



WILLOW TREE Academy

FOUR SCHOOLS; ONE VISION, SHARED VALUES AND
CONSISTENT, SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE



Curriculum policy

TOGETHER ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE

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Curriculum Statement

At WILLOW TREE Academy we have designed a curriculum that ensures a profound primary experience for all our pupils. This is underpinned by a spiritual, moral, social and cultural education that encourages personal growth and a development of core British Values in our children. Our curriculum engages and enthuses them through first hand-experiences. It is well planned to build knowledge and skills in a continuous and progressive way.

Willow Tree schools maintain a relentless and rigorous focus on raising standards through the learning skills curriculum also, which is explicitly taught so that these skills can be applied to gain knowledge and understanding across a wide range of subjects.

Our schools operate the same creative and vibrant, cross-curricular approach which aims to give every child the opportunity to fulfil their potential. First-hand experiences are fundamental to our Cultural Offer and this defines the high expectations we have within our planning; ensuring connections that are coherent and manageable are made across the primary curriculum.

We are totally committed to providing memorable experiences that last a lifetime.

1. Aims

- At Willow Tree Academy we believe in providing children with opportunities to have a positive impact on the world at a local, national and global level.
- We believe that all children's talents should be recognised, encouraged and celebrated both in and out of school.
- We aim to teach children to develop an acceptance and understanding of others within the multi-cultural society in which we live.
- We want all children to develop high aspirations for themselves, developing their thinking and reasoning skills and being able to communicate effectively.
- To enable this we will provide all children with a vibrant and engaging curriculum and through the teaching of relevant, stimulating topics.
- We want to develop children as confident, independent individuals that enable them to become responsible citizens who are environmentally aware of their world.
- We will design our NEMESIS projects with this offer in mind, so that children can understand their rights and responsibilities and become social changemakers of tomorrow.

We are proud that our schools are centres of excellence for Enterprise, Sport, the Arts and ICT; these all have equal status in our desire to educate the whole child. This is because Willow Tree schools are non-selective, learning communities that value the abilities our children bring and their many achievements. Recognising the entitlement of all pupils to a creative, cohesive curriculum, reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive.

Willow Tree schools promote the behaviour and attitudes that enable learning within a curriculum that ensures academic success, creativity and problem solving, reliability, responsibility and resilience, as well as physical development, well-being and mental health. These are the key elements that support the development of the whole child and promote a positive attitude to learning.

Our curriculum also celebrates the diversity of our pupils and utilises the skills, knowledge and cultural wealth of the community.

1.1. The Climate for Learning

- Staff are committed to providing the best possible climate for learning for every child
- We celebrate outcomes of our outstanding teaching in wonderful displays of children's learning outcomes
- We build strong relationships through collaboration and working in strong teams, both at staff and pupil level
- We care passionately about staff and children's well-being and use the Restorative Practice approach to facilitate this
- *Willow Tree Schools are a part of a national pilot for Trailblazer, this is supporting our work on addressing the social and emotional mental health of our staff and pupils*
- The aim of our curriculum is for pupils to have the requisite skills to be successful, independent and motivated learners in readiness for their next stage of education – transition success is a

focus for us

- From entry into the EYFS we aim to give our children the skills and experiences they need to be able to access the National Curriculum at Key Stage 1.

1.2 A calm and safe learning environment

Willow Tree Academy promotes a calm, safe, learning environment across all its schools. Although learning aims to be dynamic and fun, from an early age pupils are taught how to return to a place of calm reflection.

Behaviours for Learning are actively promoted and all staff are accountable for ensuring the safeguarding of all pupils both within the school and its grounds and beyond.

1.3 Embracing new technologies

Willow Tree schools drive their improvement agendas through the strategic application of new technologies. We know the considered use of IT enhances and accelerates learning, so we invest in technology to improve pupil outcomes. Support is offered to all our schools through our Trust Team.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the Academies Act 2010. We work within the guidance of the National Curriculum 2014 to achieve this. It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's Governance Handbook.

It complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the EYFS Framework

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Trust Board

The Trust Board delegates to the School Improvement Board (SIB) the monitoring and the effectiveness of this policy and is held to account for its implementation.

The SIB will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, and science, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum

3.2 The Executive Head Teacher and the Head of School

The Executive Head Teacher and the Head of School are responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The SIB is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The SIB is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions

- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEND

3.3 Other staff

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy. These will include;

- The Deputy Head Teacher
- Assistant Head Teacher/s
- The Curriculum Leader
- Classroom Teachers
- Higher Level Teaching Assistants
- Bought-in Professional Services eg Sports, the Music Service, Art Leaders

4. Organisation and planning

Our teams work together across the schools and the academy in phases and year groups to plan the delivery of our curriculum, this is designed in a thematic cross-curricular way and a topic led approach. We know this is how children learn best and this enables them to make connections across their learning, applying skills and knowledge in different contexts.

- To support teacher workload the planning is shared through the team, aligning with teacher strengths.
- We have adapted and refined the National Curriculum/subjects to meet our children's need and our local context; an example of this would be substituting local studies in Geography and more recent history studies such as the Victorians rather than Egyptians
- Although we work in a thematic approach, subject are identified and tracked carefully to build skills, knowledge and understanding. Subject policies are in place that ensure coverage and depth.
- To meet the needs of our local context through our relationships and health education(RHE) is delivered throughout the primary phases, together with Personal Safety and Drugs Education

4.1 Short, medium and long-term planning expectations

- The Willow Tree Curriculum Map and sequential learning grids set out what we teach, this is further developed in medium term planning which adds detail about when this happens.
- English and Maths is planned weekly and detailed slide planning supports the clarity and teacher skill necessary for our children's success.
- Medium term planning reduces teacher workload in the Foundation subjects. These are planned in blocks that are annotated in the short term – this means teachers do not plan individual lesson plans in these subjects. The sequential learning grid therefore enables Teachers to plan high quality lessons that enables our children to know more and remember more.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins how we plan and the experiences we offer, such as educational visits, visitors and residential.
- PSHCE is a focus for us and this incorporates the British values we aim to teach our children
- We aim to provide resources that are high quality and readily available, the enables teaching and learning to be the best it can be.
- See our EYFS policy for information on how our early years curriculum is delivered.

5. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEND policy .

6. Monitoring arrangements

The Executive Head Teacher, Head of School and SIB Governors monitor whether the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a “broad and balanced curriculum” which includes the required subjects, through:

- Work Scrutiny, learning walks, lesson observation, pupil voice all form part of our deep dive methodology and in the case of governors, school visits
- Subject leaders/curriculum leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by:
 - Work Scrutiny, learning walks, lesson observation, pupil voice
 - They also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the SLT and the SIB. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

7. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Teaching and Learning
- Assessment policy
- SEND/Inclusion policy and information report
- Equality information and objectives
- Sex and relationship education
- Drugs in Education Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Attendance Policy