



# Woodthorpe CE Primary School

## Teaching & Learning Policy

Review: annually

| Version                   | Date              | Updates                                              | Minute No.   | Review Date |
|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1                         | Spring 2026       | New policy to reflect changes to vision and planning | LTC050226/18 | Spring 2027 |
| <b>Signed</b>             |                   |                                                      |              |             |
| <b>Headteacher</b>        | <i>M. Loader</i>  | <b>Matt Loader</b>                                   | 27.1.26      |             |
| <b>Chair of Governors</b> | <i>S. Beckett</i> | <b>Sue Beckett</b>                                   | 5.2.26       |             |

## Introduction

At our school, teaching and learning are driven by a clear, ambitious vision which emphasises high-quality curriculum design, effective implementation, inclusion, and strong professional practice across all phases of education. Central to this vision is a commitment to securing strong foundations from the very start, recognising the significant impact that high-quality early education has on later academic success, well-being and long-term life chances.

Our curriculum journey begins in the Early Years, where learning is carefully sequenced to build the essential knowledge and skills children need by the end of Key Stage 1 and beyond. Staff rapidly identify misconceptions or gaps which is critical in preventing future barriers to progress, particularly for disadvantaged pupils or those with delayed language and communication skills. We ensure our Reception curriculum is clear, focused and rooted in what children need to know, avoiding overload or unfocused activities that hinder the acquisition of foundational knowledge.

We ensure that teaching across school is grounded in research-informed approaches, including high-quality assessment, explicit vocabulary teaching, and effective use of metacognitive and self-regulation strategies. These approaches are embedded from the earliest stages. Teachers use diagnostic assessment to identify gaps promptly and respond with targeted teaching and structured practice to support pupils who require more time to secure key learning.

Our curriculum is coherently sequenced and progressive, building knowledge cumulatively from EYFS to Year 6 and secure progression over time. Careful attention is given to transitions between year groups, with a particular focus on the transition into Year 1, ensuring continuity and curriculum alignment from Reception onwards. Leaders and teachers work collaboratively to make sure that learning builds securely and that no child is left behind due to unidentified or unaddressed gaps.

We place a strong emphasis on well-being, and self-regulation, recognising their importance in developing resilient, independent learners. We explicitly teach learning behaviours and self-regulation strategies to support pupils in managing their emotions, engaging with learning and becoming active participants in their progress.

To ensure long-term retention and deep understanding, key knowledge and vocabulary are revisited and reviewed regularly, ensuring pupils “know more and remember more” through coherent curriculum design and effective teaching practices. Teachers plan opportunities for retrieval, practice and application so that learning is embedded and pupils develop fluency over time.

Our teaching and learning approach ensures that every child receives the high-quality education they deserve, starting strong in EYFS, building progressively through the school, and developing the secure knowledge, attitudes and dispositions needed for future success.

## This policy aims to:

- guide and support teachers and classroom colleagues in ensuring the best possible standards of teaching and learning
- create an ethos of high expectations for all pupils
- promote consistency in the quality of teaching and learning
- ensure that all pupils make good or better progress
- cultivate a learning environment that inspires and motivates
- develop confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners

## School Aims and Ethos

At Woodthorpe CE Primary School, our curriculum is designed to uphold high standards across every subject particularly in reading, oracy and vocabulary, while broadening pupils' knowledge and experiences throughout all areas of learning. We place strong emphasis on supporting the Social and Emotional Mental Health for all children. Through thoughtful curriculum design and effective pedagogy, we nurture pupils' independence, resilience, and confidence, and actively seek opportunities to embrace and celebrate diversity within our school community.

Our behaviour policy aligns closely with these aims, adopting a relational approach that fosters a calm, supportive environment. All staff receive training in both the theory and practice of this approach, ensuring consistency and care across the school.

We believe that children thrive best when school and families work closely together. At Woodthorpe CE Primary School, we provide an inclusive education rooted in the principle of **'Learning and Growing Together to be the best we can be'**, preparing children for lifelong learning, flourishing, and achievement.

## **Vision**

"Be strong and courageous... for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

At Woodthorpe CE Primary School, this vision shapes our ethos, our relationships and our aspirations for every child. Guided by faith, community and compassion, we aim to nurture confident, resilient and courageous learners who flourish academically, socially and spiritually.

## **We aim to create a high-quality learning environment where:**

- Children feel happy, safe and secure, supported through strong relationships and a warm, family-centred school culture.
- Behaviour reflects our CARE Code, with pupils learning to make thoughtful, responsible choices grounded in care, aspiration, resilience and enjoyment.
- Every child is fully included and supported to achieve their potential, regardless of starting point, background or need.
- A sense of curiosity is nurtured, and quality discussions are valued. Children are inspired to question, analyse, and engage with the world around them.
- Children develop strong self-esteem, emotional intelligence and respect, for themselves, for others, for diversity and for God's world.
- Cooperation, kindness and mutual support are embedded in school life, reflecting our Christian values and our commitment to community.
- Success, achievement and effort are recognised and celebrated, helping pupils grow into proud, motivated and lifelong learners.

## **Through our teaching we aim to:**

- Inspire children to become confident, curious, independent learners who approach challenges with resilience and creativity.
- Promote self-respect and a clear understanding of personal responsibility, encouraging children to value the rights, ideas, beliefs and feelings of others.
- Help children develop a deep sense of belonging within their school, local community and wider world, ensuring they feel valued, included and connected.
- Design and use compassionate, CARE-aligned approaches that support emotional wellbeing, help pupils regulate their behaviour and promote positive relationships.
- Apply consistent, inclusive systems that identify barriers early, offer appropriate support and enable all pupils to engage and achieve.

Good quality teaching and learning at Woodthorpe C of E Primary School is characterised by :

- High-quality, evidence-informed teaching that strengthens pupils' ability to think about their learning, work independently and make sustained progress.
- Applying familiar, consistent, and inclusive teaching systems that offer appropriate support and reduce cognitive overload, enabling all pupils to engage and achieve.
- Maintaining a calm, relational and inclusive classroom climate where every pupil feels safe, respected and able to participate confidently.
- Delivering a well-sequenced, research-driven curriculum that reflects pupils' needs and meets national expectations for effective teaching.
- High aspirations for all children so that their achievement and enjoyment is maximised
- Comprehensive teacher subject knowledge, ensured by Continuing Professional Development in many forms including remaining up to date with current research.

- Systematic, whole-school curriculum planning ensures that every subject builds strong foundational knowledge, particularly in reading, communication and mathematics—and is carefully adapted to meet the needs of pupils with SEND, towards clearly defined end points.
- A range of teaching strategies and resources that engage, encourage and challenge all pupils
- Children's involvement in their learning, including self and peer assessment and time to respond to feedback
- The provision of learning experiences outside the classroom
- The effective use of the significant contribution of learning support assistants
- Actively involve parents as partners, valuing their influence in helping shape and support effective learning.
- Consistent and familiar marking and feedback systems that moves learning on and closes the gaps in learning.

#### **Good quality learning is characterised by pupils who:**

- Learn the curriculum and are able to retain and recall key knowledge and concepts
- Use these key concepts and knowledge to independently make links across learning areas, and develop increasingly complex 'schemata' of knowledge over time
- Have high self-esteem and resilience
- Believe that their own efforts and practice bring improvement and success
- Enjoy the satisfaction that comes from self-managed success
- Enjoy both independent and collaborative ways of working
- Are aware of how they learn and what helps their learning
- Understand the need to self-question, reflect and problem-solve
- Understand that they must judge their achievement against their own earlier performance
- Use their knowledge and skills to support the learning of others
- Self-manage their own feelings and show empathy to others

#### **Curriculum**

- At the start of each new thread of learning, teachers gather pupils' initial ideas, language and prior knowledge. These are revisited throughout the sequence so that children can clearly see the purpose of their learning, how their thinking has evolved and how their understanding strengthens over time.
- We believe that strong foundations are essential for future success. Our curriculum prioritises the development of secure foundational knowledge—especially in reading, oracy and vocabulary—because we recognise these as key to unlocking more complex concepts later on. When children can read fluently, understand subject-specific vocabulary and articulate ideas clearly, they are better equipped to access deeper learning across every subject discipline.
- Learning across the primary phase has been carefully sequenced so that knowledge builds incrementally about people, places, concepts and ideas. Alongside this, subject-specific skills are taught in a structured, progressive way, ensuring that children develop a clear understanding of both the knowledge they gain and the "how to" skills required within each discipline. Progress is defined as knowing more and remembering more. Regular retrieval practice helps strengthen memory and ensures that the most important concepts—identified by staff—are retained securely.
- Oracy and vocabulary are woven throughout all curriculum areas. We understand that a child's grasp of key vocabulary is a strong indicator of their subject understanding. Therefore, vocabulary is explicitly introduced, revisited and used meaningfully in context. Through structured talk, discussion and debate, pupils learn to express themselves clearly, justify their thinking and build on the ideas of others. This not only deepens their subject knowledge but also supports them in becoming confident communicators with thoughtful, well-rounded opinions—qualities essential for thriving within school and wider society.
- Our curriculum is often led by history, geography or science each term, with teachers making purposeful links between subjects where appropriate. Some units connect naturally under a shared theme, while others are taught discretely. Regardless of the approach, the disciplinary identity of each subject is always maintained so children are clear when they are learning History, Geography or another subject.
- We offer a curriculum that is broad, balanced and ambitious. It motivates learners by building on what they already know, challenges them to think more deeply and encourages independence at every stage. Wherever meaningful, we make connections across subjects and to real-world contexts,

as these strengthen understanding and help knowledge “stick.” Our ultimate aim is to ensure children leave us with strong foundations, confident voices and the ability to understand, question and contribute thoughtfully to the world around them.

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#### Curriculum provision and delivery includes:

- whole-class, group, paired and independent work
- investigation and problem solving
- research and finding out
- asking and answering questions
- Oracy activities, debates and presentations
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- use of ICT
- creative activities
- designing and making
- participation in physical activity
- participation in music and singing

Throughout the year, teachers organise themed days, educational visits and invite visitors into school. These experiences enrich learning and help bring the curriculum to life. All activities are carefully planned to ensure safety and appropriate adult supervision. When learning takes children off-site, parents are informed in advance and permission is always obtained. We also offer a range of extra-curricular opportunities provided by both school staff and external specialists.

Our teaching is rooted in the National Curriculum and shaped by our knowledge of each child's stage of development. Our priority is to ensure every child makes strong progress—academically, socially and spiritually—through carefully planned curriculum coverage and high-quality teaching. Learning experiences are appropriately matched to children's abilities, offering both support and challenge. Regular reviews of progress allow us to provide timely catch-up and keep-up interventions, ensuring that all pupils continue to thrive.

We teach in an atmosphere built on trust, kindness and respect. Strong relationships with children and families are central to our ethos. Staff treat all children fairly and create equal opportunities for everyone to take part in learning. Our behaviour expectations are consistent across the school and all staff follow the school behaviour policy.

Our classrooms are designed to be calm, purposeful and supportive learning environments. We aim to reduce cognitive overload by ensuring spaces feel familiar from class to class, with subtle personalisation that reflects each teacher's style. Classrooms use consistent features such as visual timetables, oracy prompts, widgets (SEND friendly symbols) and other inclusive supports that help all children access learning. Each room includes a **Regulation Station**, offering a quiet space to support emotional wellbeing, alongside access to class books to encourage a love of reading.

Displays are clear and consistent across the school to support familiarity and ease transitions. Working walls in English and maths help children revisit key strategies, while other displays celebrate learning and highlight key knowledge, concepts and vocabulary from the subjects being taught.

We teach Religious Education using the **Derbyshire Diocesan Agreed Syllabus** alongside the **Understanding Christianity** framework, ensuring a rich and reflective approach to spiritual development.

#### Planning

Each year group/phase uses the National Curriculum and the school's sequence and progression documents to create long-term plans. For each phase, Y1/2, Y3/4, Y4/5 and Y5/6, these plans are on a two year rolling programme due to mixed-age classes, ensuring that coverage and progression are carefully considered. The long-term plans which feed into short-term plans that are personalised for each class to include adaptations for pupil groups, use of other adults and class context. Planning and resources are saved to SharePoint.

Each curriculum driver begins with a carefully developed key question, designed to spark curiosity and act as a pre-assessment tool. This initial question helps teachers establish what children already know and provides a purposeful starting point for new learning.

Each lesson then has a clear learning focus, followed by success criteria that define the intended outcomes and guide the teaching. This structure helps to clarify, organise and prioritise learning for both teachers and pupils. Links are explicitly made to show how children's prior knowledge supports the new content within the lesson, reinforcing the idea that learning builds over time.

### **Learning Clarity**

All teachers from Y1-Y6 follow the 'Woodthorpe Way' (*Separate documents*) which are developed specific to the needs of each subject and reflect up to date research in effective teaching practices.

All lessons begin with Retrieval Practice, where teachers prompt children to recall prior knowledge—either from earlier learning or from the knowledge organisers used in foundation subjects. This ensures pupils regularly revisit the most important knowledge needed for the lesson ahead.

Teachers then introduce new learning through a clear "I do, we do, you do" structure. In the *I do* phase, the teacher models the concept or skill; in the *We do* phase, the class works together with guided support; in the *You do* phase, children apply their learning independently.

Alongside this structure, we look carefully at key vocabulary in every lesson. Teachers explicitly teach, revisit and model subject-specific vocabulary, using sentence stems where appropriate—particularly in maths—to support children in explaining their reasoning, articulating methods and using precise academic language. This sequence is not used rigidly. Teachers continuously assess learning throughout the lesson and adapt teaching in response. If misconceptions arise, further modelling or guided practice is needed, or deeper challenge is appropriate, teachers revisit earlier stages. This responsive, formative approach ensures teaching meets the needs of all learners and supports secure understanding before moving on.

A learning objective and success criteria is stuck in children's books. At the beginning of each book, children also have individual targets which they can refer back to regularly. They use these targets to reflect on their progress, highlighting them through conversation with teachers, when they feel they have achieved or demonstrated understanding. This supports children in taking ownership of their learning and recognising their next steps.

### **Adaptation for pupils with SEND**

So that we always have the highest possible expectations of individual learners and so that can demonstrate what they can do, understand and achieve, teachers will adapt the curriculum according to individual needs through:

- pace
- content
- task
- resources
- extension
- outcomes
- teacher/adult support

Curriculum planning includes clear and explicit adaptations to support high-quality, inclusive teaching for all learners. Universal provision is built into every sequence of learning to remove barriers and ensure every child can access the curriculum. Planning also identifies opportunities where children can be challenged and extended as needed.

Teachers refer to EHCP targets, Support Plan targets and any identified individual needs when designing and delivering learning. This ensures adaptations are purposeful, personalised and aligned with the support each child requires. Consideration is also given to pupils' wellbeing and emotional state, recognising that children learn best when they feel safe, regulated and ready to engage.

### **Inclusion, Promoting Equality and Tackling Discrimination**

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in all subjects according to their individual abilities. We identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. (see *Equalities and SEND Policies*). Children that are more able and those who have gifts or talents are identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

All children are provided with equal access to the curriculum. We provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of:

- whether or not learners are disabled
- ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- gender and gender identity
- sexual identity

Attainment is tracked individually and by pupil group. Swift action is taken to address any underperformance. The school prides itself on the way it promotes equality of opportunity. (See *Equalities Policy*).

### **Parental Involvement**

We see parents and carers as partners in their children's education and recognise the impact that they can have on pupil achievement. We work closely with parents and carers by:

- Sending letters and information via Class Dojo.
- Sharing Pupil progress and learning at least termly
- Sharing achievements and recognition
- Keeping the website up to date
- Holding information events as required
- Holding open days for new starters
- Planned induction for children entering reception
- Inviting parents to participate in or watch class activities
- Ensuring the Head of School or other senior member of staff is available at the start and end of each school day.

### **Parents are encouraged to support their child's learning by:**

- ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, well-rested and in good health
- ensuring that their child arrives at school wearing the correct uniform and bringing necessary equipment
- providing support for the behaviour policy within the school and for the teacher's role
- reading regularly with and to their child
- supporting the work of educational targets and becoming actively involved in the implementation of any support programme
- participating in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainment
- ensuring early contact with school to discuss matters which affect a child's happiness, progress and behaviour
- supporting the school's homework policy and give due importance to any homework
- ensuring that all contact addresses and telephone numbers are up to date and correct
- allowing their child to become increasingly independent as they progress throughout the school
- informing the school of reasons for their child's absence

### **The Role of the Subject Leader**

Curriculum leaders work closely with staff, and Link Governors to plan for and sustain improvement in teaching and learning. Leaders:

- are clear on the intent of their subject, how their subject will be implemented across school and the impact it will have
- monitor and evaluate standards and progress, work alongside and advise the Head of School on action needed and develop new action plans
- Attend CPD and stay up to date with current research and distribute relevant information to staff.

- contribute to staff development through INSET, in staff meetings and by offering support and advice
- take the lead in policy development and the production of sequencing and progression grids for their subject designed to ensure high standards in their subject throughout the school
- support colleagues in their development of detailed work plans and implementation of the planning overviews and in assessment and record keeping activities
- ensure coverage of skills across the Key Stages
- monitor teaching and learning and disseminate good practice
- carry out pupil voice and book scrutinies to gauge progress against the sequence and knowledge progression documents
- take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of resources
- keep up-to-date with developments in their subject and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate

## **The role of the governors**

**The governors discuss, support, monitor and review the policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:**

- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment and achievement
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school's self-evaluation processes
- have due regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out it's duties toward all pupils with special educational needs
- spend time in the classroom where possible, and with the permission of staff, in order to gain first-hand experience of the way in which the teaching and learning is being carried out and see the way in which pupils engage with the curriculum
- meet with subject leaders to gain insight into planning and ensure that the national curriculum subject areas are adhered to, standards maintained and any subject weaknesses addressed
- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by monitoring the effectiveness of resource allocation
- ensure that buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations

## **Monitoring and review**

**Monitoring and review of this policy is carried out by:**

- Subject Leaders who monitor standards in their subject across the whole school through a range of methods and produce an evaluation of strengths and weaknesses that is shared with staff. Directed time is provided for this.
- the Headteacher and SLT who analyse annual ASP/IDSR and a range of other data and use it to inform school improvement planning
- headteacher 'drop-ins' to lessons
- the monitoring of targets and planning and scrutinising of children's work by subject leaders and team leaders
- Learning Walks and work scrutinies by leaders and DDAT School Improvement Officers
- the monitoring of subject leader reports by the headteacher
- following the school's performance management and appraisal policies

We are aware of the need to review the learning and teaching policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will review the policy annually.

## **Related policies and documents:**

- SEND
- RE

- Behaviour
- E-Safety
- Equalities
- Assessment and Reporting
- Homework
- Marking and Feedback
- Early Years Foundation Stage
- Curriculum Sequence and Progression grids for all subjects, plus English Long Term Plans
- Curriculum Maps by Year Group
- Adapting the Curriculum for Pupils with SEND document
- British Values in our Curriculum document
- Safeguarding within our Curriculum document
- Spiritual, Moral and Social Development documents
- The Woodthorpe Way documents for Reading, Writing and Maths