

Willow Tree Primary School Curriculum Statement

Introduction

The purpose of this statement is to outline the methodology that has been adopted to implement the curriculum at Willow Tree Primary School and sets out our aims.

The curriculum long and medium term plans set out the knowledge and understanding that we have organised for each class, year group and key stage. The decisions that have been made reference our school mission statement and overall aims and vision of the school.

Through this framework, all members of staff will have a clear view of the planning and organisation of the curriculum and the school's method of securing children's entitlement to a full range of learning opportunities. The principles of breadth balance and progression have been included. These are crucial to our curriculum design and ultimately to the enhancing of the quality of learning that takes place.

School Mission Statement

At the heart of our provision is a desire for all children to:

Be confident

Have hope

Have friends

Be inspired

Know right from wrong

We are working together for a brighter future.

INTENT

What makes our curriculum unique?

The school has an explicit desire to provide a relevant educational experience for all of our children, regardless of their background, ability, gender, age or ethnicity. We recognise that all children are different and unique. Similarly, we recognise that the school has been set a task by society in general, to assist each child in his/her development towards being a responsible and well-rounded adult of tomorrow. Willow Tree strives to provide an atmosphere where relationships are based on mutual respect and the belief that all children matter. These relationships are the foundation on which our values such as understanding, tolerance and co-operation will be built on.

We believe that each child is entitled to receive learning experiences that will enable him/her to reach his/her full potential and learn the skills, which will equip them best for the challenges they may meet in the 21st century.

Central to this we endeavour to ensure that all children develop a positive attitude towards learning. It is therefore important that school is a happy place and a place where every child can take

advantage of the learning opportunities offered without interference from others. We will strive to ensure that all children have the opportunity to develop the qualities of experimentation, investigation and creativity. It is our mission to help each child learn how to learn and behave.

Rationale of Our Unique Curriculum

In 2014, the government introduced a new national curriculum. This curriculum detailed the learning objectives to be taught throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 with a strong emphasis on the teaching of English and Mathematics.

In order to make the Willow Tree curriculum unique we researched other successful school curricular and set out the requirements for our own curriculum as follows:

- English and Mathematics were to be taught discretely
- Reading was given a high priority
- It was specific to the needs of our children
- It was outward looking, giving the children experience of the local, national and global community in which they live
- It supported the school ethos
- It contributed to the development of the whole child
- Children were motivated and enjoyed it
- It was skills based but creative at the heart
- It contributed to high standards in English and Maths

School fulfils its statutory duties and ensures all objectives are covered in a project approach. We also decided to teach additional objectives specific to our school to ensure breadth balance and relevance.

IMPLEMENTATION

At Willow Tree, we wanted to define the curriculum more widely than just the statutory requirements alone. We fully encompass the 2014 National Curriculum and our own priorities such as the Creative Arts, P.E and ICT.

We have achieved our uniqueness by including the following:

A cross-curricular project approach linked explicitly to the National Curriculum subjects

An emphasis on the development of talk and developing language rich opportunities

Books are placed at the centre of each project providing rich writing opportunities

External visits and visitors into school are closely linked to the projects

Creative home learning opportunities linked to a project across a term

Balance of Our Curriculum

Balance in the curriculum is about the amount of time dedicated to each curriculum area and how it is used. At Willow Tree, we have set a reasonable amount of time in order to meet statutory requirements.

Thought has been given to the frequency of subjects taught and whether some subjects can be taught in blocks rather than appearing on the timetable every week and the needs of our children.

Teachers are allowed sufficient time to teach and children are given sufficient time to learn.

Progression in the Curriculum

A three step continuous cycle is adhered to (plan, teach, assess). Teachers plan lessons based on the assessed needs of the children. Subject leaders play a leading role in providing progressive long-term plans in their subject, which are then transferred to a long-term whole school plan. These plans contain the statutory coverage of the subject alongside enquiry questions and key skills which are progressive. Class teachers write weekly plans which have clear learning objectives and success criteria which plan for progression. The school's whole school plan reflects very well how we establish breadth, balance and continuity.

Our Curriculum Priorities

English and Mathematics are the foundations of our curriculum. Children require strong literacy skills to access other aspects of the curriculum. At Willow Tree, we prioritise reading and other aspects of the curriculum that we believe require extra time and emphasis. There may be a need for our children to have further work in English and Mathematics, this might include additional writing sessions each week, intervention and group work with teachers and teaching assistants or extra English added to the timetable across the school. Decisions are made carefully and based on evaluating evidence such as school data.

Creativity and the Arts

The White paper (Nov 2011) said that **“ If we are to prepare successfully for the 21st Century we will have to do more than just improve literacy and numeracy skills. We need a broad, flexible and motivating education that recognises the different talents of all children and delivers excellence for everyone.”**

At Willow Tree, creativity means children are involved, seeing, thinking, and innovating. Throughout their project work, children will be immersed in a subject or issue and teachers will help them ask questions, take risks, be imaginative and playfully explore options as well as innovate. We have built into our curriculum, time for developing children's creativity by an artist in residence and specialist music teachers. We also devote extra time to Arts weeks, and enrichment days.

P.H.S.E

At Willow Tree, we aim to give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and become informed responsible citizens. SRE is taught via PHSE in the Growing and Changing Curriculum themes. The whole of the school curriculum is permeated with opportunities for the teaching of Health, Social Education and Citizenship and this complemented by a Community Project in Year 4. All children at Willow Tree are encouraged to participate in a wide range of activities and experiences across and beyond the curriculum, contributing fully to the life of our school and community.

IMPACT

In September 2014, the DFE required maintained schools to adopt a new national curriculum. At Willow Tree, we use Target Tracker which gives us a means of assessing pupils by recording against statements based on the national programmes of study. Alongside this Target Tracker uses a stepped scale to allow schools to summarise attainment against age related expectation.

The cohorts in Year 2 and 6 are the third to have completed end of key stage assessment. There is evidence to suggest that schools using Target Tracker to assess against age related expectation are doing so very successfully. There is a close fit between user views of age related expectation in Target Tracker and outcomes at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.