

At Woodcroft school it is our intention that the curriculum we provide presents pupils with a wide range of opportunities and experiences that enable them to progress both academically and personally; developing the skills, knowledge and understanding required to successfully fulfil their individual potential. Our curriculum takes into consideration the varied and unique profiles of our pupils, their non-typical learning styles and the barriers they experience.

Academic strand

The academic component or strand of the curriculum is informed by several sources drawn mainly from the Equals curricula, which includes informal, semi formal and formal pathways and key stage 3 levels. It is not unusual for pupils to need to access several curricular pathways. Where appropriate, to provide challenge and aspiration, we offer aspects of the mathematics and English national curriculum.

Therapeutic strand

The pupil's profiles are 'spikey', meaning that through a combination of the presence of physical, emotional and neurodivergent factors, personalised considerations need to be incorporated into our approaches to teaching and learning. We have to take into account some pupil's reluctance or fear of evidencing work on paper, their high interest levels but lower literacy skill sets and difficulties with sensory integration, which necessitate frequent changes and movement opportunities. These considerations, coupled with the provision of a wide range of physical and outdoor learning activities and therapies, is woven through our approach and can be considered as the therapeutic strand of our curriculum. This underpins everything we do and is a significant component, over time, in the success of the pupil's mastering of their challenges and realisation of new competencies, talents and understanding.

Personal interests

A further consideration in the design of the curriculum is the worth and purpose the pupils see in various subjects and topic areas. It is often necessary to consciously incorporate aspects of their special interests, certainly in the initial stages, in order to draw them into being prepared to try new areas of learning.

Personalised pathways

A significant number of pupils require access to personalised pathways, providing them with interventions that target an area of individual need. This can be because of the requirement for frequent breaks due to sensory or emotional overstimulation, transactional supports (during certain times of the day) or difficulty sustaining desktop learning. Over time these personalised pathways have enabled pupils to experience greater emotional regulation and a de-sensitising and greater tolerance to circumstances that previously would have overwhelmed them.

Educational Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) – outcomes

Most of our pupil's personal priorities are identified within their EHCPs and specified as areas for targeted attention. This is done through the Woodcroft Approach to Goal Setting (WAGS). The WAGS goals are composed with regard to the SCERTS framework (Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Supports) and correlate closely to the SCERTS objectives, usually being written in the same language. The goals are approached in a holistic fashion and integrated into the pupil's programmes. See also Appendix 1. below.

Careers guidance

The pupils in key stage 3 (years 7 and 8) or any pupil over the age of ten years in a mixed key stage 2/3 class will access appropriate careers guidance and preparation for adulthood, as set out in the school's *Careers guidance policy*. This will largely involve examining a range of career pathways in school, but will also include visits to some work places.

Progression and sequencing

Through the process of curriculum review, great consideration has been given to the aspects of progression and sequencing. It is appreciated that in some cases the gaps in pupils' learning will never be closed, but can be narrowed over time (Peter Imray – Equals 2022). The need to incorporate areas of coverage that motivate and interest the pupils will influence the subject content and choice of topics.

Planning

Currently the school works from a two year plan spanning the period 2025 – 27.

Year 1 : term 1 – history / term 2 – geography / term 3 – outdoors

Year 2 : term 1 – history / term 2 – geography / term 3 – other cultures

Through the different curricular pathways the approach of beginning with the very familiar (the world about me) and progressing out to wider concepts of a global nature, are addressed through medium and long-term planning.

Review

The curriculum policy will be reviewed and evaluated annually and any alterations enacted.

Appendix 1 – Assessment

Assessment ensures that the content of lessons and learning experiences meets individual needs and that the school's impact on learning is recorded and celebrated along with the pupils' achievements. The aim is not to fit our pupils into the National Curriculum, but to see what aspects of the broader Woodcroft curriculum can be used in order for them to make progress. Our assessment framework places the pupil at the centre of the process.

Many of the pupils placed at Woodcroft have very complex needs. We have found that our pupils are less likely to learn in a linear fashion and are more likely to demonstrate very individualistic pathways, including lateral progression, as opposed to climbing through nationally recognised norms. For pupils with profound, complex or multiple needs, it is often difficult to predict progress. Achievements may appear to plateau quickly or be delayed for long periods, and this makes it largely meaningless to compare our pupils against national age cohorts. Our approach to assessment is one that is able to capture and describe the progress the pupil makes during their time at Woodcroft.

As with our curriculum, we take a holistic approach to assessment and so there is a natural overlap in the assessment of our interwoven academic and therapeutic curriculum strands.

The assessment cycle

We aim to ensure that information is processed at a time and in a format best suited to the individual teaching and learning styles of our pupils, so that the impact of our work can be measured in a timely way against learning intentions at pupil, class and school level.

Assessment takes place throughout the year. In the first instance, after admittance to Woodcroft, a planning meeting takes place following a period of settling into the school, where a baseline is completed by the class teacher. This initial period of observation allows the teachers and therapists to set meaningful child-centred outcomes for every individual.

An ongoing series of assessment data collection points follows on a termly and yearly basis alongside teachers' planning.

The head teacher and senior management team provide assessment analysis to the board of directors annually.

Aims of Woodcroft's assessment framework

To help pupils to:

- recognise and take pride in their own achievements;
- recognise areas and skills that need to be strengthened;
- become involved (where possible) in the planning of their own future learning; and
- to record their own achievements and share these with others.

To help families to:

- know how their child is progressing;
- be aware of how best to help and encourage learning at home; and
- participate in celebration of achievements.

To help teachers and therapists to:

- have a knowledge of each pupil's particular abilities, skills and understanding;
- plan future learning goals for individual pupils and groups; and
- plan future teaching through evaluation of materials, resources and strategies.

To help the school to:

- provide continuity and progression within school, to home and beyond;
- to effectively evaluate whole school curriculum planning and practice;
- meet statutory requirements;
- provide data; and
- contribute to effective transitions.

Woodcroft curriculum assessment framework

Assessment focussed on the academic curriculum strand

- The core subjects (English, maths and science) are recorded using the Woodcroft Assessment Tools System (WATS). This is based on the pre-key stage learning outcomes.
- The foundation subjects are assessed using our Subject Trackers which are live documents, regularly updated, and which draw on learning intentions from the Equals curricula.
- Samples of work are collected termly and yearly in individual pupil evidence folders.

Assessment focussed on the therapeutic curriculum strand

- Annual reviews of each pupils' EHCP, including multi-disciplinary therapy team reports.
- The EHCPs form the basis of the Woodcroft Approach to Goal Setting (WAGS) assessment system. This is focussed on social, emotional and communication outcomes and uses SCERTS terminology. Although updated termly, these are collated and reported upon annually.

Additional assessment methods

- Records of achievement are added to regularly, in order to back up assessment systems and provide evidence of progress.
- Pupil progress meetings are held termly by the assessment manager and teachers to review individual pupil performance and identify and overcome barriers to progress. These are recorded and can form supplementary assessment records.
- Parental consultations.
- End of year reports are sent by teachers to parents.

Evidence base

Curriculum area	Where to locate the evidence
My communication / English	Assessment evidence English books Topic books WATS (and where appropriate the National Curriculum)
My thinking and problem solving / Maths	Assessment evidence Foundation maths tracker Maths books Topic books WATS (and where appropriate the National Curriculum)
My play and leisure	Records of achievement Assessment evidence
My independence	Records of achievement Assessment tracker
My physical wellbeing	Records of achievement Assessment evidence Assessment tracker
RSE / RE	RSE topic books Assessment evidence Assessment tracker
The world about me	Topic books Assessment evidence Assessment tracker
My outdoor school / My outdoor and off-site experiences	Records of achievement Assessment evidence Assessment tracker
My art / My dance / My drama / My music	Records of achievement Assessment evidence Assessment tracker
My emotional literacy and wellbeing / self regulation / self determination / PHSE and SCERTS	Woodcroft Approach to Goal Setting (WAGS)
Protected characteristics / British values	School website School council Records of achievement
ICT / E-safety	Assessment tracker

Appendix 2 – Key stage 3 curriculum

The change from the primary phase of education to that of secondary is a challenging time for any child, regardless of whether they have special educational needs or not. Children on the autistic spectrum are very likely to view the world differently, experience difficulties in the processing of language and may be challenged by their need to seek sensory and emotional regulation. In order to be successful, the transition for children on the autistic spectrum needs careful and informed management. Not all pupils are ready to move on to a less structured, more generic school environment at the end of Key Stage 2 (KS2). For some children there is a need for a more gradual process of transition and change. In recognition of this, Woodcroft School initiated its KS3 secondary provision in 2016.

It is our intention to consciously build on and extend the skills pupils have developed during their primary schooling at Woodcroft, so that, supported by familiar routines and strategies, they learn to more fully manage their emotional regulation, new routines and expectations, as they transition into their secondary years. We believe some pupils will be better prepared for their movement on to the next phase of their secondary schooling through this extended period of transition.

Aims

Woodcroft aims for each pupil to:

- Become familiar and confident in routines within the secondary provision.
- Develop an identity and awareness as a secondary aged pupil.
- Become as independent as possible.
- Maximise competence in all areas of their learning, including literacy and numeracy skills, social and communication skills, physical mobility, problem solving, team work and self-management of their emotional and sensory regulation.
- Develop the confidence and determination to try hard.
- Increase their ability to take advice and redraft their work if necessary.
- Be able to work and function as part of a whole class, a smaller group or alone, as the occasion demands.
- Become more aware of appropriate social behaviour.
- Become more confident as an individual.

The curriculum

Communication, socialisation and independence skills continue to be a main focus during the KS3 transition programme. The curriculum will be presented via a largely integrated topic approach that has regard to the National Curriculum programmes of study and the Equals schemes of work. Similarly, the ability to socially interact in the wider community is recognised as being a very important factor in promoting the long term well being and future happiness of each individual. To this end, the programme will provide frequent opportunities for pupils to take part in activities within the community through the use of public transport; general educational visits; and visits to local shops, the library, recreational and sports facilities and a local farm. The pupils will be prepared for these experiences by the modelling of appropriate positive interactions and least intrusive ways of interacting in public, so as not to startle other members of society, nor draw unwanted attention to themselves.

Therapies

Pupils in the KS3 transition group will continue to receive appropriate therapeutic input and support from the school's team of therapists in the areas of language and communication, occupational therapy, music therapy and physiotherapy.

Individual priorities

Each pupils' identified needs relating to issues such as communication, social understanding and flexibility of thought will be integrated into their programme using the SCERTS and Great Goal Setting approach. These priorities will be referred to throughout the school day and in a range of settings, including the classroom, lunchtime, break times, during off site activities and out in the wider community.

Admissions criteria for KS3 at Woodcroft School

Our KS3 provision is intended to be used in exceptional circumstances for pupils who have completed year 6 at Woodcroft and who have not been able to transition to another setting for one or both of the following reasons:

1. The complexity of their social, language and communication needs has resulted in a proposed placement being harder than normal to find, or has broken down.
The placement will usually be reviewed on a termly basis, unless a transition date has been identified and agreed in writing with the sending authority.
2. Occasionally and based upon individual circumstances, a pupil may return to Woodcroft in September after completing year 6, for an agreed short period of time (half a term or a full term) in order for Woodcroft to focus on assisting them in transitioning to their new secondary school.

Please note: Our key stage 3 provision is not open to new admissions, as it will be closing at the end of the 2025/26 academic year.