



# Woodside Junior School

To be reviewed: Annually

**Teaching and Learning Principles**

## Introduction

These procedures have been created by and agreed upon by the staff. At Woodside School we are committed to high quality teaching and learning to raise standards of achievement for all groups of children. All teachers have been consulted in developing these procedures, which summarise expectations and common working practices. They reflect what has been agreed in terms of approach and consistency and make explicit the best practice to which the school aspires.

## Principles of Teaching and Learning

Learning is the purpose of the whole school and is a shared commitment. Working in partnership with all stakeholders, we aim to:

- provide a supportive, positive, healthy, caring and safe environment, which has high expectations and values all members of the school community;
- recognise the needs and aspirations of all individuals and provide opportunities for all pupils to make the best possible progress and attain the highest personal achievements;
- ensure children can develop as literate, numerate and technologically competent individuals, within a broad, balanced, exciting and challenging curriculum;
- provide rich and varied contexts and experiences for pupils to acquire, develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- provide a curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical, mental and emotional development of the pupils;
- develop individuals with lively, enquiring minds, good thinking skills and oracy, self-respect, self-discipline and positive attitudes;
- encourage all children to be enthusiastic and committed learners, promoting their self-esteem, self-worth and emotional well-being;
- develop children's confidence and capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively;

## Planning

At Woodside Junior School we are committed to following the programmes of study as required by the National Curriculum 2014. We follow a cross curricular approach to learning, where some subjects are taught through a topic and some are covered as discrete subjects. Regular staff meetings are used to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and to ensure consistency of approach and standards.

Curriculum is enriched by extra-curricular activities such as Forest School, Mini-Enterprise, visits to places of interests linked to the school curriculum, visitors and 'off-curricular' days.

Termly/half-termly plans are on the teachers' shared drive and teachers produce weekly plans for English and mathematics. Plans are based upon previous assessment data, pupil need and subject expectation. Curriculum time can be planned as continuous study throughout the term, or as blocks of study. At Woodside School we are committed to raising standards of basic skills i.e. ability to read, write and speak in Standard English and to use mathematics at a proficient level to facilitate learning across the curriculum.

**Organisation**

The learning environment is managed in such a way as to enable different styles of learning.

Opportunities are made for:

- whole class teaching;
- outdoor learning;
- group work, organised according to appropriate criteria (i.e. ability, mixed ability, friendship, etc.);
- one to one teaching;
- collaborative learning in pairs or groups;
- independent learning.

All areas of the learning environment are planned for, including, where appropriate, the outside areas.

This ensures opportunities for a range of practical activities, which will develop appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding. The classrooms are organised to enable learning and the development of independence. The school uses learning walls to aid children's learning.

Classroom support is available in the form of both learning support assistants and volunteers. These are used at the discretion of the class teacher. Volunteer helpers assist with the many aspects of school life, including supporting reading and providing assistance with school visits. Students from the local sixth forms are welcomed into our school.

Each child is given an opportunity to have work displayed during the school year. Sustained effort, including drafting and reworking, is encouraged to enhance standards. School events such as performances and assemblies are seen as opportunities for all pupils to demonstrate their own best performance.

**Differentiation**

All staff have the highest possible expectations of individual learners. Teachers differentiate the curriculum according to individual needs by:

- pace;
- content;
- task;
- relevance;
- resources;
- extension;
- autonomy;
- outcome;
- teacher/adult support.

Differentiated tasks are detailed in weekly planning. Pupils with additional needs (including special educational needs) receive support provided by learning support assistants during lessons as well as via 1:1 tuition and additional interventions. The school support the use of 'fluid interventions' based on class teachers assessments of children's learning. . Additionally, advice is sought from relevant external support agencies when and where the need demands it.

### **Homework**

Woodside's agreed practice for homework is that:

- homework is set on a regular basis, for all years
- homework will generally follow on from work which has taken place in class but may take many different forms, including reading, learning multiplication facts and spellings.
- homework may sometimes consist of preparation for work yet to be done;
- children should understand exactly what they are expected to do, how to do it, and how long it should take;
- homework may sometimes involve the participation of the parents;
- children who have made insufficient effort during class time may occasionally be asked to complete work at home or during lunchtime.

### **Teaching Strategies and Styles**

In order to ensure equality of access and effective matching of tasks to needs, Woodside staff employ a variety of teaching strategies in any one session. These include:

- provision of an integrated curriculum;
- discussion and questioning (open and closed as appropriate);
- previewing and reviewing work;
- didactic teaching;
- interactive teaching;
- listening;
- brainstorming;
- providing opportunities for reflection by pupils;
- demonstrating high expectations;
- providing opportunities for repetition/reinforcement;
- providing encouragement, positive reinforcement and praise;
- making judgements and responding to individual need;
- intervening, as appropriate, in the learning process in order to encourage development;
- providing all children with opportunities for success;
- using a range of communication strategies – verbal and non-verbal.

Learning activities ought to show a balance in terms of individual, group and whole class work. The emphasis of our procedures is on a good variety of experiences and we encourage children increasingly to take an active role in their own learning, for example:

- investigative work is used;
- children are encouraged to communicate findings in a variety of ways;
- opportunities are provided for children to become involved in decision making and to take responsibility, along with staff, for their own learning.

At Woodside School we recognise the importance of key skills. Opportunities are made available across the curriculum to develop:

- application of number;
- communication;
- computing skills
- problem solving;
- working with others;
- improving own learning and performance.

Thinking skills are developed across the curriculum. This includes:

- creative thinking;
- enquiry;
- information processing;
- reasoning;
- evaluation.

### **Learning Processes and Learning Styles**

Children enter school at different stages of development. Children learn in different ways and at different rates of progress. In the course of learning, children develop their skills through a variety of processes and learning styles. These include:

- investigation;
- experimentation;
- listening;
- observation;
- talking and discussion;
- asking questions;
- practical exploration and role play;
- retrieving information;
- imagining;
- repetition;
- problem-solving;
- making choices and decision-making.

At Woodside School we aim to provide opportunities to develop a wide range of learning styles. We recognise that each child has a unique way of learning and that learning preference is affected by previous experience, competence, confidence, beliefs and values.

Planning will incorporate as many styles of working as possible. These styles include:

- individual learning;
- collaborative learning in small groups, or pairs;
- one to one learning with an adult, or more able pupil;
- whole class;
- independent learning.

Group work may include friendship, matched ability, mixed ability, etc., appropriate to the activity. Collaborative learning is encouraged, although some periods of the day may be set aside for silent work.

Teachers at Woodside feel that pupils learn best when:

- they are happy, healthy and alert – receptive and positive
- they are interested and involved – learning is relevant and stimulating
- the purpose of a task is understood – they understand why they are doing it
- they feel secure – in terms of environment, relationships and learning
- they feel valued – teachers and other adults care about their development as learners
- they have opportunities to explore and take risks
- they are actively involved, making choices and taking responsibility in their learning
- they have an element of control and can work with independence
- they receive positive feedback and praise for achievements
- the learning environment is well-organised and resources are easily accessed
- tasks are differentiated and matched to the child's learning needs
- learning is built on existing knowledge and experience – clearly defined small steps
- they have opportunities to talk about their work, reflecting, discussing and sharing ideas
- the teacher is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and motivated
- they have clearly defined targets which they can successfully achieve e.g. appropriate time scale

Successful teaching takes account of children's prior learning and must ensure continuity and progression.

Linked to the above, successful teaching is:

- confident – teachers have a clear understanding of subject knowledge and setting objectives
- high expectation – there is high expectation of success
- well planned – there is differentiation with methods and organisation strategies which match curricular objectives and needs of all pupils
- interactive – pupil's contributions are encouraged, expected and extended
- characterised by high quality oral work
- well paced – there is a sense of urgency, driven by the need to make progress and succeed
- informed – by assessment outcomes

### **Resources**

Classroom and central resources are the responsibility of classroom teachers and subject leaders who ensure that:

- there is a range of appropriate resources available, for which pupils can select materials suitable to the task in hand;
- all children know where classroom resources are kept and the rules about their access and use;
- children are encouraged to act independently in choosing, collecting and returning resources where appropriate;

- the library is a valued resource and used appropriately;
- children work together to establish an attractive, welcoming and well organised environment engendering respect, care and value for all resources.

.At Woodside School the use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum is valued and these are used throughout the school to widen children's experiences and support learning across a range of subject areas.

Time is a resource that we value. To maximise its use:

- as children progress throughout the school they are encouraged to take greater control of their own learning, including their use of time;
- opportunities for learning are maximised by ensuring that tasks are made specific by focused objectives;
- teachers encourage pupils to work within given time scales, and facilitate the effective use of time through the provision of appropriate resources and planning extension activities;
- all children engage in useful activities upon entering the classroom and know what to do between the end of an activity and the end of a session.

Computing is a major resource, which is used across the whole curriculum.