

# Woodside Academy



## English Policy

September 2025

*Excellence through Opportunity*

*“We want the very best teaching and learning experiences for all our children.”*

From School Mission Statement



At Woodside we aim for our children to:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

### **Achieving and Maintaining High Standards**

‘Teachers should develop pupils’ spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum.

Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for  
success in all subjects.’

National Curriculum 2014

The above underpins all teaching and learning at Woodside Academy. We have an agreed approach to developing children’s English as stated in the opening paragraph. In addition to this we:



- Facilitate children's articulation, reading and writing, through a phonics teaching programme (Monster Phonics)
- Develop the four main strands of the curriculum – Spoken Language, Reading, Writing, and Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar & Punctuation
- Develop children's enjoyment of, and skills in reading through daily whole class guided reading sessions and shared reading opportunities
- Teach basic skills including handwriting (Letter-join) and spelling (Emile) through modelling, discussion and giving children regular opportunities to practise and develop
- Children are encouraged and guided to select the challenge level of their work wherever appropriate

### **The Foundation Stage**

In the Early Years we plan from the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory guidance (EYFS). On entry, judgements are made against the Development Matters statements to identify whether pupils are on track or not on track in the Literacy aspect of learning. Thus, informing planning and ensuring teaching and learning meets the needs of all. A mixture of adult directed tasks, child-initiated learning and accurate AfL ensures an exciting and hands on cross curricular approach to enable children to make good progress and meet the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception.

In Reception, phonics is taught daily (see separate phonics policy) as a whole class session. The Monster Phonics programme is followed. Teaching and learning combines reading, spelling, handwriting and spoken language. Shared and modelled reading, plus regular story time, fosters a love of books.



Writing is promoted across the curriculum using both the inside and outside learning environments. Children's progress is evidenced through photos, work books and child -initiated activities.

### **Approaches to speaking and listening**

In line with the National Curriculum (2014), Woodside Academy aims to develop children's competence in spoken language and enhance the effectiveness in which they are able to communicate across a range of contexts and to a range of audiences. Therefore, children are given opportunities to work in groups of different sizes – in pairs, small groups, and large groups and as a whole class. Additionally, children are regularly provided with opportunities to participate constructively in conversations and debates. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

### **Approaches to Reading.**

Woodside believe in providing many opportunities for children to be exposed to reading. To achieve this, children at Woodside are provided with the following:

- Daily reading sessions where teachers read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction to pupils
- Guided Reading Sessions – children in years 2-6 are provided with daily guided reading sessions. Guided Reading is taught as a whole class (including SEND children)



- Guided Reading sessions introduce children to a wide range of literature and non-fiction that they could not or might not choose to read independently
- Lessons focus on children's prior knowledge, tier 2 and 3 vocabulary, reading fluency and understanding the text as a whole
- Lessons include discussion and debate, analysis of text, as well as decoding and comprehension skills
- Independent reading – teachers ensure that children are provided with opportunities to read independently throughout the school week (Book Club)
- Home Reading – children are encouraged to read at home. Children from reception –year 6 are provided with a reading journal and are expected to read outside of school for a minimum of 10 minutes at least five times a week. There is a reward system to promote and support home reading
- Access to the internet – year 6 children are encouraged to complete online reading quizzes using the Read Theory website
- Wider reading (including Library trips, author visits and different adults)
- Phonics (Early years and KS1) – The Monster Phonics program is followed

**Resources** – In Early Years and Key Stage 1, all of the independent reading books are colour coded and put into bands depending on the individual child's level of phonics ability. All books are banded in line with the Monster Phonics levels. Children's home reading book supports their phonic capabilities. In addition, children are invited to select a second book of their choice (in class and/or from the school library) that they have particular interest in and would like to read with or without adult support. We believe this promotes a love for reading as well as extending children's vocabulary.



In Key Stage Two, each year group has an age appropriate recommended reading corner filled with a variety of books (classic and modern fiction, war and history, graphic fiction, poetry, moving on and growing up, non-fiction, diversity and emotions, confidence and relationships) that promote a love of reading as well as for information. The books ensure children read a diverse range of texts that are structured in different ways.

Children who are not yet fluent readers will continue to progress through the colour bands but are encouraged to be more independent in the choices they make. If needed, previous bands are revisited so children's learning can be consolidated.

Shared reading is a top priority across the school. Teachers ensure children are read to everyday, incorporating a range of text types and authors. There are also many big books used for shared reading as well as e-books on the interactive whiteboard.

The school library is regularly visited by each class and children are invited to take home books to share with their family. There is also an allocated time for parents to access the library after school with their children.

## **Approaches to Writing**

Writing is an area that we are consistently striving to improve. Our bespoke writing curriculum is linked to our geography, history, science and wider curriculum. Grammar, spelling and punctuation is linked to each writing unit and is taught contextually. A vast range of genres (fiction, non-fiction and poetry) are covered in each year group to give children the opportunity to explore the features of a range of texts. Marking ladders (that include a list of text features, spelling, punctuation and grammar requirements) are used for



extended pieces of writing. Children refer to the ladders when they are writing to ensure they have met the requirements. On completion, children are then given time to identify the requirements set out in the marking ladder in their own work. Furthermore, children use purple polishing pens in years 1-6 to edit and improve their writing. They are also used to self and peer assess their work.

### **The Writing Journey**

- Diagnostic Task
  - Text Deconstruction
  - Contextualised Construction
  - Reconstruction
  - Assess and Feedback
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- Excellence in Writing – certificates are given, throughout the year, to children who demonstrate a high level/improved level of writing. Certificates are presented to children in Woodside’s celebration assembly
  - Handwriting- Woodside follows the Letter-join handwriting scheme to ensure consistency across the school, encouraging a cursive joined up handwriting style. Children are provided with handwriting interventions if necessary throughout the school.

### **Cross Curricular Links**

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum.



## **The use of ICT**

Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in English are planned for and used as appropriate.

## **Planning**

The school's English co-ordinator (Lauren Burton) will take overall responsibility for ensuring effective planning and consistency of approach by teachers in accordance with the National Curriculum 2014.

## **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

We use ongoing AfL to refine planning and identify next steps. Learning objectives are shared with the children in every lesson, although success is measured by effort and perseverance as well as achievement. Children are provided with opportunities for self /peer assessment and improvement (Purple Polishing Pens and next step marking).

English work is moderated both within school and across schools (Independent Primary Academy Group -IPAG schools) to ensure teachers' judgements are accurate. Writing assessment sheets are displayed at the front of extended writing books (Y1-6) and teachers use the writing assessment sheets to assess one piece of writing each half term.

Sonar assessment sheets are used along with summative assessment for reading. Currently Years 3-5 TES assessments are taken in reading each term as well as Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar assessments. Year 6 children sit past SATs papers in English Reading and English Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar each half term. Assessment results are analysed by teachers to inform future planning and identify areas for development.



Results are kept by class teachers and our assessment lead to inform progress over time. Parents are informed of progress each term.

### **Equal opportunities**

The English policy reflects and supports the equal opportunities ethos of the school. All children will have access to the English curriculum appropriate to their age and need.

L Burton    September 2025

Review Date: September 2026