

Teaching and Learning Policy



Wistaston Academy
Primary and Nursery School
Together We Learn • Together We Achieve

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Teaching and Learning Policy

Teaching for Learning Statement

At Wistaston Academy, our continual aim is to deliver an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum that challenges all pupils across the foundation and core subjects while offering expansive opportunities beyond the traditional frontiers of primary education. We endeavour to foster a positive, lifelong attitude to learning so that all children leave Wistaston Academy as confident, articulate and independent learners who can work collaboratively, communicate effectively and manage their own learning.

Our curriculum is designed around the Artsmark Principles. We believe that creativity, imagination and cultural engagement are fundamental to high-quality education and should permeate all aspects of school life. Through rich artistic experiences, children are encouraged to explore ideas, express themselves confidently and make meaningful connections across the curriculum.

Subject leaders work closely with teachers to raise standards through high-quality, evidence-informed teaching. Our notion of quality first teaching is built on a deep understanding of how children learn and is informed by the latest educational research, professional reading and reflective practice. Our approach is also shaped by visits to outstanding schools and by our understanding and interpretation of effective practice nationally and internationally. We adopt and adapt strategies that have proven impact and which align with our values and context.

Central to our approach is the belief that learning is social and language-rich. We are committed to developing pupils' oracy through the principles of Voice 21, recognising spoken language as essential to thinking, learning and achievement. Classrooms provide regular opportunities for children to listen actively, articulate ideas, ask thoughtful questions, build on the contributions of others and engage in purposeful dialogue. Through structured talk, discussion and collaborative learning experiences, children develop confidence, reasoning and the ability to communicate effectively in a range of contexts.

Wistaston Academy is a Read Write Inc. (RWI) School. RWI underpins our approach to early literacy through the systematic and rigorous teaching of phonics, reading and spelling.

- RWI delivers the systematic teaching of phonics through highly structured daily lessons.
- Children learn to decode confidently while simultaneously developing reading comprehension and fluency.
- Writing is taught through carefully chosen, ability-matched texts, enabling children to apply and consolidate their developing literacy skills.

As children move beyond the early stages of reading, literacy teaching develops into a rich, text-based and drama-informed approach. High-quality texts, storytelling, performance and drama strategies are used to deepen comprehension, extend vocabulary, develop empathy and inspire purposeful writing. Children are encouraged to respond creatively and critically to texts, making connections and exploring language through discussion, performance and written composition.

Teaching strategies that support learning include:

- Peer-to-peer support and collaborative learning
- Cold Calling to ensure participation and accountability
- Reframing and extending questions to deepen thinking
- Kagan cooperative learning structures
- Structured oracy strategies, including talk partners, discussion protocols and exploratory talk
- A range of whole-class feedback techniques, including Popcorn Responses, Choral Response and Show Me
- Retrieval practice and regular opportunities to revisit prior learning
- Explicit modelling, guided practice and independent application

Planning for Teaching and Learning

We recognise the importance of carefully planned lessons that acknowledge the active roles of both teacher and learner. Effective planning ensures that learning is ambitious, inclusive and sequenced to enable children to build knowledge and understanding over time.

Learning experiences are designed to:

- Have clear learning intentions
- Build on prior knowledge and make meaningful connections
- Provide opportunities for dialogue, creativity and collaboration
- Include appropriate challenge and support for all learners
- Encourage independence, resilience and reflection
- Enable children to apply knowledge in meaningful and authentic contexts

Inclusivity

Teaching and learning at Wistaston Academy are inclusive and recognise that children learn in different ways and at different rates. We are committed to ensuring that all pupils, regardless of need or ability, can access an ambitious curriculum and experience success.

Some children require additional support from highly skilled teachers and support staff, particularly in literacy and numeracy. At times, this support may be delivered through carefully planned interventions, small-group teaching or individual programmes.

Opportunities for inclusion are pursued rigorously through adaptive teaching, appropriate scaffolding and differentiated approaches to lesson design and delivery for pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans and others on the special educational needs register.

Teaching and learning also recognise that some pupils demonstrate exceptional abilities and talents beyond those typically expected for their age. Teachers provide opportunities for these pupils to deepen, extend and apply their learning in increasingly sophisticated ways.

The Academy is particularly committed to ensuring that children at significant educational risk have access to an effective curriculum that helps them overcome barriers to learning and achieve their potential.

We promote equality of opportunity and foster respect for people of all backgrounds, cultures, faiths and identities.

Teaching Guidelines

Planning

(Refer to the Academy's Planning Policy.)

Classroom Organisation

- Teachers are well prepared with high-quality resources within organised, purposeful learning environments that accommodate a range of learning needs and styles.
- Teaching spaces are uncluttered, safe and conducive to learning.
- Learning environments are prepared before each academic year and are reviewed regularly.
- Displays support learning, celebrate achievement and reflect current curriculum experiences.
- Teachers are mindful of health and safety in all aspects of classroom organisation.
- Resources are well maintained, appropriately labelled and readily available.

Classroom Management

- Movement in and out of classrooms is calm and purposeful.
- High-quality teaching and engaging learning experiences promote positive behaviour and high levels of participation.
- Clear routines and expectations support pupils in becoming increasingly independent and responsible learners.

Pupil Books

- Children have opportunities to record their learning regularly across the curriculum.
- Where learning is practical, oral or digital, an appropriate record is made in pupils' books.
- High expectations are maintained regarding presentation and handwriting.
- Books are labelled consistently using school templates.

Feedback and Assessment

- Feedback follows the school's Feedback Policy and is timely, purposeful and focused on moving learning forward.
- Verbal and written feedback help children recognise successes and identify next steps.
- Children are increasingly encouraged to reflect on, assess and improve their own work and the work of others.
- Interim and summative assessments are recorded in line with the school's assessment timetable.

Professional Reflection and Teamwork

Teachers continually evaluate their teaching and its impact on pupils' learning in order to improve outcomes. As reflective professionals, staff work collaboratively to review practice, share expertise and engage in ongoing professional learning.

Teachers regularly participate in whole-school initiatives and interventions, which are rigorously evaluated for their impact on teaching, learning and pupil outcomes.

Class Cover

The term 'cover' refers to occasions when the teacher normally responsible for a class is absent during their timetabled teaching session.

Cover supervision should primarily be used for short-term absences and includes:

- Delivering work set in accordance with the school's teaching and learning policies
- Maintaining standards of presentation and handwriting in line with school expectations
- Managing behaviour to ensure a constructive learning environment
- Responding to pupils' questions regarding processes and procedures
- Dealing with immediate issues or emergencies according to school policies and procedures
- Collecting completed work and returning it to the appropriate teacher
- Reporting on pupil behaviour and any issues arising during the lesson in accordance with agreed procedures