND and English as an additional language.

The curriculum promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of the next stage of their education and lives - see our Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development policy. The curriculum actively promotes fundamental British values including democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance.

The school provides part time supervised education for children aged 2½-4 years and full time supervised education for pupils between the ages of 4-11 years.

The Aims

- To provide full time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- To provide a curriculum that is subject-matter appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, encouraging children to develop their strengths and interests and providing support where necessary.
- To give all pupils the opportunity to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.
- To provide personal, social, health and economic education which reflects the school's aims and ethos and which encourages respect for other people, irrespective of: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, sex, race, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief or lack of these, pregnancy and maternity and with regard to protected characteristics. Please see our PSHEE policy which outlines in more detail how these are included in the curriculum.
- To provide Relationship, Health and Sex education about relationships, emotions, gender issues, sex, sexuality, and sexual health by teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of healthy, respectful and positive relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. Please see our Relationship, Health and Sex Education policy for more details of how these are included in the curriculum.

- To provide pupils below compulsory school age with a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills.
- To provide all pupils with a programme of religious education that teaches them about religions and belief systems in order to engender respect for other people and also as a means to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- To ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress by providing a well-planned and regularly monitored curriculum.
- To provide effective preparation for pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of secondary education and life in British society and to provide them with activities to develop characteristics such as grit, tenacity and a growth mindset.
- To promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that pupils enjoy coming to school and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning.
- To enable pupils to be creative and to develop their own thinking.
- To teach children about the world around them, including how their environment and society have changed over time.
- To provide a curriculum that actively promotes British values including: democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and to provide an environment that values and promotes diversity and inclusion.
- To help children understand Britain's cultural heritage.
- To appreciate and value the contributions made by all ethnic groups in our multi-cultural society.
- To teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual and moral development.
- To help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all.
- To enable children to have high self esteem and respect for themselves and others.
- To enable children to live and work co-operatively with others.

All pupils from Pre school to Form 6 take part in Forest School sessions each half term and this helps them to experience over time an increase in their self-belief, confidence, learning capacity, enthusiasm, communication and problem solving skills and emotional wellbeing.

Curriculum Structure

The school is divided into three stages:

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – Pre-School and Reception; Key Stage 1 – Forms 1 and 2; Key Stage 2 – Forms 3, 4, 5 and 6.

To ensure that subject matter is appropriate to the age and aptitude of pupils, the National Curriculum is used as a guide, particularly for English and Mathematics. Challenge work may cover aspects of the Key Stage 3 Curriculum. Children are prepared appropriately for entrance exams at 11+.

Following a curriculum review, a more topic-aligned approach to teaching and learning was implemented from September 2023. English, history, geography and Art/DT are topic based and elements of other subjects such as music, MFL, science and RE are linked where possible to the topics.

An annual plan is documented for each year group and subject. Each subject has a broad overview of the topics that are to be taught in each term and to which groups of children. The programmes of study for Key Stage 1 and 2 are made available to parents in Curriculum Information Booklets via the school's website. These are reviewed annually.

Medium term planning provides greater detail on the objectives, teaching suggestions for each subject/topic and considerations for pupils for support and mastery.

Short term planning is recorded weekly for English and Mathematics, with plans documenting the teaching and learning for each day. For other subjects, individual lesson planning is for the teacher's own benefit and personal use so that activities can be organised to meet the learning objectives.

Children are encouraged to develop their skills in:

Speaking – by asking and answering questions, participating in discussions, performing in plays, reading in assembly, conversing with adults and peers, reporting to the class

Listening – in assembly, to signals and instructions, to information given in lessons, to the opinions and ideas of others

Literacy – by reading fiction, non-fiction, poetry etc and writing for a variety of purposes in most subjects

Mathematics – by counting, calculating, applying mathematical reasoning to everyday situations, problem solving.

Computing - by evaluating and applying information technology analytically to solve problems and by using information and communication technology in responsible, competent and creative ways.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – Pre-School and Reception

In the Pre-School children attend part-time and parents can choose how many sessions their child attends per week.

In Reception, full time supervised education is provided between 8.40am and 3.15pm. The day can extend from 8am – 5.30pm if parents choose for their children to attend Early Birds, Late Stay or extra-curricular activities.

The curriculum followed in the Pre-School and Reception meets the requirements set out in the 2023 EYFS Statutory Framework.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and engage and 'have a go'
- active learning - children are motivated and involved 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

Curriculum planning includes all seven areas of learning and development:

The prime areas:

- Communication and Language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations
- Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, movement and self-care. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of healthy activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food

- Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

The specific areas:

- Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials (stories, poems and other written materials) to ignite their interest
- Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, space and measures
- Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment
- Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and create with a range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for expressing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

Key Stage 1 – Forms 1 and 2

Full time supervised education is provided between 8.40am and 3.15pm. The day can extend from 8am – 5.30pm if parents choose for their children to arrive early or attend Late Stay or extra-curricular activities.

Subjects taught	Particular Areas of Experience
English and MFL	Linguistic Pupils will have opportunities to develop communication skills and increase their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing.
Mathematics	Mathematical Through a variety of ways (including practical activity, exploration and discussion) pupils will make calculations, understand and appreciate patterns in number and space and develop their capacity to think logically.
Topic – including Science, History, Geography and Religious Education	Scientific/Human and Social Pupils will increase their knowledge and understanding of nature and materials. They will form hypotheses, conduct experiments, make observations and record their findings. They will learn about people and their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions. They will acquire an appreciation and respect of their own and other cultures.
Art, Design and Technology, Dance and Music	Aesthetic and Creative Pupils will have opportunities to make, compose and invent and to give personal, imaginative and practical responses.
Computing, Design and Technology	Technological Children will have opportunities to become responsible, competent, confident and creative users of information and communication technology, including abstraction, logic, algorithms, data representation and programming. They will develop, plan and communicate ideas; work with tools and equipment, materials and components to produce good quality products; and evaluate processes, products and technologies.

PE and Swimming	<p>Physical</p> <p>Children will have opportunities to develop physical fitness, control and co-ordination. They will learn to be part of a team.</p> <p>Children will swim weekly for one term each year and will have opportunities to develop confidence in the water and improve their coordination and strokes.</p>
PSHEE and Form Time	<p>Children will have opportunities to develop their self-knowledge, to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the rule of law, to learn about public services, to value democracy and show tolerance towards those with differing opinions and beliefs.</p> <p>The Jigsaw scheme we use, as well as our school values and ethos, ensure that pupils are encouraged to have respect for other people, with particular regard to protected characteristics. British values will be promoted. Relationships, health and sex education will be covered age appropriately.</p>

Key Stage 2 – Forms 3, 4, 5 and 6

Full time supervised education is provided between 8.40am and 3.45pm. The day can extend from 8am – 5.30pm if parents choose for their children to arrive early or stay for Late Stay or extra-curricular activities.

Subjects taught	Particular Areas of Experience
English and MFL	Linguistic Pupils will have opportunities to develop communication skills and increase their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing.
Mathematics	Mathematical Through a variety of ways (including practical activity, exploration and discussion) pupils will make calculations, understand and appreciate patterns in number and space and develop their capacity to think logically.
Science	Scientific Pupils will increase their knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces. They will form hypotheses, conduct experiments, make observations and record their findings.
History, Geography and Religious Education	Human and Social They will learn about people and their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions. They will acquire an appreciation and respect of their own and other cultures.
Art, Design and Technology, Dance and Music	Aesthetic and Creative Pupils will have opportunities to make, compose and invent and to give personal, imaginative and practical responses.
Computing, Design and Technology	Technological Children will have opportunities to become responsible, competent, confident and creative users of information and communication technology, including abstraction, logic, algorithms, data representation and programming. They will develop, plan and communicate ideas; work with tools and equipment, materials and components to produce good quality products and; evaluate processes, products and technologies.
PE, Games and Swimming	Physical Children will have opportunities to develop physical fitness, control and co-ordination. They will develop tactical awareness and learn to be part of a team. They will evaluate and improve their performance. Children will swim weekly for one term each year and will have opportunities to develop confidence in the water and improve their coordination and strokes.
PSHEE and Form Time	Children will have opportunities to develop their self-knowledge, to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the rule of law, to learn about public services, to value democracy and show tolerance towards those with differing opinions and beliefs. They will have opportunities at age-appropriate levels to understand the wider world and economic considerations. The Jigsaw scheme we use, as well as our school values and ethos, ensure that pupils are encouraged to have respect for other people, with particular regard to protected characteristics. British values are promoted. Relationships, health and sex education will be covered age appropriately.
Thinking Skills/ Reasoning	Children will have opportunities to develop logical reasoning skills.
Activities sessions	A variety of experiences will be offered including: philosophy, Forest School, gardening, cooking, current affairs, drama, team games

Hidden Curriculum

Many aspects of children's personal development may not be addressed directly in lessons but are covered during the school day in a wide variety of ways. These may include:

- Expectations for standards of behaviour in the classroom
- Understanding the school rules
- Playground rules and the ability to co-operate with peers
- Healthy eating and table manners at lunchtime
- Participation in Family Group and House activities
- Stories/morals in assembly
- Celebration of personal successes and those of others
- Being responsible for personal organisation – uniform, kit, homework etc
- Involvement in fundraising events for charities

Trips and Visitors to School

We aim to provide pupils with a wealth of first hand experiences to enhance their learning in the classroom. These include educational visits, theme days, visitors to the school and an optional residential trip at the end of Form 6.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Great value is placed upon pupils participating in extra-curricular activities to develop their confidence, interest and skills in a wide variety of areas. Pupils are encouraged to make the most of the opportunities available to them. We aim to offer a breadth of activities so that there is something to appeal to every pupil.

Strategies for Assessment, Progression and Continuity

Please see our Teaching and Learning, Marking and Assessment policy for a detailed explanation of these important aspects of our curriculum.

Planning in EYFS is responsive to the needs of individual pupils to ensure that they progress through a sequence of development requirements for each area of learning, which lead to Early Learning Goals. These establish expectations for children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children explore the Early Learning Goals through play-based activities, which can take the form of adult-focused sessions, adult-initiated sessions or child-initiated activities. Children will be exposed to a range of learning experiences and will access the curriculum both indoors and outdoors.

The EYFS Profile is completed for all children in the final term of the academic year in which they reach age five. Each child in the EYFS is assigned a key person who will assess their skills and development against the Early Learning Goals. Results of these assessments are shared with parents. Assessments are made through observations, photographs and examples of work which are documented in their Learning Journeys.

At the end of EYFS, Form 1 teachers will be given a copy of the Profile together with a handover discussion about each child's skills and abilities in order to support and extend pupils' learning at the start of Key Stage 1.

Throughout the Pre-Prep and Prep progress is monitored through formative assessment using the Otrack system and tracking data obtained from Non- Verbal Reasoning, Verbal Reasoning, Maths and English Assessments. Annual tests

meetings and passed on to the next teacher to ensure they are aware of the learning needs of each child and can plan activities accordingly.

See our SEND and able, gifted and talented policies for details of planning, provision and assessment for children with additional learning needs or identified as able in particular subjects.

Curriculum Review, Monitoring and Evaluation

The curriculum is reviewed annually by the teachers when curriculum information booklets are updated. Subject leaders are responsible for promoting the aims and objectives of their subjects and for ensuring schemes of work are of sufficient quality, breadth and depth. Standards are monitored through evaluation of planning and scrutiny of children's work to ensure a consistently high standard of implementation. The Deputy Head Academic is responsible for reviewing the schemes of work on a termly basis to ensure that they are complete, up to date and appropriate to ensure that all pupils are provided for and have the opportunity to learn and make progress.

Subject leaders complete an evaluation of their subject's provision annually with proposals for future developments and discuss this formally with the Headteacher.

Each subject leader reports to and is supported by, a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The SLT carry out work scrutiny throughout the academic year which encompasses all subjects and involves discussing work with pupils: general points noted during these reviews are discussed at staff meetings and teachers also receive personal feedback on the work seen.

In particular, the School will review the revised topic-aligned curriculum in the summer of 2024 and will seek to implement any changes identified by staff and pupils to enhance it further.