Woodside Primary Academy

Early Years Curriculum Overview

Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds, Healthy Futures

Curriculum Intent

Woodside Primary Academy is located in an area with a rich social and culturally diverse community. We use this as a basis for our curriculum, which celebrates diversity and utilises the skills, knowledge and cultural wealth of the community whilst supporting pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage sets the standards for learning and development, assessment, safeguarding and welfare for children from birth to five.

Our Early Years curriculum is enriched with new and exciting experiences and offers broad and ambitious learning opportunities, tailored to meet the needs of our diverse community. It is well sequenced to provide progressive steps that prepare children with the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve their next steps, regardless of their starting points.

The curriculum is strategically planned through a systematic, child-centred and play-based approach. Children revisit key concepts over time, build cultural capital and develop the foundations needed to become successful learners.

Our curriculum identifies what we want children to know, experience and be able to do. High-quality teaching and provision enable children to learn it. Assessment tells us what has been understood and what needs to happen next.

Our Core Aims

- Learn new words, key vocabulary and speech structures.
- Communicate and express themselves positively.
- Make healthy choices and develop healthy habits, while showing respect for others.
- Develop creativity, curiosity and a positive attitude to learning.
- Navigate a stimulating and challenging environment with increasing independence and confidence.
- Explore, create, produce and refine ideas.
- Understand what they are learning and question how and why things happen.
- Understand that print has meaning, develop phonological awareness and learn to read and write.
- Apply early mathematical knowledge to prepare for future learning.
- Think deeply, make secure links and build on what they already know and can do.

Curriculum Implementation

A Progressive Curriculum

The curriculum is well sequenced and has clear progression through the Early Years and into the National Curriculum in Year 1. Learning builds from children's individual starting points so that knowledge, skills and vocabulary develop over time.

Practitioners consider what children already know and can do, what they need to learn next and the experiences and interactions that will help to secure that learning. Children are given opportunities to revisit, practise, apply and deepen important knowledge and skills.

Children access the cultural capital and challenge they need through carefully planned learning, direct teaching, high-quality interactions, purposeful play and continuous provision. Half-termly themes and experiences provide contexts through which core knowledge, skills and vocabulary can be developed and revisited.

Frameworks, Guidance and Resources Informing our EY Curriculum

Our curriculum is not based on one scheme or document. Statutory requirements, non-statutory guidance, evidence-informed practice and carefully selected subject-specific programmes and resources work together to strengthen curriculum design, teaching and assessment.

EYFS Statutory Framework

Provides the statutory foundation for our curriculum, including the areas of learning, educational programmes and Early Learning Goals. It establishes the requirements within which leaders and practitioners design an ambitious curriculum for the children at Woodside.

Development Matters (DM)

Supports understanding of child development and curriculum progression. It helps practitioners consider children's strengths, what they need to learn next and where additional support may be required. It informs professional judgement rather than being used as a checklist.

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

Ensure that we consider both what children learn and how they learn through playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically.

Early Learning Goals (ELGs)

Provide the statutory end-of-Reception assessment expectations. They are an important end point, but are not used as the curriculum itself. Our curriculum builds the knowledge, vocabulary, experiences and skills that enable children to work towards these expectations.

White Rose Maths (WRM)

Supports the sequencing and development of early mathematics through practical experiences, mathematical talk and opportunities across adult-led learning and continuous provision. It supports number, shape, measure and spatial thinking.

NCETM Early Years Mathematics

Strengthens mathematical progression through the key areas of cardinality and counting, comparison, composition, pattern, shape and space, and measures.

Third Space Learning

Provides additional mathematics resources that complement our wider mathematics curriculum and provide further opportunities to practise and apply mathematical learning, including reasoning and problem-solving.

EEF Early Years Evidence Store

Provides an additional evidence base for developing practice across communication and language, PSED, self-regulation and executive function, physical development, early literacy and early mathematics. Evidence is considered alongside practitioner expertise and knowledge of our children.

Read Write Inc. Phonics

Provides our systematic approach to phonics. Regular assessment supports fluid grouping, ensures teaching is matched to children's current stage and helps identify children who require additional support.

NELI

Supports the identification of communication and language needs so that targeted support can be planned where appropriate.

REACh2 Ready for School Assessment

Supports understanding of children's starting points in key foundational skills, helping to identify strengths and gaps on entry and informing early intervention and curriculum planning.

Communication, Language and Early Reading

Communication and language underpin children's access to the wider curriculum. Vocabulary development is therefore woven throughout adult-led learning, stories, rhymes, play, routines, provision and everyday interactions.

Early reading skills are taught systematically through:

- Stories which provide an avenue into learning and themes.
- A read-aloud programme.
- Phonological awareness.
- Read Write Inc. phonics.
- Shared and guided reading.

Literacy is woven throughout the curriculum so that children are immersed in language, stories, rhyme and purposeful opportunities to communicate, read and write.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Developing Self-Regulation and Positive Learning Behaviours

Woodside Early Years behaviour guidance focuses on building and teaching self-regulation skills from the earliest stage. This supports self-confidence, independence, resilience, empathy, wellbeing and positive learning behaviours.

Our approach links closely with the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning and supports children to become increasingly confident, curious and independent learners.

Adult-Led Learning and Continuous Provision

Our curriculum is implemented through a balance of:

- Directed and discrete teaching in large and small groups.
- One-to-one teaching where appropriate.
- High-quality adult-child interactions.
- Supported and narrated play, including sustained shared thinking.
- Purposeful continuous and enhanced provision.
- Independent and self-directed activities.
- Indoor and outdoor learning experiences.

Continuous provision is part of the curriculum rather than separate from teaching. It provides opportunities for children to revisit, practise and apply previously taught knowledge and skills independently and in different contexts. Adults use interactions purposefully to model language, extend vocabulary, develop thinking, identify misconceptions and move learning forward.

Enabling Environments

Our environments are shaped around the principle of enabling children to learn successfully through teaching, play and exploration. They provide:

- A welcoming atmosphere where children feel secure and safe to take risks in their learning.
- Opportunities for curiosity, enthusiasm, independence and purposeful learning.

- Meaningful interactions, communication, talk and appropriate challenge.
- Physical exploration and development.
- Opportunities to revisit and apply curriculum knowledge and skills.

Assessment Informing the Curriculum

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and curriculum implementation rather than a separate activity. Practitioners draw on their knowledge of individual children, high-quality interactions and observations, children's responses to teaching and provision, formative assessment, information from parents and carers, and professional judgement.

Assessment helps practitioners answer three key questions:

- What does the child already know and understand?
- Where are the gaps or barriers?
- What do we need to teach or provide next?

A Responsive and Adaptive Curriculum

Our curriculum is carefully planned but remains responsive to children's needs. Assessment and practitioner knowledge inform adaptations to adult interactions, direct teaching, provision, resources, vocabulary, levels of support, targeted intervention, opportunities for further practice and opportunities for greater depth and challenge.

Curriculum ambition remains high. Where children need additional support, teaching, provision and interactions are adapted to help children access and secure the intended learning.

Challenge and Depth

Challenge in EYFS does not simply mean moving children on to older content. Children deepen their learning by explaining their thinking, making connections, using increasingly precise vocabulary, applying knowledge in new situations, solving problems, making independent choices and revisiting concepts with increasing complexity.

Curriculum Impact

We engage children in learning from their first day and expect them to leave the EYFS as increasingly happy, self-confident and skilful communicators, able to make choices and approach learning with a "can do" attitude. Children are prepared to continue their writing journey through rich experiences, stories and rhyme, a strong early reading diet and well-developed fine motor skills and coordination. Children leave Early Years increasingly creative, curious and ready for the next stage of their education.

We expect children to:

- Make progress from their individual starting points.
- Build secure knowledge, skills and vocabulary over time.
- Communicate with increasing confidence.
- Develop strong foundations in early literacy and mathematics.
- Demonstrate increasing independence and self-regulation.
- Apply previous learning in different contexts.
- Develop curiosity about the world around them.
- Be well prepared for their next stage of education.

Curriculum Monitoring and Evidence

Leaders evaluate whether the intended curriculum is translating into children's everyday experiences and learning. Monitoring and evaluation draw on:

- The two-year progress check.
- EYFS Profile at the end of Reception.
- Baseline information, including the Reception Baseline Assessment, and termly assessments.
- End-of-year reports.
- Moderation.
- Tapestry learning journeys.
- Curriculum and progression documents.
- Medium-term planning.
- Learning walks and observations of teaching and provision.
- Interactions with children.
- Children's work and book looks.

The purpose of monitoring is to evaluate the relationship between curriculum intent, implementation, children's learning, assessment, adaptation and impact.

What SLT Should Expect to See in Practice

- A clear and progressive curriculum.
- Staff who understand what they are teaching and why.
- Purposeful adult-led teaching and high-quality interactions.
- Vocabulary being modelled and developed deliberately.
- Continuous provision that connects with curriculum learning.
- Children revisiting and applying learning through play.
- Increasing independence and positive learning behaviours.
- Appropriate support, adaptation and challenge.
- Assessment being used to inform teaching rather than simply generate evidence.
- Practitioners who can explain children's starting points, strengths, gaps and next learning.
- Children becoming increasingly confident, curious and articulate learners.

Starting points -> Curriculum -> Teaching and Provision -> Assessment -> Adaptation -> Impact

See whole-school curriculum long-term plans and EYFS progression documents for further detail.