



Formal Curriculum

The Woodlands Academy Curriculum provides a broad and balanced curriculum, underpinned by an in depth knowledge of each individual student, and how they learn. The curriculum incorporates the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and other experiences and opportunities which best meet the learning and developmental needs of the students in our school.

The majority of our Formal learners are working at levels that can be related to the National Curriculum performance expectations.

Intent

The formal curriculum recognises that students have a range of needs and requires access to specialist provision which is made available through a carefully planned curriculum, for example bespoke Social Communication sessions.

The **curriculum** is designed to provide adequate time for practice to embed the students' knowledge, understanding and skills. Planning ensures that communication, reading, writing numeracy and social skills are embedded throughout the curriculum. Our emphasis on 'learning through' other subject areas allows pupils to transfer skills, for example horticulture to transfer numeracy problem solving skills as well as working with others and developing independence. Staff teams identify students who might be falling behind and look at how any issues can be addressed e.g. use of an intervention, pastoral involvement etc.

Thinking and Problem Solving is fundamental for our students, it is not taught as an isolated scheme of work, but in everything we do and all learning should be regarded as an opportunity for thinking and problem solving.

KS 3-4 Curriculum

In the KS 4 curriculum the focus is on developing their independence skills in both their academic learning and their personal skills and to be recognised for these achievements through external qualifications and accreditation. **Please note our accreditation offer is currently being updated.**

We build on previous learning in KS3 (both academic and self-help skills) so that each student becomes prepared for the transition to post 16 education and beyond. Our aim is that all our students become as independent as possible and acquire the tools and strategies needed to manage the challenges of life beyond Woodlands.

In KS4 students will have the opportunity to undertake work related learning, including opportunities for work experience.

KS 2-3 Curriculum

The aim of the KS3 curriculum is to build on the experiences from the primary phase and to support our students to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

Students study a rich, developmentally appropriate curriculum at KS3 which encompasses a broad range of subjects including: Literacy, Numeracy, Humanities, Science, PSHE, Creative Arts, Food Technology, Computing and PE. The curriculum is delivered on a three-year rolling programme based on a thematic scheme.

KS1-2 Curriculum

This group of students are largely taught using subjects as a 'vehicle' for learning, using a 'thematic' approach. For example using the theme 'journeys' to incorporate all subjects allowing for the transference of knowledge and skills.

A three year cycle provides students with the opportunity to consolidate and enrich skills learnt within each subject and build on their knowledge and skills within each theme.

The curriculum is effective in enabling students to apply skills and knowledge acquired in Literacy, Numeracy, Science and other curriculum areas in a purposeful and concrete way. We have linked all theme areas to the key skills students should learn in History, Geography, Science, DT and Art.

At Woodlands Academy play takes a central part in our Curriculum, and can be seen in areas of our formal and semi-formal curriculum. Play is an essential part of learning, so we provide our students with a safe and secure environment, to explore and engage in Play and Leisure skills.

Implementation

At Woodlands we start by looking at each students 'barrier to learning' as detailed in their Education Health Care Plans. We then 'hook' the curriculum around these identified barrier, which could include:

- Cognition – thinking and learning
- Communication difficulties – over half of our students have a diagnosis of Autism, so have difficulties communicating and socialising.
- Sensory Processing – some pupils have significant sensory integration difficulties. They may experience both hyper (over) and hypo (under) sensitivities throughout the day.
- Generalisation – difficulty transferring a skill across a range of contexts.
- Working Memory- Could hold fewer words, numbers and ideas at any one time and will find holding instructions difficult to recall.
- Problem Solving – acting upon understanding.
- Environmental – students may have family circumstances or expectations that impact negatively upon their learning.
- Social and emotional issues resulting in low confidence and self-esteem.
- Attendance - Some children's attendance is low which will impact on their learning.
- Medical needs – some students have significant medical needs which impacts on their ability to learn.

We are committed to ensuring that the curriculum is engaging, motivating and challenging. Students are provided with opportunities to embed new skills across a range of cross curricular subjects. Students are encouraged to be self- motivated in their learning. Peer scaffolding is an important strategy by which peers model the problem solving then step back and offer support as needed.

Our formal teaching spaces are laid out to support the range of needs within the environment. Visual structure to support the student's communication and working memory

needs are used throughout. Many of the students need structure, routine and certainty in their learning, however opportunities that encourage them to think and problem solve as independently as possible are incorporated into their daily structure.

In order to implement the curriculum which is right for our student's staff knowledge and understanding is crucial. We strive to ensure that all staff have a full understanding of the teaching strategies needed to overcome barriers to learning. All staff need to have a full understanding of 'what' and 'how' they want students to learn through the implementation of a personalised approach planned with the use of rigorous assessment and evidencing.

Throughout the formal curriculum there is a selection of reading scheme books, including Collins, ORT, Talisman and Project X. There can be many factors as to why a student might be on a particular reading book, including level of reading ability, comprehension skills, and interests. Due to the complex needs of some of our students they do not simply progress through one reading scheme in a sequential way. We are currently updating our reading scheme to include Bug Books which will allow for electronic access at home. Students use Nessy Reading which is accessed at home by many. Our approach to reading includes the wider world, environment and life skills. Using a cross curricular approach students are encouraged to explore a range of reading materials, including books, leaflets and I.T.

Impact

At the Woodlands Academy, continuous assessment forms an integral part of keeping individual learners as our core focus. This means that from the day we meet them to the day they leave our school; their learning will be completely personalised to their needs. We will endeavour to ensure learners make high levels of progress at each stage of their education in their academic attainment, emotional, functional and life skills progress.

Summative and formative assessment is used to ensure that a student's progress and needs are reflected within their personalised learning.

The academy uses PIVATS to assess our formal students. Baselines are carried out at the beginning of each academic year to ensure that we continue to be accurate regarding the starting points of all our students. Effective in-school summative assessment enables teaching staff to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period and the impact of their own teaching, developing and refining where required. The Academy holds standardisation meetings across the year including internal and external moderations whereby staff and leadership are able to validate their judgement and the different assessments used.

Formative Assessment is assessment for learning and focuses on improving teaching and learning for all students. This is an ongoing process, it helps to form the story of why the practitioners have made judgments based against EHCP's and teacher assessments. This in turn helps to reflect personalised targets. Teaching staff identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons. We also ensure that our formal students gain an understanding of how well they are achieving towards their targets and how they can improve on this. Pupils have Personalised Learning Intention Maps (PLIMS) which are set termly and linked to their key milestones from their EHCP outcomes. Parents are kept informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period, through EHCP (Education Health Care Plans) and during parent evenings. Subject leaders track pupil progress and the impact of programs or approaches to learning. This in turn ensures that changes can be made to support or challenge pupils.

All assessment is designed to improve both pupil progress and the effectiveness of the staff team in meeting the pupil's needs. Thus helping to provide a robust and accurate system for monitoring pupil progress and attainment. Data is collected two times a year to ensure that pupil progress is timely and allow any interventions to take place. Additionally should a pupil exceed expectation they can be challenged further. The data collected is shared with staff via target setting and monitoring meetings.