



WILLOW TREE Academy

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



Welcome to
THE LEAF CENTRE



Curriculum policy

'TOGETHER ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE'

Date Published	September 2026
Version	1
Last Approved Date	
Review Cycle	2 yearly
Review Date	September 2028

Contents

1. Aims
2. Legislation and guidance
3. Roles and responsibilities
4. Organisation and planning
5. Inclusion
6. Monitoring arrangements
7. Links with other policies

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 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, each with equal status in our commitment to educating the whole child. This is reflected in the fact that Willow Tree schools are non-selective learning communities that value the abilities, talents and experiences that every child brings, as well as their many achievements. Recognising the entitlement of all pupils to a creative, cohesive and inclusive curriculum reinforces the need for teaching that enables every child to thrive.

Willow Tree schools promote the behaviours and attitudes that enable effective learning, within a curriculum that supports academic success, creativity and problem-solving, reliability, responsibility and resilience, alongside physical development, wellbeing and mental health. These are key elements in supporting the development of the whole child and in fostering a positive attitude towards learning.

Our curriculum also celebrates the diversity of our pupils and draws upon the skills, knowledge and cultural wealth of the communities we serve.

1.1 The Climate for Learning

- Staff are committed to providing the best possible climate for learning for every child, with high expectations for achievement, behaviour and personal development.
- We celebrate and share the outcomes of high-quality teaching through purposeful displays and celebrations of children's learning, progress and achievements.
- We build strong, respectful relationships through collaboration and effective teamwork, both between adults and with pupils.
- We value and promote the wellbeing of both staff and pupils. Our use of Restorative Practice supports positive relationships, emotional wellbeing and the resolution of conflict.
- We create an inclusive culture in which every pupil feels valued, respected, listened to and able to participate fully in school life.

- We promote positive attitudes to learning, including curiosity, independence, resilience, responsibility and a willingness to take appropriate risks in their learning.
- Our curriculum aims to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to become successful, independent and motivated learners, ready for their next stage of education. Effective transition is a key focus.
- From entry into the EYFS, we aim to provide children with the knowledge, skills and experiences they need to develop as confident learners and to access the National Curriculum at Key Stage 1.

1.2 A Calm and Safe Learning Environment

Willow Tree Academy promotes a calm, safe and purposeful learning environment across all its schools. While learning should be engaging, dynamic and enjoyable, pupils are taught from an early age how to regulate their emotions, recognise when they need to return to a place of calm and use appropriate strategies to support their own wellbeing and readiness to learn.

Behaviours for Learning are actively promoted across our schools. All staff share responsibility for creating an environment in which pupils feel safe, secure and ready to learn, and are accountable for safeguarding pupils within school, on school grounds and when representing the school in the wider community.

Our schools promote consistency, clear expectations and positive relationships so that pupils understand what is expected of them and are supported to make positive choices.

1.3 Embracing Digital Technologies

Willow Tree schools use digital technologies strategically to support school improvement and enhance teaching and learning. We recognise that the considered and purposeful use of technology can enhance, enrich and accelerate learning and can provide pupils with opportunities to develop the digital knowledge and skills they need for their future.

We invest in appropriate technology and infrastructure where this supports improved pupil outcomes, effective teaching and inclusion. Support and guidance are provided to all our schools through the Trust Team, enabling schools to share effective practice and make informed decisions about the use of digital technologies.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the statutory requirements for academy schools to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and to teach the National Curriculum, as set out in the **Academies Act 2010**, as amended by the **Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026**. We are guided by the statutory **National Curriculum in England** and ensure that our curriculum provides pupils with the knowledge, skills and experiences they need to succeed.

The policy also reflects the requirements for inclusion and equality set out in the **Equality Act 2010** and the **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years**. It takes account of relevant Department for Education guidance and the expectations for academy trust governance set out in the **Academy trusts: governance guide**.

The policy is consistent with the Trust's **funding agreement and articles of association** and takes account of other statutory requirements and guidance relevant to the curriculum, inclusion, safeguarding and pupil wellbeing.

For pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage, this policy reflects the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework**, which sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. The current framework for group and school-based providers has applied since 1 September 2025, with the updated statutory framework applying from 1 September 2026.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Academies Act 2010
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- National Curriculum in England
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- EYFS statutory framework
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Academy Trust funding agreement
- Willow Tree Academy Articles of Association
- Academy trusts: governance guide

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Trust Board

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

The SIB will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets.
- The school complies with its funding agreement and provides a broad and balanced curriculum, including English, mathematics and science, with sufficient teaching time allocated to meet statutory and curriculum requirements.
- Appropriate provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- The school implements all relevant statutory assessment arrangements.
- It is appropriately involved in decision-making relating to the breadth, balance and quality of the curriculum and provides appropriate challenge and support to school leaders.

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, together with subjects and areas of learning that the school chooses to offer, have clear aims and objectives that reflect the aims of the school and identify how the needs of individual pupils will be met.
- Sufficient time is allocated to teaching the required elements of the curriculum and that curriculum time is reviewed regularly.
- Requests to withdraw pupils from curriculum subjects are managed appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements.
- The school's assessment arrangements meet all relevant statutory requirements and effectively support teaching and learning.
- The SIB is appropriately involved in decision-making relating to the breadth, balance and quality of the curriculum.
- The SIB is provided with appropriate information about whole-school priorities and targets to enable it to fulfil its monitoring and challenge role.
- Appropriate provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including pupils with SEND.
- Staff have the knowledge, skills and resources necessary to implement the curriculum effectively.

3.3 Other staff

All staff are responsible for implementing the school curriculum in accordance with this policy and for contributing to an inclusive, ambitious and effective learning environment.

This includes:

- Trust School Improvement Team
- 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 collaboratively across our schools, phases and year groups to plan and deliver the curriculum. We use a thematic, cross-curricular and topic-led approach where this supports meaningful learning and enables pupils to make connections between different areas of knowledge and apply their skills in a range of contexts.

Our approach to curriculum organisation and planning is designed to:

- Support teacher workload through collaborative planning and the sharing of resources and expertise across teams, while making effective use of individual teachers' strengths and experience.
- Adapt and refine the National Curriculum and individual subject curricula to meet the needs of our pupils and reflect our local context, while ensuring that statutory curriculum requirements are met. For example, in Geography and History, local studies and topics that are particularly relevant to our pupils and communities may be prioritised alongside the wider requirements of the National Curriculum.
- Ensure that, although learning may be organised thematically, individual subjects and their disciplinary knowledge are clearly identified and systematically planned and monitored. Subject policies and curriculum plans ensure appropriate coverage, progression, depth and development of knowledge and skills.
- Provide a curriculum that reflects the needs of our pupils and the communities we serve. Relationships and Health Education (RHE) is taught throughout the primary phases, alongside age-appropriate Personal Safety and Drugs Education.
- Ensure that curriculum planning supports progression in knowledge, skills and understanding from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to the end of Key Stage 2 and prepares pupils effectively for their next stage of education.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to revisit, apply and deepen their learning across different subjects and contexts.

4.1 Short, medium and long-term planning expectations

- The Willow Tree Curriculum Maps and Sequential Learning Grids set out the knowledge, skills and understanding to be taught across each subject and year group. Medium-term planning develops this further by identifying the sequence and timing of learning.
- English and Mathematics are planned on a weekly basis. Detailed slide planning provides a clear structure and supports teachers in delivering high-quality teaching that meets the needs of our pupils.
- Medium-term planning is used to reduce teacher workload in the foundation subjects. Learning is planned in blocks and teachers annotate these plans as part of their short-term preparation. Teachers are therefore not required to produce individual lesson plans for each lesson in these subjects, enabling them to focus their time on preparing and delivering high-quality learning.
- Sequential Learning Grids support teachers in planning lessons that build systematically on prior learning and enable pupils to know more, remember more and apply their knowledge and skills.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins our curriculum planning and the experiences we provide for pupils. This includes educational visits, visitors to school and residential experiences.
- Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) is a key part of our curriculum and supports pupils' personal development, including their understanding of British Values.
- We aim to provide high-quality, accessible resources that support effective teaching and learning and enable teachers to focus on meeting the needs of their pupils.
- Further information about the delivery of the Early Years curriculum can be found in the EYFS Policy.

5. Inclusion

Teachers have high expectations for all pupils and are committed to ensuring that every pupil can participate fully in the curriculum and achieve their potential. Teachers use appropriate assessment information to set ambitious and achievable targets and to plan appropriately challenging learning for all pupils, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers plan learning to ensure that pupils with SEND and/or disabilities have access to the full breadth of the National Curriculum. Appropriate adaptations, reasonable adjustments, resources and support are provided to remove barriers to participation, progress and achievement.

Teachers take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English and provide appropriate opportunities and support to develop their language and communication skills. This enables pupils to access the curriculum, participate fully in learning and develop the academic language required to succeed across all subjects.

Our approach to inclusion recognises and values the individual strengths, needs, experiences and backgrounds that every pupil brings to the school community. Curriculum planning and teaching are adapted where appropriate to ensure that all pupils are supported to make progress and achieve well.

Further information can be found in our Equality Information and Objectives and SEND Policy.

6. Monitoring arrangements

The CEO, Headteachers, School Improvement Board (SIB) Governors and Trust School Improvement Leader monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the curriculum and the school's compliance with its funding agreement and statutory curriculum requirements. This includes monitoring the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum and ensuring that all required subjects are appropriately taught.

Monitoring takes place through a range of activities, including:

- Work scrutiny
- Learning walks
- Lesson observations
- Pupil voice and discussions with pupils
- Curriculum and subject reviews
- Analysis of assessment information and pupil outcomes
- Review of curriculum planning and progression
- School visits and monitoring activities undertaken by governors.

These activities form part of the Trust's and schools' approach to curriculum monitoring and may be brought together as part of a curriculum deep dive/.

The findings from monitoring activities are used to identify strengths, areas for development and priorities for improvement. Where appropriate, these inform school and Trust improvement planning, professional development and curriculum development.

5.1 Trust School Improvement Leader

The Trust School Improvement Leader provides strategic oversight, challenge and support to schools in relation to curriculum quality, implementation and impact. This includes:

- Monitoring the quality, breadth and balance of the curriculum across Trust schools and ensuring that statutory requirements are met.
- Working with Headteachers, school leaders and Curriculum Leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum design, implementation and impact.
- Undertaking curriculum reviews and deep dives across schools, using a range of evidence including work scrutiny, learning walks, lesson observations, pupil voice, curriculum planning and assessment information.
- Identifying strengths, areas for development and priorities for improvement, and ensuring that these inform school and Trust improvement planning.
- Providing appropriate challenge and support to school leaders where curriculum provision or pupil outcomes require improvement.
- Supporting schools to develop and refine their curriculum in response to the needs of their pupils, their local context and national requirements.
- Promoting consistency in curriculum expectations across the Trust while recognising the individual context and characteristics of each school.
- Facilitating collaboration and the sharing of effective practice between schools, phases and subject areas.
- Supporting the development of Curriculum and Subject Leaders through professional development, training and opportunities to share expertise.
- Reporting key findings and recommendations from curriculum monitoring activities to the Executive

- Team and School Improvement Board, as appropriate.
- Monitoring the impact of curriculum improvement actions and ensuring that agreed priorities are followed through and evaluated.

5.2 Subject and Curriculum Leaders

Subject and Curriculum Leaders are responsible for monitoring the quality, implementation and progression of their subject across the school. This includes:

- Undertaking work scrutiny, learning walks, lesson observations and pupil voice activities, as appropriate.
- Monitoring curriculum planning, coverage, progression and the development of subject-specific knowledge and skills.
- Evaluating the impact of teaching on pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Identifying strengths and areas for development and contributing to appropriate actions for improvement.
- Monitoring the quality, accessibility and organisation of subject resources and ensuring that resources are stored and managed appropriately.
- Sharing effective practice and supporting colleagues in developing the quality of teaching and learning within their subject.
- Working with the Trust School Improvement Leader and school leaders to contribute to Trust-wide curriculum development and improvement.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually. 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