



# Woodbury School

## Curriculum Policy

**Reviewer:** Lisa Gulley  
**Reviewed:** May 2019  
**Next review:** May 2020

The curriculum at Woodbury School meets the needs of pupils referred to the school by:

- paying due regard to the Core subject requirements in accordance with the DfE.
- utilising a personalised learning approach to meet individual pupil needs

Such an approach is required because pupils referred to us have a wide variety of educational backgrounds and life experiences that often involve serious trauma. Due to these experiences their attainments may not match those expected of their peers within a key stage. Our pupils may have Education Health and Care Plans, be school phobic and more than likely will have significant gaps in their learning. The flexibility we build into our whole school approach enables pupils to experience a broad, balanced curriculum in which they acquire skills, knowledge and make progress commensurate with their ability. This also allows us, as a school, to meet our mission statement and vision:

### **Mission Statement for Horizon Care and Education**

*'We aim to inspire lasting change in our children and young people to enable them to achieve beyond their goals and to have the best possible start to adult life'*

### **Vision for Horizon Schools**

*'Enabling achievement and fulfilling individual potential through an inclusive, safe and inspirational learning environment'*

We recognise that pupils referred to the Woodbury School may well have had traumatic life experiences that are beyond those experienced by the vast majority of society. The effect of their personal histories on our pupils means that they will have missed out on many valuable positive learning experiences in any setting, be it within their family, prior educational settings, or other social interactions. The negative consequences of these experiences on their attitude to, and engagement with, learning transfers with them into our school and can manifest itself in unpredictable ways but most often as severely challenging behaviour.

Having recognised this commonly shared background of our pupils, Woodbury's curriculum is focused on providing positive and personalised learning experiences that, over time, lead to greater engagement. The engagement we seek to engender, in turn, leads to improved achievement, something that our pupils have often not made in the educational setting(s) they experienced before joining our school.

We endeavour, as far as possible, to make learning real and relevant to our pupils, while also ensuring that they develop and progress in the core subject areas (English, Maths and Science). There is a strong emphasis within the school on the importance of PSHE and SMSC teaching in both group and individual sessions that takes place in both formal and informal settings.

Where it is possible, we work to provide continuity to our pupils from their previous educational setting and we ensure that the core subjects (Maths/English/Science) are studied to exam level using a range of appropriate specifications. ICT is embedded into all our teaching and is approached in a cross curricula manner.

Our approach to teaching and learning helps to support our pupils in becoming positive, responsible individuals who can work and co-operate with others in whatever environment they may find themselves once they have left school.

**The aims of Woodbury School curriculum are:**

- ✓ To enable all pupils to learn and develop skills, knowledge and understanding to the best of their ability so that they are equipped to lead happy, purposeful lives in society;
- ✓ To develop in our pupils a positive attitude towards learning, so that they become lifelong learners who are able to deal with an uncertain future;
- ✓ To develop in our pupils' competencies in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT);
- ✓ To enable pupils to be creative in developing their own thinking;
- ✓ To provide opportunities for our pupils to successfully return to a mainstream environment where appropriate.
- ✓ To enable pupils to develop respect for themselves, for others, and for their environment;
- ✓ To enable pupils to be positive citizens that contribute to society;
- ✓ To enable pupils to have an experience of the world of work as part of a preparation for their future working lives;
- ✓ To support pupils in developing a personal awareness of their own spiritual self and an understanding of right from wrong;
- ✓ To help pupils understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they are able to recognise discrimination and stereotyping, and to challenge it;
- ✓ To enable pupils to develop an understanding of the rights and responsibilities that all of us have in society;
- ✓ To help pupils respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- ✓ To ensure that pupils know about the world, how the environment has changed over time and how they can contribute to future progress locally, nationally and globally;
- ✓ To develop in our pupils the desire to pursue healthy lifestyle choices.

**Organisation and Planning**

Pupils will have individual personalised timetables, bringing them together as small groups of no more than 5 in core subjects based on their current Key Stage. The groups will as far as possible be based on the stage their learning is at so pupils in the same group may be different ages.

The work the pupils will engage in is differentiated to meet each pupil's need and level of ability. Where additional teaching skills and knowledge are required, we use peripatetic teachers; this could be for specific elements of foundation subjects and core subjects.

Where, through ongoing assessment, pupils are found to have gaps in knowledge and understanding of a subject, individual teaching will be deployed.

The curriculum is planned in terms of long and medium term (block of lessons) programmes: the short term programmes drive the learning that is current. The medium and long term programmes are adjusted on the basis of an evaluation of the progress pupils are making.

In the case of core subjects and other courses that lead to accreditation, planning is informed by the requirements of the exam board specification. Our pupils may join us at any time in the year, and in enabling these pupils to reconnect with learning, it may well be that initially they revisit work they have already covered in previous settings. Where a pupil feels “I’ve already done this...” there will be flexibility in the planning for that individual to make the adjustments that meet their perceived needs.

We will meet the challenge of finding age appropriate learning experiences for pupils whose level of ability falls well below that of their chronological age

Where pupils are assessed as gifted and talented, the curriculum is flexible enough to allow early entry into examination subjects so that if the young person is at risk of being transient, there is the best chance possible of that person achieving an accreditation.

*Given that pupil placement can be determined by a multitude of factors, Woodbury aims to ensure that pupils gain nationally recognised qualifications at the earliest opportunity that meet their level and ability.*

## **Woodbury School Curriculum**

### **[A] Rationale**

At Woodbury School, we have high expectations of teaching and learning; teaching on a regular basis should be of a good or better standard. We intend to improve the quality of teaching and learning by recognising that we are all learners within a community of learning and that, as learners, we continue to develop our expertise and professionalism. The curriculum at Woodbury School therefore promotes the following strategic challenges for developing the school vision:

- ✓ The promotion of high standards without inequalities in attainment
- ✓ Education tailored to the talents, aspirations, and potential of individual students
- ✓ The encouragement of innovation through ICT to transform teaching and learning
- ✓ Developing the skills necessary for autonomous learning, enabling students to become life-long independent learners
- ✓ The setting of targets for both learning and teaching standards.

### **[B] Teaching and Learning**

Teaching and Learning in the classroom is informed by the needs of the individual to reach a level of attainment that enables each and every pupil to develop. The content of our curriculum is informed by the suite of accreditations that can unlock the doorway to a happy, purposeful life as a member of a local, national and global community. We adopt the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Pupils in Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 will experience a curriculum that promotes both personal and academic development through a range of qualification pathways that will enable them to pursue their life ambitions. This will be supported by appropriate advice, information and guidance to suit each individual. Pupils in Key Stages 4 and 5 will also have access to independent career advice and to work experience opportunities.

### **[C] Practice**

Learning happens within three different contexts at the Woodbury School:

**1) Lessons** – planned experiences where pupils work through a programme or scheme of work. The needs of the pupils at the Woodbury School requires curriculum planning that is flexible and relevant as both the context in which we live continually changes, as do the needs of our pupils at different stages of their lives. Our curriculum will facilitate the acquisition of knowledge as well as skills and promote enjoyment of learning.

**2) Routines** – regular occurrences where pupils are influenced as they go through the school day: registration, assemblies, break-times etc.

**3) Events** – these can include, but are not limited to, performances, sporting occasions, field/study trips and themed days which all create opportunities for pupils to access curriculum content and/or develop personal qualities and characteristics.

### **[D] Essential components**

Lessons, routines and events at Woodbury School will contain the following components:

**1) Learning styles** – We recognise that all learners have preferred ways of learning affected by prior experiences, beliefs and values. Pupils learn best when:

- A variety of learning styles are encouraged
- Particular sensory modes of learning are employed (multiple intelligences, Visual, Auditory and Kinesthetic approaches)
- Levels of learning are planned within lessons and range from surface level acquisition to deep level processing

- **2) Teaching styles** – The full range of teaching styles is used from whole class teaching through independent learning, to individual exploratory work and interactive (group) work where possible. The appropriate teaching style is deployed for each learning event so that learning objectives can be met and outcomes achieved. Pupils learn best when:
  - Lessons are lively, stimulating and interesting
  - The provision is challenging and appropriately matched to the needs of the individual pupil
  - A variety of teaching and learning styles are employed within a course of study/individual lesson
  - Pupil success is celebrated in a range of different ways.

**3) Environment** – This changes from classroom to classroom within which specific programmes are delivered. Every learning environment is carefully planned to provide the best learning potential. Pupils learn best when:

- The organisation of what is taught matches the needs of both the individual pupil and the curriculum
- The room is arranged appropriately for the lesson
- There is access to relevant resources which are safely arranged and distributed
- There are stimulating displays which show pupils work and contribute towards the school ethos
- Displays should also take the form of teaching tools and be educational and inspirational – these should complement the curriculum being studied and be reviewed regularly.

**4) Lesson structure** – lessons or a series of lessons should contain the following elements:

- Starter
- Main
- Plenary
- Mini Plenaries
- AFL opportunities
- Personalisation/differentiation

## **[E] Effective teaching and learning within the classroom**

### **Questioning strategies**

Open-ended questions (What if? How might?)

High Order Questioning (Synthesis/Evaluation)

Prompting questions

Mind mapping

Making use of visual stimuli/resources

### **Intervention/interaction with pupils**

Peer support

Formative marking

Praise/sharing good practice with whole group

Rewards

Positive reinforcement

Remove barriers to learning and progress

## **Differentiation**

### **By Task**

Open ended task  
Support in core and extension  
Choice of task or style of response  
Choice of entry and exit points

## **Differentiation**

### **By Support**

Use of teaching assistant  
Mentors  
Resources  
Teacher intervention  
By pace/time  
Pupils allowed more/less time  
Waiting time in response to teacher questions  
Time for review/evaluation  
Number of tasks required

### **[F] Teaching and learning behaviours**

In the classroom the behaviour of staff and pupils should reflect high standards of engagement, challenge and expectations.

### **[G] Resources**

These are developed and shared in the staff room and through weekly meetings. Teachers, Instructors and Teaching Assistants all work together to develop and produce learning materials.

### **[H] Managing diversity**

We make every attempt to give consideration to the educational requirement of different groups of learners: pupils with SEND, pupils recognised as Gifted and Talented, pupils with behavioural/emotional difficulties, pupils from ethnic minorities, pupils with a disability and those who appear to be underachieving.

There are numerous opportunities to improve and extend teacher skills in differentiation and learning styles to meet individual needs. Different systems of internal and external accreditation have also been developed thus acknowledging a broader range of educational outcomes.

### **[I] Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

The elements of self-evaluation – monitoring, evaluation and review – are applied within a wider programme of whole school review.

Within teaching and learning there are key areas for self-evaluation: quality of learning, meeting pupils needs, assessment and quality assurance. These key areas are monitored through cyclical visits to lessons looking for the extent to which there is evidence of elements of good and outstanding practice and regular reviews of the quality of outcomes and the response of our pupils to what they are given (quality assurance).

The cycle of review informs intervention programmes for staff. The Quality Assurance Programme uses both shorter observations in the form of visits and scrutiny, and longer observations carried out by line managers.

Where an individual is found to have elements of pedagogy that require improvement or are inadequate, a bespoke intervention will be implemented using expertise within the Woodbury School in the first instance and support from other schools in the Horizon Care family if required.

Intervention programmes are available from the National College, and where necessary, these will be used:

ITP – National College 6 week teacher training program

Impact on Learning (Teaching and Learning) – 6 week internal support program

Impact on Learning (Behaviour Management Coaching) – 6 week internal support program

Additional monitoring, evaluation and review includes:

OFSTED inspections

External benchmarking against key criteria