Willow School

Curriculum Policy

Date: September 2026

Review: September 2027

Introduction

Willow School is an independent day school for pupils in Key Stages 2-3 with communication, interaction, cognition and learning needs who have an Education, Health and Care Plan. We welcome pupils to our nurturing school and aim to provide a calm environment for all of our children. Willow School holds its values and drivers at its core and ensures that the well-being of pupils remain at the front and centre of everything that is done. We aim to provide pupils with a broad and engaging education to ensure they are equipped with the life skills, social skills and knowledge to succeed as they progress to the next stage of their education.

Legislation

This policy reflects the requirements for Independent Schools to provide full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996). This gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education as per The Education (independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014 and the National Curriculum where the school delivers those programs of study.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in:

- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (2014)
- Education Inspection Handbook – Ofsted November 2019
- Non-association independent school inspection handbook - Ofsted October 2019
- A Competency Framework for Governance – DfE January 2017

Vision

At Willow School, we aim to grow together, through nurture, learning and enrichment, enabling pupils to gain the skills and resilience to thrive in the wider world.

Our curriculum is organised into two distinct pathways: the Roots Pathway, which provides a semi-formal approach to learning, and the Branches Pathway, which delivers a formal curriculum with personalised adaptations.

Curriculum Aims

Our curriculum aims to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils that's coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and future learning and employment.
- Enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
- Allows pupils to make both the social, emotional and academic progress they are capable of

- To fill gaps and provide opportunities to deepen knowledge and increase skills
- Equip pupils with the strategies and skills to become independent
- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning
- Ensure equal access to learning for all pupils, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- Develop pupils' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for further/higher education and employment

These curriculum aims are underpinned by our values:

- Grow: We aim to equip our pupils with the skills to enable them to grow and be ready for the next stage within their education.
- Achieve: Our curriculum is planned and supported to ensure all of our pupils achieve their goals.
- Inspire: Our curriculum provides a broad range of skills, knowledge, enrichment and opportunities to inspire our pupils in school and into their futures.
- Nurture: Our school and staff provide a warm and nurturing environment where all pupils feel safe. Our curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn skills to support their own mental health and develop social skills with others.

Curriculum Statement

At Willow School, we strive to provide a range of opportunities and enriching experiences for all our pupils. Our aspiration is for every pupil to develop the knowledge and skills to succeed and thrive in the next stage of their education and into society. Our curriculum has been carefully planned and adapted to equip our pupils with a broad range of opportunities to inspire them and help them to grow and flourish.

We provide a clear focus on the world around us, both locally and globally, planning immersive opportunities for trips and visitors, to develop our pupil's awareness of the world around them and develop their own identity as a citizen within it. As a school, we explore our local area, providing an understanding of what the children know, to enable them to make links between the local area into the wider world. We encourage our staff to continue to hone, develop and refine their understanding of the pedagogy that lies behind our curriculum, recognising how children learn and the different stages in their cognitive development, so that they can scaffold the curriculum appropriately, ensuring access for all. We believe that, by encouraging pupils to become more active in their learning, they are able to know and remember more.

Through a curriculum that is both engaging and relevant, that promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development of our pupils, we work with our families and communities to help to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences in later life in our society. PSHE is at the heart of our curriculum and we prioritise the mental health of our pupils. We know that once this is secure, learning and engagement become much simpler. Our lessons include ways in which children can keep themselves safe, manage their own well-being, develop life and communication skills and we ensure our schools teach Relationships and Sex Education following government guidelines.

We recognise pupil's self-awareness, and awareness of other's, develops as they mature and that this has a significant impact on their ability to relate to and learn about the world we live in. We develop interesting and appropriate enrichment experiences to help pupils to become self-aware individuals, enabling them to learn to make connections and begin to empathise with themes such as tolerance, responsibility and culture around the world.

Curriculum Drivers

When designing our curriculum, we carefully considered the needs of our pupils and ensured these sat at the forefront of our vision. With this in mind, our curriculum drivers of **wellbeing, communication and being worldly wise** are at the heart of our school and remain threaded throughout our curriculum pathways. Our drivers underpin everything that we do at Willow and enable our pupils to grow and flourish.

Wellbeing: Each day, well-being time is built into the curriculum and tailored for each pupil. We know that well-being is paramount and must be met before pupils can begin on their educational journey. Well-being tasks link directly to their EHCP outcomes. PSHE is a key component in our curriculum and teaches pupils ways to manage their own mental health, learn about themselves and provides time for reflections.

Communication: Communication is key to learning and to life. We aim to equip our pupils with communication skills and provide them with broad opportunities to communicate in different ways and with different people.

Worldly-wise: The World Around Us curriculum underpins our termly topics and provides opportunities to learn about the world both locally and globally. We aim for our pupils to thrive in the wider world and therefore provide the knowledge and skills to do this across all of our curriculum.

Our Curriculum

Roots Pathway (Semi-Formal)

At Willow School, the Roots Pathway is a semi-formal, sensory and communication-based curriculum designed for pupils with multiple learning difficulties and those working at the earliest stages of development. This child-centered approach focuses on meeting individual needs through meaningful, engaging and holistic learning experiences.

The curriculum prioritises the development of communication, interaction, social and emotional wellbeing, cognition, independence and life skills. Learning is personalised to each pupil's EHCP outcomes, with a strong emphasis on engagement, repetition and practical experiences that support overall development and preparation for adulthood.

The Roots Curriculum is structured around the following key areas:

- My Communication
- My Thinking
- My Body
- My Lifestyle
- My Independence

This is supported through:

- Continuous and Enhanced Provision
- Sensory Development
- Core Word Programme
- Themed Weekly Texts

Pupils benefit from continuous provision within their learning environment, where skilled adult modelling and scaffolding support them to explore, practise and apply skills at their own pace. This approach promotes independence, emotional regulation, purposeful learning and meaningful participation in everyday experiences.

Pupils on this pathway can access ASDAN Life Skills, Personal and Social Development & Towards Independence qualifications as well as Entry Level qualifications for core subjects.

Branches Pathway (Formal)

At Willow School, the Branches Pathway is designed for pupils who can access a more structured curriculum and are working towards academic and vocational qualifications appropriate to their individual abilities. The pathway provides a broad, balanced and personalised education that develops knowledge, skills, independence and preparation for adulthood.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils follow the National Curriculum, with teaching and learning adapted to meet individual needs and levels of attainment. A strong emphasis is placed on developing core skills in communication, literacy, numeracy, personal development and independence alongside a broad range of foundation subjects.

In Key Stage 3, pupils continue to build subject knowledge and transferable skills through a curriculum that combines the National Curriculum with ASDAN Life Skills and Entry Level qualifications. Learning focuses on personal development, independence, problem-solving and preparation for future learning and employment.

The Branches Pathway promotes high aspirations for all pupils, providing opportunities to achieve recognised qualifications while developing the confidence, independence and life skills needed for their next stage of education and beyond.

Maths Vision and Intent

We aim to ensure that all children have success in developing mathematical knowledge and skills so that they know more and remember more and that all are best prepared for the next stage of their education and for life.

We recognise that thinking mathematically is a life skill and without the successful teaching of mathematics in education we severely limit the opportunities available to our pupils and for this reason mathematics is held with such prominence at Willow School.

How Maths is Taught

Maths is taught on a daily basis at Willow School. This is sequenced in a clear and progressive way, with small, accessible steps for learning using White Rose Maths throughout all key stages. It is delivered in a visual, pictorial and kinaesthetic way to enable engagement and understanding, as well as verbal discussions to develop communication.

Children are assessed through our bespoke system. This ascertains each pupils abilities, needs and gaps – enabling the curriculum to be tailored to their individual needs. Any key gaps will then form targets on the child's support plan and will be worked on regularly.

Throughout the year, on-going assessment takes place to measure the knowledge learnt and identify any gaps for further focus.

Our maths curriculum is supplemented with additional resources to ensure accessible, challenging and engaging lessons for all of our pupils.

We aim for our pupils to leave Willow School equipped for the next stage of education and therefore place emphasis on revisiting core maths concepts to ensure they are embedded through its spiral curriculum. These concepts underpin other mathematical areas and is a necessity that essential they are secure before pupils learn new areas.

English Vision and Intent

At Willow School we want children to become lifelong readers, confident communicators and eager writers.
Our curriculum has been planned to develop children's love and happiness of reading, writing and discussion. This prepares them for future success within the wider world. We recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where children take pride in their writing, where they will develop the skills of writing to use in the wider world.

They are taught the skills to write clearly and accurately and adapt their language and style for a range of contexts. The teaching of writing through a text & media base approach provides children the opportunity to communicate and explore with the world further than their own local area, thus developing aspirations children may have.

We aim to inspire everyone to be confident and happy in the art of speaking and listening and who can use discussion to communicate and further their learning. We believe that children need to develop a secure knowledgebase in English, which follows a clear pathway of progression as they advance through the primary and secondary curriculum. A secure basis in English skills is crucial to a high-quality education and gives our children the tools they need to participate fully as a member of society.

Our curriculum drivers of Worldly Wise, Wellbeing and Communication are embedded throughout both of our curriculum pathways: Roots, our semi-formal curriculum, and Branches, our formal curriculum. These drivers run through our cohesive and progressive English curriculum, which incorporates a diverse range of texts and media that explore different emotions, cultures, beliefs and perspectives.

How English is Taught

On arrival, children are initially assessed through our bespoke system. This ascertains each pupil's abilities, needs and gaps – enabling the curriculum to be tailored to their individual needs and levels. Any key gaps then form targets on the child's support plan and will be worked on regularly.

English is taught daily at Willow School. To engage some pupils where writing is a barrier, we have a Drawing Club intervention, which uses books, media, imagination and art to encourage reluctant writers to begin their writing journey. This sequentially builds skills and stamina to enable pupils to move towards writing for a purpose and audience.

Pupils will look at a range of high-quality model texts within both pathways, explore their key features, learn how to include these and progressively build towards writing their own text. This will all take place in small steps and each child's outcome will be tailored and appropriate to their abilities.

Throughout Branches 1, 2 and 3, pupils are given the opportunity to develop their understanding of a range of literary genres, revisiting and building upon key knowledge and skills through a spiral curriculum approach. Our Branches curriculum is supplemented with learning and resources from:

- Literacy Shed Plus – providing visual and written prompts to structure writing and inspire children

- Grammarsaurus – providing resources and structure for the place value of punctuation and grammar, as well as extensive high-quality model texts and resources

As pupils progress, they move on to the Canopy Curriculum in Key Stage 3 which introduces Entry Level qualifications. Throughout KS3, learning becomes increasingly ambitious and prepares pupils for adulthood through the development of literacy, communication, critical thinking, independence and meaningful engagement with the wider world.

How Reading is Taught

Reading is taught on a daily basis at Willow School. Each child receives adapted provision dependent on their needs and abilities. This may be through:

- Daily phonics

- Reading comprehension

- Book studies

Whether accessing phonics or not, all children will be a part of whole class reading and discussions to develop enquiry and comprehension skills from an early stage.

Whole class reading in the Shoots Curriculum is based on a weekly text with a theme that can include picture books, poems, non-fiction and even songs. The Branches Curriculum has a book based on a theme every term. Following the text, class activities will take place supporting areas such as vocabulary, inference, prediction, explanation, retrieval and summarising. This ensures pupils develop a range of skills, as well as being exposed to a variety of text types and genres, ensuring they become worldy-wise.

Pupils working on the Canopies curriculum will engage within extended book studies, focusing on a key text and responses to develop a deeper understanding of higher-level texts, where appropriate. Pupils will explore a broad and diverse range of texts and media that promote our curriculum drivers of Worldly Wise, Wellbeing and Communication, fostering an understanding of different cultures, experiences, viewpoints and the wider world.

During the week, there are opportunities such as reading assemblies for pupils to hear and enjoy stories and books to develop reading for pleasure and to inspire children. There are planned visits the local library and access to school books so they can select books to develop phonics, reading and also reading for pleasure.

Phonics and Spelling

Willow School follows the Little Wandle phonics scheme. Pupils are assessed on entry using the Placement Assessment, which identifies where they need to enter the Little Wandle programme or further individual needs. Phonics lessons use engaging ways to ensure participation and progress and are streamed to their appropriate group. Phonics and spelling are taught through:

- Daily phonics (for those accessing phase phonics)
- Daily catch up (daily sessions to support those struggling with phonics)
- Phonic intervention
- Rapid catch-up phonic (a refresher for those who already have their phonics sounds)

We teach phonics for 20 minutes a day following the phonic scheme. Additionally, we can include oral blending games, independent and supported activities within well-being time. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers. Summative assessments will take place every term to monitor progress, identify any gaps and consider whether any intervention is needed.

Whilst pupils are receiving phonics, their reading books will be decodable and matched to their current sounds, these will also be used for their reading lessons.

Once pupils have completed their phonics programme, they undertake a baseline spelling assessment to identify their current level of attainment and determine whether they are ready to access the spelling curriculum. It may also identify if targeted intervention is needed to address any gaps in phonic and spelling knowledge.

Following this assessment, pupils are placed into an appropriate spelling group to ensure teaching is closely matched to their individual needs. The spelling curriculum, delivered through Grammasaurus, is carefully aligned to the English units being studied, enabling pupils to apply newly taught spelling patterns and rules in meaningful reading and writing contexts. This approach provides regular opportunities for pupils to revisit, practice and embed spelling knowledge, supporting greater accuracy, confidence and independence in their written work.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) Vision

At Willow School, we teach PSHE as a whole-school approach to underpin children's development as people and because we believe that this also supports their learning capacity.

Our PSHE lessons are supported by The Jigsaw Programme, which offers us a comprehensive, carefully thought-through scheme of work which brings consistency and progression to our children's learning in this vital curriculum area. The Jigsaw Programme is supplemented by our own well-being frameworks and strategies which are embedded across school – including well-being areas, check in stations and additional curriculum enrichment. In addition to this, we provide a range of external speakers, trips and celebrations to further develop our pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural skills and knowledge.

Through our weekly sessions, we aim to provide our pupils with the knowledge, skills and strategies needed to support themselves in school, at home and further into the **wider world** – both mentally and physically - through our PSHE curriculum. Pupils are taught in a relaxed and 'safe to speak' environment, where they feel comfortable to listen, engage and learn through a combination of team-building games, meditation, talking time and group and individual activities. The sessions provide challenge and help the pupils consider their aspirations and how to reach their goals, as well as staying safe as they enter the **wider world**. The lessons teach children about our diverse world and provide opportunities to communicate and **challenge differing and similar perceptions and beliefs close to home and around the globe.**

Our PSHE curriculum supports the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of pupil's aspects required under the Independent School Standards, as well as significantly contributing to the school's Safeguarding and Equality Duties and the Government's British Values agenda. It also meets the DfE guidance for Relationships and Sex Education which is taught on a yearly basis.

How PSHE is Taught

PSHE is taught on a weekly basis in every classroom and follows the Jigsaw programme. Each lesson includes a social skills game, mediation, reflection, discussion and an opportunity to respond to the learning. Key concepts will be revisited throughout the week to ensure consolidation.

Each year a cycle is followed to ensure mixed age classes are taught different sessions year on year. Lessons are planned to ensure that key knowledge is developed over time and over the course of each PSHE unit. RSE units are taught to chronological age to follow current guidelines. Key knowledge is reviewed by the children and rigorously checked and consolidated by the teacher at the end of each unit of work. Each unit is revisited each year to allow for a progression of skills and knowledge:

Term	Puzzle (Unit)	Content
Autumn 1:	Being Me in My World	Includes understanding my own identity and how I fit well in the class, school and global community. Jigsaw Charter established.
Autumn 2:	Celebrating Difference	Includes anti-bullying (cyber and homophobic bullying included) and understanding
Spring 1:	Dreams and Goals	Includes goal-setting, aspirations, who do I want to become and what would I like to do for work and to contribute to society
Spring 2:	Healthy Me	Includes drugs and alcohol education, self-esteem and confidence as well as healthy lifestyle choices, sleep, nutrition, rest and exercise

Summer 1:	Relationships	Includes understanding friendship, family and other relationships, conflict resolution and communication skills, bereavement and loss
Summer 2:	Changing Me	Includes Relationships and Sex Education in the context of coping positively with change

The World Around Us Vision and Intent

We want everyone at our school to become enthusiastic adventurers, geographers, historians and learners, who are inquisitive about the world around them. The World Around Us curriculum is designed to ensure pupils leave Willow with the knowledge and awareness of the world around us and an understanding of how cultures, places and people can differ and also be the same.

As children progress through our curriculum, they should be encouraged to enjoy enquiring about the world around them, as well as their place in it. We want to inspire our children to be adventurous, happy and explorative in the world that we live in and we encourage our children to notice the positive effect that time outside exploring can have on our well-being.

By embracing the diversity of the physical, human and religious world and becoming worldy-wise, children will be prepared for success within modern Britain and the wider world outside of Willow School. We nurture children's natural curiosity and encourage communication and discussion about issues effecting people around the world and consider ways in which we can contribute to society and local and global issues.

How The World Around Us Taught

The World Around Us curriculum has been carefully designed to provide pupils with a broad understanding of the world, whilst equipping them with the skills to flourish and thrive within it.

Each term a different topic is covered. These topics have been carefully planned to cover elements of history, geography, religion, influential figures, life skills and culture. The over-arching topic spirals enabling pupils to complete new learning year on year, building on prior knowledge each time. Example topics are outlined below:

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
What is in our local area?	How can I shape the future?	How has the past changed our lives today?

The World Around Us is taught weekly through Grammasaurus for the Shoots and Branches Curriculum and through ASDAN units for the Canopies Curriculum. Pupils access learning through exploration, creativity, written work, drama and practical activity to ensure they acquire the

knowledge and skills each term. In addition to this, learning will be supplemented with the celebration of key events and responses to local and global events as well as regular visitors, speakers and visits to only engage and embed knowledge further.

Objectives and topics are mapped progressively to ensure challenge and the development of new knowledge year on year through both pathways.

Creativity Vision and Intent

Our creativity curriculum, including art and design technology, has been designed to provide pupils to the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge, as well as expressing themselves and finding ways to be mindful.

Art: As a school, we nurture creativity, imagination, and inventiveness. We believe that art gives our pupils the skills, concepts, and knowledge necessary for them to express responses to ideas and experiences. Art should enable pupils to communicate what they see, feel and think being honest with their own opinions. They should experiment with their ideas, their use of colour, texture, form, pattern and different materials and processes. Self-evaluation of work is encouraged, and pupils are taught how to be resilience to achieve their goals.

We research a variety of Artists, styles and skills to expose our pupils to the rich culture of the art world, to use inspiration to then develop our own ideas and thoughts. We introduce art language and engage pupils in the process artists take to develop and evolve into critical thinkers.

Art is not only taught in a designated Art lesson. Wherever appropriate, it is linked to topics in our wider curriculum as it gives children the opportunity to bring topics to life. We use whole school curriculum days to inspire a love of art and create whole school displays. Pupils also explore ideas and meanings through the work of artists and designers. We plan events such as inviting specialist artists in to work with the children, we visit galleries and explore the community art, all in the hope of inspiring them and to challenge their thinking and creativity. We give children the opportunities to visit museums and galleries, developing their skills of observation and evaluation.

DT: Design and Technology is an inspiring, rigorous, and practical subject. Using creativity and inspiration, pupils design and make products that solve real and relevant problems, within a variety of contexts, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values. We teach our pupils to tap into their own opinions and ideas developing an honest approach and build them individually as designers.

Our pupils are taught to select and use appropriate tools safely and effectively to make a product. In all areas of Design and Technology the children are encouraged to consider the effectiveness of their designs and requirements of the product. Everyone will have the opportunity to learn and extend their understanding, experience, and application in the use of technology in as wide a variety of situations as possible developing a pathway to success.

We nurture our children, and they are introduced and supported in their learning about what is healthy and good for our bodies. The children develop a deep and secure understanding of how to prepare and cook healthy meals and develop their design and technology language to support their problem solving and creative applications.

How Creativity is Taught

Throughout the year, each term alternates between Art and Design and Technology. Pupils follow the curriculum through Grammarsaurus, Kapow and ASDAN units, developing skills and knowledge. Cross-curricular links provide opportunities to explore culture, religion, history and geography. Local visits, school trips, local walks and visitors are an underpinning part of our Creativity curriculum, providing inspiring opportunities for all pupils.

Artwork is recorded in sketchbooks to capture experience and imagination, to help the children develop their ideas and to show progression in their artistic ability. We encourage children to work on their own and collaborating with others on projects in two and three dimensions and on small and large scales to develop their own levels of success.

Our Creativity curriculum has been planned in a spiral way, allowing pupils to build on the previous year's knowledge, consolidating and developing new skills as they journey through the branches of Willow School.

As pupils move into the Canopies curriculum, their art lessons take on a new structure and are delivered through ASDAN Lifeskills units. Learners will explore the work of a range of artists, experiment with different artistic techniques and styles and use these influences to develop and create their own independent final pieces.

The curriculum includes a variety of creative and practical projects, such as community-inspired artwork, creative food presentation, exhibition planning and upcycling, allowing pupils to develop their artistic skills alongside creativity, independence, problem-solving and personal development.

Physical Education (PE) Vision and Intent

At Willow School, we believe everyone should have access to a high-quality PE curriculum and PE should be an integral part of the whole school curriculum. Our school recognises the benefits high quality PE provision and school sport can give to all pupils – benefiting their physical and mental health. Our curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils develop physical literacy and the fundamental knowledge, understanding and skills to excel in a wide range of physical activities, by providing a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities for all.

Our PE curriculum contributes to healthy and active lifestyles; improve emotional and physical **well-being** and successfully develop key skills such as leadership, confidence, social and team building skills.

PE inspires pupils to be active and supports them in their understanding of how to participate safely and effectively. Our PE curriculum aspires to be inclusive to ensure that pupils of all abilities access the range of activities on offer and that they are physically active for sustained periods. Regular participation in sport and physical activity can help to encourage a healthy lifestyle, improve physical fitness, promote good health, instil self- discipline, develop **communication** skills, improve self-confidence, reduce stress and develop happy, lifelong learners.

How PE is Taught

PE is taught twice a week and on these days pupils are asked to attend school in their PE kits to maximise learning time.

Each term, the pupils access two different sessions. These sessions have been mapped to ensure pupils learn a range of skills throughout the year from invasion games to net and ball to striking and fielding. Children are assessed at the beginning of each unit and placed in streamed groups to ensure appropriate levels of support and challenge are given at the appropriate levels. Children that are highlighted to need extra support with gross motor skills will access the fizzy programme for the start of their lesson as a targeted intervention.

We aim to enrich our PE curriculum to provide pupils with stimulating and inspiring opportunities to discover new hobbies and talents, whilst developing their own skills. These sessions have also been carefully planned to support sensory needs, as well as benefiting physical and mental health.

Computing Vision and Intent

Our Computing curriculum is built in a spiral way, which encourages our pupils to build upon, and learn, new skills and knowledge. Computing provides a breadth of opportunities for our pupils to develop their communication skills, with one another, but also online and the ways in which this can be done. Pupils will learn, through Computer Science and specifically Computational Thinking, how to solve problems and apply these solutions in the real world. They will also learn how to network responsibly – reaching a global audience through the internet.

Our curriculum aims to educate pupils on the positive and negative ways technology can impact our lives. Pupils will learn, through Digital Literacy, how to maintain a positive online reputation, successfully manage online relationships, how to nurture their self-image and identity and how to keep themselves and others safe online and maintaining their own well-being. Pupils will be encouraged to make links between Computing and our Relationships PSHE unit.

Throughout the spiral curriculum, pupils should learn a wide range of skills and be aware of the different areas within computing. We aim for our pupils to be equipped with the skills needed to enter the next stage of their education, as well as considering how technology could be incorporated into their life or future career.

How Computing is Taught

Computing is taught weekly using online components from Teach Computing. Where possible, cross curricular links are made to deepen learning and provide purposeful outcomes for the pupils as well as planned assemblies and session on internet safety. Throughout other curriculum areas, pupils have opportunities to use a wide range of technology and therefore learning will be extended beyond the weekly lesson.

Throughout our curriculum, pupils cover the following topics, often within a spiral providing consolidation and extension:

• Algorithms — Be able to comprehend, design, create, and evaluate algorithms
• Computer networks — Understand how networks can be used to retrieve and share information, and how they come with associated risks
• Computer systems — Understand what a computer is, and how its constituent parts function together as a whole
• Creating media — Select and create a range of media including text, images, sounds, and video
• Data and information — Understand how data is stored, organised, and used to represent real-world artefacts and scenarios
• Design and development — Understand the activities involved in planning, creating, and evaluating computing artefacts
• Effective use of tools — Use software tools to support computing work
• Impact of technology — Understand how individuals, systems, and society as a whole interact with computer systems
• Programming — Create software to allow computers to solve problems
• Safety and security — Understand risks when using technology, and how to protect individuals and systems

Computing is supplemented with external visits from the StaySafe Partnership, providing workshops on:

- Internet safety
- Online relationships
- Gambling

Science Vision and Intent

Through science lessons at Willow School, our vision is for the children to be curious and inquisitive about the world around them, and excited for the future. Pupils are provided with opportunities to learn, explore and apply concepts to their own lives, developing our young people into global citizens of the 21st century. It is our intention that the children will learn the scientific skills required to understand the uses and implications of science, today and for the future, opening up the possibility of entering STEM professions in the future.

Knowledge in science is progressive and builds on the children's prior learning. By the end of their Willow journey, the children will have developed scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics. They will develop an understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science through different types of scientific enquiry that help them to ask and answer scientific questions about the world around them. Pupils will be able to describe associated processes and key characteristics in a common language, and will use technical terminology accurately and precisely, building up an extended specialist vocabulary throughout their time at Willow School.

How Science is Taught

Science is taught on a weekly basis. Children are encouraged to ask their own questions and are given opportunities to use their scientific skills and research to discover the answers. This curiosity is celebrated within the classroom. Teachers ask a range of questions which enable all children to take part, listening carefully to answers and taking learning forward, using open and closed questions and allowing children time to think. New vocabulary and challenging concepts are introduced through direct teaching.

The canopies curriculum follows the national curriculum areas which are then highly adapted into entry level ability where needed allowing children to achieve to their highest potential and achieve an associated accreditation or qualification.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC), Enrichment and Citizenship

In addition to our taught curriculum, we provide weekly SMSC & enrichment lessons for our pupils following the Branches and Roots curriculum. These opportunities have been carefully mapped to supplement our whole school curriculum, whilst nurturing, inspiring and developing our pupil's knowledge of the wider world. They provide experiences within the local and wider community and include practical and engaging opportunities.

Our enrichment offer links carefully to our SMSC topics and aims to develop independence, social skills, aspirations and life skills for our pupils. Our enrichment will take place throughout the year and wherever possible includes visits to our local area.

As pupils progress into the canopies curriculum, they begin to study Citizenship. This builds upon the knowledge and experiences gained through the school's SMSC and Enrichment curriculum, providing opportunities for pupils to apply their learning in real-life contexts.

Citizenship helps pupils develop an understanding of their role within the community, how to access local services, and the responsibilities and opportunities available to them as active citizens. For example, after visiting a police station through the Enrichment curriculum, pupils may learn how to access police services, contribute positively to their community, and explore careers within the police service. Through these experiences, pupils develop the knowledge, skills and confidence needed for independent and responsible adult life.

Assessment of Pupils

Upon entry, many pupils are operating at a pre key stage level in different areas, both curricula based, communication based and with their social & emotional skills. The school places a high emphasis on pupils' individual personal development in addition to their academic progress.

When a child arrives at Willow School, it is key for staff to get to know them, academically and socially, to ensure we build positive relationships & provide them with tailored support to enable them to reach their full potential.

During the first term, pupils are assessed for a baseline using a bespoke Holistic Pupil Assessment tool, which includes information about the pupils' educational statistics, social influences and circumstantial history. It is then centred around eight key areas of learning set in the Autism Education Trust framework (Emotional Understanding and Self-Awareness; Social Understanding and Relationships; Communication and Interaction; Healthy Living; Learning and Engagement; Sensory Processing; Interests, Routines and Processing; Independence and Community Participation). A sensory profile assessment is also carried out.

Pupils are also assessed in reading, writing and maths. All assessments are then tracked through the year and inform pupils targets, intervention and well-being time activities.

Assessment Periods

Assessment will take place at 3 intervals throughout the year:

- End of Autumn term (Checkpoint 1 - yellow)
- End of Spring term (Checkpoint 2 – pink)
- End of Summer term (Checkpoint 3 - green)

New pupils will have a baseline assessment if they join after the start of the academic year using the HPA tool, as well as assessments in Reading, Writing and Maths. These should be completed in Blue.

Assessment at our school is individualised and designed to recognise and celebrate the progress made by every pupil. Expected progress is determined in relation to each pupil's holistic assessment outcome, ensuring that expectations are appropriate to their starting points, strengths and needs. However, we remain aspirational for all pupils and recognise that many children may make progress beyond these expected outcomes. Pupils following the Semi-Formal Curriculum (Shoots) are assessed across all areas of learning using the Cherry Tree Assessment Framework. Where a pupil demonstrates attainment beyond the Cherry Tree assessment pathway in Reading, Writing and Mathematics, they transition to the Formal Curriculum (Roots) assessment pathway in those subjects. The Formal Curriculum is assessed using a bespoke assessment framework based on the National Curriculum objectives, which have been broken down into small, achievable steps to accurately measure progress and support next learning targets.

As pupils progress into the Canopies curriculum, they have opportunities to work towards a range of accredited qualifications and awards. Core subjects are accredited through recognised examination boards, while non-core subjects are accredited through ASDAN programmes.

All qualifications are quality assured and internally and externally moderated to ensure high standards and meaningful achievement. These accreditations provide pupils with recognised outcomes that support progression into further education, training, employment and independent adult life, helping them to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence needed for their future.

PSHE Assessment

At the end of each PSHE lessons, pupils will self-assess their learning against the given objectives by ticking, marking or colouring their reflection of the lesson.

Alongside this, teachers will record the progress of each child during the lesson by highlighting their achievements or areas of difficulty within each lesson. Any areas of focus will be picked up throughout the week and additional time will be spent on this during well-being time or target time. Any misconceptions will be identified and added to the following term's Medium Term Plan overview to be addressed before beginning the new unit. A topic quiz is completed at the end of each term to record learning and to see progress.

Thinking Squares

At the start of non-core units, a Thinking Square will be completed to find what pupils already know. This will be written, scribed, verbal or answered using picture cards, where appropriate. At the end of each unit The Thinking Square is revisited to ascertain what the pupils have learnt and remembered throughout the topic. This will show any gaps within learning for teachers to revisit or be planned for again within the curriculum.

Subject Overviews

Subject overviews outline the key knowledge, lesson by lesson, as well as a progression of vocabulary to be taught each week. The knowledge is assessed for each pupil following the lesson to show their understanding and allow for any gaps in learning to be addressed.

Education Health Care Plans

Education Health Care Plans will be reviewed yearly (unless an early review is needed) alongside parents, carers, school staff and any outside agencies. Targets and provision will be reviewed at this time and new areas set. These plans will be worked on daily by school staff and inform the pupils well-being and target time each week. Larger targets may be broken down into smaller ones, which will appear on pupil's Support Plans.

Support Plans

Support Plans will be working documents for staff, who will continually update progress and set new targets where appropriate. These targets may feed from baseline or summative assessments, as well as day to day areas of need. Support Plans will be reviewed three times a year in line with the SEN Code of Practice with school staff and parents and carers.

Monitoring Arrangements

The proprietors monitor coverage of curriculum subjects and compliance with other statutory requirements through:

- Meetings with the Headteacher and Curriculum Lead
- Mapped monitoring throughout the academic year

Senior Leaders with the support of Subject Leaders monitor progress and the way subjects are taught throughout the school by:

- Regular meetings
- Lesson observations
- Book monitoring
- Student voice
- Learning walks
- Subject deep dives
- Pupil progress meetings
- Assessment data analysis
- Attendance data analysis