



# **Woodloes Primary School**

## **Teaching and Learning Policy**

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Date	Autumn 2025
Date adopted by Governors	Autumn 2025
Date for policy renewal	Autumn 2026

## Introduction

This Teaching and Learning Policy outlines our approach to delivering high-quality education that meets the expectations set forth by Ofsted and the 2014 National Curriculum in England. Our aim is to provide an enriching and engaging learning environment that fosters curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking while ensuring that all pupils achieve their full potential.

## Vision and Aims

Woodloes Primary School has continued to refine its pedagogical approach to teaching and learning. Building upon a thematic learning model, we have crafted a bespoke and personalised educational strategy. Recognising the importance of equipping our students for the future, our policy also closely aligns with the vision of the Community Academies Trust (CAT) in Ensuring Excellence.

At Woodloes, our vision is to empower every child to become a confident, independent learner who is well-prepared for the challenges of the future. Our key aims are:

- To deliver a broad and balanced curriculum that inspires all learners and meets the full requirements of the National Curriculum.
- To create a stimulating environment that encourages enquiry, exploration, and a love of learning.
- To ensure that teaching promotes high standards of achievement, emotional well-being, and personal development for all pupils.
- To foster a culture of resilience, respect, kindness, and mutual support in the learning community.

## Curriculum Design

We follow the 2014 National Curriculum, enhancing this through the use of White Rose, Bug Club, Kapow and **P.E.** ensuring that our curriculum is well-sequenced, relevant, and tailored to the needs of our pupils. Key elements include:

- **Core Subjects:**
  - **English:** Emphasis on reading, writing, and communication skills; exposure to various genres and texts.
  - **Mathematics:** Focus on problem-solving, reasoning, and fluency across all year groups, employing CPA (Concrete, Pictorial, Abstract) methods.

- **Science:** Exploration of scientific concepts through hands-on investigations and experiments.
- **Foundation Subjects:**
  - **History and Geography:** Interconnected learning that highlights historical events and their geographical significance.
  - **Art and Music:** Opportunities for creative expression through different mediums and styles, alongside music theory and practice.
  - **Physical Education:** Emphasis on physical well-being, teamwork, and developing lifelong skills through various sports.
  - **Computing:** Instruction focused on core skills, digital literacy, and safe use of technology.
  - **Religious Education:** Exploration of world religions and the ethical and cultural impacts of beliefs.
  - **Personal, Social, Health, and Economic Education (PSHE):** Development of emotional intelligence, understanding of healthy relationships, and preparation for citizenship.
- **Enrichment Opportunities:**
  - Scheduled trips, themed days, visits professionals, and collaborative projects that enhance understanding and engagement.

For a more detailed overview please see our *Broader Curriculum Opportunities and Deep and Diverse Experiences*.

## Teaching Strategies

At Woodloes, we recognise the significance of learning from contemporary cognitive science, acknowledging that children achieve optimal learning when knowledge is deeply embedded within their long-term memory. Our staff comprehends that working memory is limited; thus, children can only absorb a restricted amount of information concurrently. We strive to enable pupils to retrieve information from their long-term memory with both confidence and fluency.

In pursuit of this goal, our pedagogical approach is informed by Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction, which are predicated on robust evidence from cognitive science and empirical research into the practices of 'master teachers'. These principles are integral to our teaching philosophy, ensuring that our methodologies are grounded in proven efficacy.

We believe that by adhering to these principles, we can foster an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning. The key principles encapsulate strategies such as regular review, explicit instruction, and guided practice, all of which collectively enhance students' ability to assimilate and recall information. By

strategically applying these principles in lesson planning and delivery, we aim to maximise every child's learning potential at Woodloes.

1. **Present new material using small steps:** We break down the curriculum in small steps, related to the level of pupils' prior knowledge. We build confidence, step by step.
2. **Provide models:** There are many examples of how models are used in the classroom to give pupils the cognitive support they need, for example the teacher thinking aloud, live modelling of a task or providing a step by step demonstration of a task.
3. **Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks:** Rosenshine suggests effective teachers engage pupils in a 'cognitive apprenticeship', supporting them to reach ambitious goals using scaffolding processes that guide them on their way. When ready, the supports are withdrawn as it is a temporary process and are not relied upon in the long run.
4. **Ask questions:** Rosenshine highlights the dual purpose of questions:
  - b) To provide opportunities for student practice
  - b) To allow a teacher to determine how well material has been learned, informing their decision to move on or to provide additional instruction.
5. **Check for pupil understanding :** There is a significant emphasis on the importance of this process in Rosenshine's writing. 'What have you understood' versus 'Have you understood?' promotes deeper and more accurate outcomes. This is evidenced through children's purple pen evaluative comments.
6. **Guide pupil practice:** Rosenshine suggests that teachers who spend more time in guided practice will secure higher success rates for pupils. This can be in the form of elaborating material in small steps, teacher asking questions checking for understanding or misconceptions.
7. **Independent practice:** This builds on guided practice and fluency and is an important element in learning as it frees up working memory.
8. **Daily review:** It is widely understood that it is good practice to have a review of prior learning before building on it with new related material. All lessons begin with a prior learning activity (retrieval), where pupils can demonstrate the accuracy of their prior knowledge.
9. **Weekly and monthly review:** Rosenshine emphasises the need for pupils to be involved in extensive practice to develop well-connected and automatic knowledge: 'the more one rehearses and reviews information, the stronger the interconnections between the materials become'.

## Learning Environment

A rich, supportive learning environment is vital for success. Our expectations include:

- **Classroom Setup:** Classrooms are vibrant, organised, and labelled to reflect current themes and learning objectives, with displays celebrating students' work.
- **Use of Technology:** Integration of digital resources, interactive whiteboards, and educational software to enhance learning experiences and develop digital literacy.
- **Outdoor Learning:** Utilisation of our school's grounds for natural exploration, enhancing the curriculum while promoting physical activity.

## Assessment and Feedback

We adopt a comprehensive array of formative and summative assessment methods to monitor progress and provide feedback. This includes:

- **Ongoing Assessments:** Regular quizzes, questioning, retrieval and reflections to gauge understanding during lessons.
- **Half -termly Summative Assessments:** Comprehensive assessments at key intervals to evaluate learning outcomes in core subjects.
- **Pupil Progress Meetings:** Regular discussions between staff to review individual and group achievements, focusing on next steps for improvement.
- **Feedback:** Constructive, timely, and specific feedback through written comments, verbal discussions, and one-to-one sessions to foster improvement and set achievable goals.

Further detailed information can be found in our *Marking and Feedback Policy*.

## Inclusion and Diversity

Our school is committed to providing an inclusive learning environment that respects the diverse backgrounds of all pupils. This is achieved through:

- **Culturally Responsive Curriculum:** A curriculum that reflects diverse cultures, engaging all pupils through relevant context and materials.
- **Communication with Families:** Stakeholder engagement to ensure cultural nuances are respected and integrated into the learning environment, fostering collaboration between school and home.
- **Support Services:** Comprehensive support for pupils with Special Educational Needs, disadvantaged backgrounds, including targeted interventions, mentoring, and access to resources.

## Professional Development

Ensuring our teaching staff are equipped with the latest pedagogical knowledge is paramount. Our approach includes:

- **Regular Staff Meetings:** Focused sessions on innovative teaching methods, subject-specific pedagogy, and educational research.
- **Peer Observations and Feedback:** A nurturing environment where staff observe each other's lessons, providing constructive feedback to promote best practices.
- **Access to External Expertise:** Opportunities for teachers to attend conferences, workshops, and training sessions to refine their practice and enhance professional development.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

We regularly evaluate the effectiveness of our Teaching and Learning Policy through:

- **Classroom Observations:** Formal observations led by senior leaders to assess and enhance teaching quality across year groups.
- **Data Analysis:** Systematic analysis of assessment data to identify trends, strengths, areas for development, and inform targeted interventions.
- **Pupil Feedback:** Regular feedback sessions with pupils regarding their learning experiences, preferences, and perceptions of school. This is enhanced through our Pupil Voice.

## Conclusion

This Teaching and Learning Policy is designed to ensure our school meets the highest standards of educational excellence as per the expectations of Ofsted and the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum in England. Our commitment to continuous improvement and high-quality teaching will ensure that all pupils are well-prepared for their future educational journeys.