



Willow Dene
SCHOOL

Curriculum Offer

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Time, People, Place & Culture including RE..... | 19 |
| Play and Leisure | 19 |
| Music | 19 |
| Modern Foreign Languages..... | 19 |
| Secondary Statutory Areas | 20 |
| Relationships, Health and Sex education | 20 |
| Modern foreign language (French) | 20 |
| Citizenship..... | 20 |
| Personal Interests, Strengths and Skills at Key Stage 3 | 21 |
| Specialist Interest Afternoons | 21 |
| Enterprise Projects | 21 |
| Enterprise Projects Cycle | 22 |
| Personal Interests, Strengths and Skills at Key Stage 4 | 23 |
| Accredited learning: AQA Unit Awards scheme | 23 |
| Futures Mapping | 24 |
| Positive Contribution | 24 |
| Careers | 25 |
| Summary | 25 |
| Related Documentation..... | 26 |

Rationale

The intent of the curriculum models for Key Stage 1 and 2, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 is that the children are enabled to be active learners, moving towards independence, autonomy, control and choice and that they learn to effectively communicate needs, wants, and opinions. The curriculum provides the opportunities that are essential for the learning and development of children at Willow Dene. All children have special educational needs and face significant and complex barriers to learning, which include autism, sensory impairments, complex medical needs and physical disabilities. The broad and balanced curriculum is based on a learner centred approach enabling every child to be inspired and encouraged, enjoy learning, make progress and achieve. This allows for opportunities to develop a depth of knowledge through teaching, consolidation and practice. Children at Willow Dene have specific, diverse and individual needs and the curriculum models aim to reflect and meet these. Through personalising the curriculum, we aim for all children to acquire processes, knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to their developmental level. The high expectations and aspirations for children are enshrined in the teaching of the curriculum models. All statutory requirements set out in the National Curriculum are met through detailed curriculum coverage mapping. There is a clear rationale for ensuring this is meaningful and purposeful and meets the needs of children throughout the school.

The successes achieved during the EYFS, Key Stage 1 and 2, are built on within the secondary curriculum models; this ensures continuity and progression giving children depth of learning. The secondary curriculum models place a greater emphasis on developing specialist interests and building community links, as children move towards adulthood. The focus is on continued progress whilst supporting children through the emotional and physical changes associated with adolescence and growth. This is extended further in Key Stage 4 when the curriculum focuses on extending independence, access and autonomy, building on children's strengths and interests with relevant, personalised and ambitious accredited learning. The curriculum celebrates what children are good at by broadening experience and deepening learning, ensuring an element of challenge.

Intentions

The curriculum is designed to enable all children at Willow Dene to:

- have strategies to be able to communicate their needs, wants, opinions and thoughts
- be active learners
- develop their social skills so that they can engage and interact with others meaningfully
- develop skills for learning to channel their natural curiosity
- be active and have a healthy lifestyle
- access a clearly structured day with routine which they can recognise and understand
- develop motor control and physical independence
- develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural values
- make a positive contribution to community life
- develop specialist knowledge and interest in a range of topics
- develop skills that contribute to their autonomy and independence in a range of environments
- transfer skills between home, school and community

And that we:

- capitalise on pupil voice which will shape an individual's provision
- advocate for those who need it in a relevant and respectful manner
- utilise advances in technology to continue to develop learning and promote independence
- actively involve parents with a shared vision of their child's aspirations and achievements
- support and develop a personalised transition from school to further education and community life, drawing on expertise and knowledge of individual children

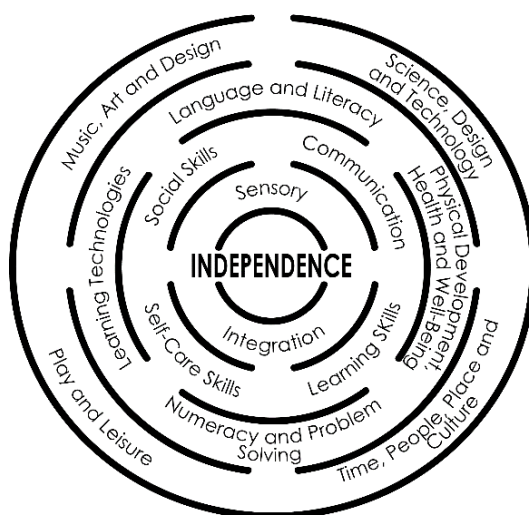
Therefore, the curriculum provides all children with the opportunity to become:

- enthusiastic and successful learners who love the challenge of learning and are resilient in their pursuit of knowledge
- individuals who value learning and who continue that process throughout their lives
- curious, interested learners, who seek out and use new information to develop, consolidate, generalise and deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills
- confident learners who make progress to achieve their full potential in a wide range of subjects
- individuals who are supported to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- valued and valuable citizens who make a positive contribution to society
- fluent in a range of skills that enable them to broaden their life experiences

Curriculum Model

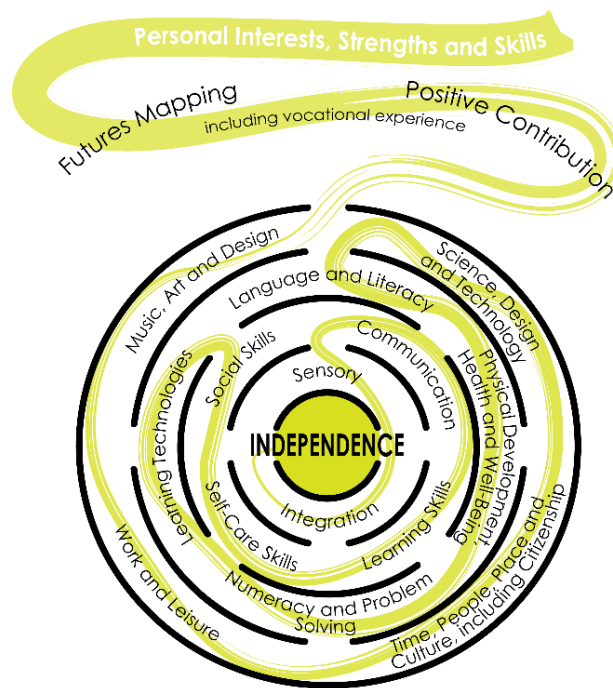
The Key Stage 1 and 2, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 curriculum models are based on National Curriculum Programmes of study and include all statutory curriculum requirements for each key stage. All models also include pre-requisites to learning such as sensory processing. The curriculum models include areas that reflect the specific learning needs of children at Willow Dene and build on each other in order to provide progression as children get older. The curriculum is designed to promote the school's vision of 'Seeing Possibilities, Realising Dreams'.

Key Stage 1 and 2



Key Stage 3

Key Stage 4



The curriculum is implemented through:

- Learning environments
- Positive relationships
- High quality planning
- High quality teaching
- Visiting locations in the local community
- Routine / structured approach
- Learning and development of staff
- Engaging resources
- Special events
- Essential skills
- Learning outside the classroom
- Multidisciplinary work
- Personalised learning
- Child-led approach
- Home-school partnerships
- The ethos and approach to learning
- Collective worship
- Topic based approach

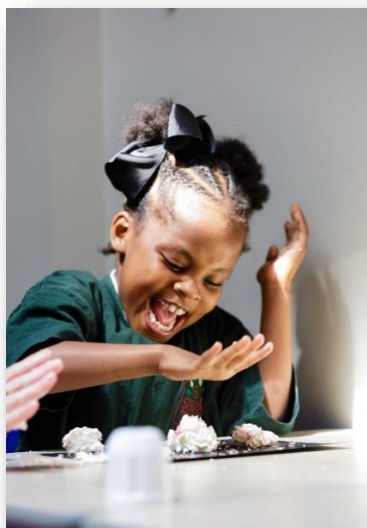
Independence

The Willow Dene curriculum models place the development of independence at the hub of all that we do. Independence is about enabling children to develop autonomy, control and a sense of agency in a way that is meaningful to them.

Sensory integration

Children's sensory needs are prioritised and addressed to help them achieve a state of readiness for learning. Sensory integration is an integral part of learning for children at Willow Dene. This is embedded in discreet and planned sessions to teach and support

children to process sensory information and understand how this affects their learning and overall wellbeing. Children who need support with regulation and modulation have planned opportunities to develop strategies to help them to self-regulate and process sensory information in routines and individualised programmes.



Essential Areas

Promoting independence and learning is underpinned by four essential strands for life and learning, which are integral to the whole curriculum and school day.

Communication

At Willow Dene School communication is incorporated into every area of the curriculum and is one of the four essential areas which underpin all learning. Each child has a communication passport which details how they communicate and how best to communicate with them. The school promotes a total communication approach through the child's environment, which include strategies such as visual supports, objects of reference, PECS, signing and verbal language. The curriculum promotes children's pre-intentional and intentional communication skills through approaches such as attention autism sessions, intensive interaction sessions, sensory journeys and structured play. Focussed communication sessions are planned throughout the week to ensure that key areas of communication have a clear focus. This includes areas such as developing anticipation, sharing information, reciprocity, social awareness and supportive strategy skills. These sessions are taught in fun, motivating ways to ensure all children have an irresistible invitation to extend their communication.



Learning skills

Teaching skills for learning is fundamental to children's growth and continued independence. Across the curriculum children are taught the skills that are required to be able to acquire knowledge and take care of themselves; these are broken down into meaningful steps. Learning skills are centred on individual need to enable children to draw upon strategies that will help them to learn more effectively.

Social skills

Opportunities to develop social skills are threaded throughout the day. Planned and integrated teaching of this area facilitates an awareness of self and others.

Social skills are taught through planned opportunities to develop social awareness and an understanding of simple social rules. Motivating social communication and play activities in and out of the classroom environment help to develop an awareness of others and build relationships. This enables skills to be practiced in a meaningful way.



Self-help skills

Self-help skills are learning experiences that are both planned and spontaneous, such as eating, drinking, personal care routines, dressing and undressing. Children's dignity, agency and independence are fostered by practicing and developing these skills.

Assessment and learner profiles

The curriculum models enable learning to be tailored to meet the developmental needs of different learner profiles. These are assessed via the four elements of the Learning Journeys assessment system: Footsteps, Stepping Out, Paces and Strides. The transitions between learner profiles are gradual and there are no distinct boundaries between them.

Children working at an early development level are developing the foundations of communication, social interactions and cognitive processes and skills on which all future learning is built. These children are assessed using Footsteps.

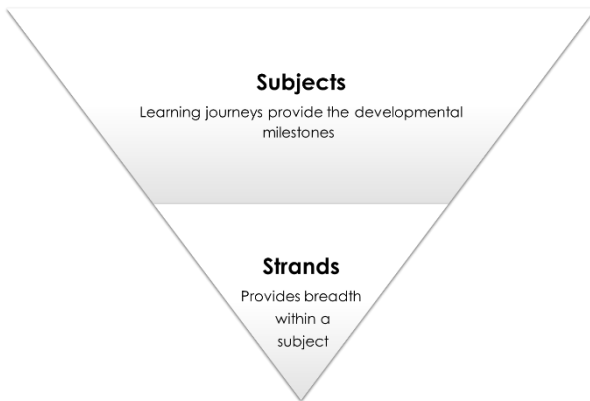
Children at an emergent concept level are developing more refined communication, cognitive and social interactions skills with greater intentionality. They are beginning to use more formal and representative systems for language-based concepts, which may include symbols and signing as well as single words. Children are developing a greater understanding of how their actions can impact on people and the environment. They are assessed using Stepping Out.

Children working at a basic concept level have started to secure early concepts such as colour, shape, size, position and number. They are developing more sophisticated understanding and use of language including combining words. They are assessed using Paces.

Children working at an applying knowledge level are developing more formal, subject-based knowledge and skills within the National Curriculum. They are learning how to use and apply the knowledge they have and make connections between concepts and ideas. They can communicate at conversational level. These children will still need significant support to apply knowledge flexibly and in more than one context. They are assessed using Strides.

Coverage

Early Development and Emergent concept



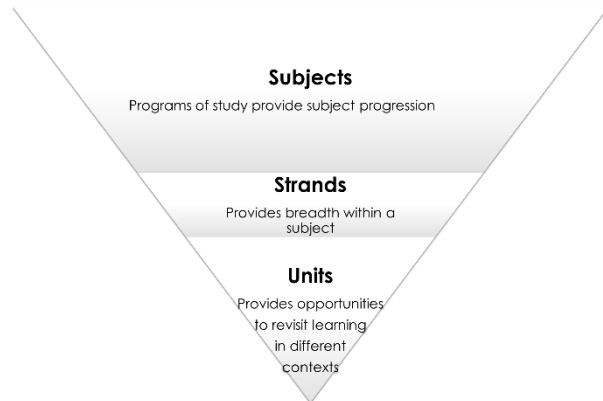
For children working at an **early development or emergent concept level**, core learning is derived from the **Footsteps and Stepping Out progression framework** and is also assessed against this.

Curriculum coverage, provided through the key strands of each subject, give contexts and opportunities for early learners to practice core learning through rich and broad experiences related to a subject.

Key strands within each subject are mapped out in an annual coverage document, which provides opportunities to revisit the fundamental elements of these.

The strands are distilled from aspects of the National Curriculum. Footsteps and Stepping Out skills and processes are applied to the subject to provide the learner with a broad rich curriculum.

Basic Concept and Applying knowledge



Children working at a **basic concept or applying knowledge** level follow the curriculum coverage document which outlines the focus areas of each subject, mapped across the school year.

Each subject and focus area are broken down into half termly units taught on a 3-year cycle in the primary phase and a 2-year cycle in the secondary phase.

The strands and units are planned to ensure balanced coverage.

Subject-specific learning is derived from the programme of study for each subject, which provides a progression framework, and unit maps which ensure well-sequenced learning of subject-specific knowledge and skills.

Depth and progression

Through careful and bespoke planning, children make progress from their individual starting points by accessing a rich curriculum. Children's learning across the curriculum is strengthened and deepened as they progress through the school from the early years to Key Stage 4. The curriculum offers all children appropriate opportunities to practice, rehearse and generalise. Progress is often lateral and is about transferring knowledge and skills to new contexts. The purpose of our spiralled or interleaved approach is that it allows children to generalise their understanding and commit learning to their long-term memory. Emphasis on routine and structure enables children to use more of their working memory in order to undertake learning tasks.

Children working at basic concept and applying knowledge levels have opportunities for building and consolidating knowledge and associated skills in each area of the curriculum. Children are encouraged to apply their understanding, experience, knowledge and skills to their learning in order to strengthen cognitive connections. All children build on the foundations of their prior learning in order to be able develop a greater depth of understanding or transfer learning to new contexts. Progression is mapped using individual subject progression frameworks which detail children's progress within subjects.

Structure and sequencing of learning

The structure and sequence of learning are provided by Subject POS, exemplars of the LJ's progression framework at early development/emergent concept. Teachers use these and in-depth knowledge of the children to plan learning across enrichment and core areas of the curriculum. This allows children repeated opportunities to practice, rehearse in many contexts and build on prior learning in order for the knowledge and skills they have acquired to be applied. Children working at an applying knowledge level are learning how to use subject-specific knowledge and skills flexibly and in different contexts.

Pupil Voice

At Willow Dene we are committed to ensuring the voice of every child is heard. Provision is child-centred, so it is essential that children have a role in ensuring it meets their needs.



Children have diverse ways of communicating and staff teams are dedicated to understanding and helping them to express their needs, thoughts, feelings and opinions. Staff work closely with children to ensure that they are acting as an advocate or listening for the underlying message, so that all children are able to effectively share what they want to express.

Children in Key Stage 3 have their own blog on the school website to share news, events and their views. This is composed by children and supported by staff. It is updated regularly and allows children to communicate about the things that are important to them in the wider world as well as providing a meaningful context to develop an understanding of online safety.

In Key Stage 4 children take over the Willow Dene Twitter feed during planned times of the year to share their thoughts and interests as well as providing a meaningful context for social media awareness and online safety.

Areas of the curriculum

In addition to the areas of independence, sensory processing and essential skills, there are nine areas of learning in the curriculum. These are designated as either Core Areas or Enrichment Areas. Core Areas support learning which the school considers fundamental to children's development and fulfilment of their potential. Enrichment Areas offer breadth, balance and richness of opportunities and further enable learning in the Core Areas, essential skills and independence. It is through the Enrichment Areas that we develop cultural capital, supporting children to learn creatively and gather the skills and experiences they need to share their knowledge and achievements with the wider world.

| Core Areas | Enrichment Areas |
|--|--|
| Language and Literacy | Art and Music |
| Numeracy and Problem Solving | Science and Technology |
| Physical Development, Health and Wellbeing | Time, Place, People and Culture (including RE) |
| Learning technologies | Play and Leisure |
| Relationships, Health, Sex Education | |

Children's progress is clearly mapped using our Learning Journeys assessment system and programmes of study. These detail the what needs to be learnt, the sequence of learning and demonstrate a clear sense of progression. Children's progress in individual subjects is tracked and recorded using the online version of Learning Journeys, accessed through the Evidence for Learning app.

Core Areas

Language and Literacy

Language and Literacy broadly refers to the teaching and learning within the strands of 'reading', 'communication' and 'writing'. We adopt a holistic and creative approach in delivering these strands, with an underlying emphasis on fostering the development of children's communication skills. Literacy at early development is communication focused, supporting the fundamental building blocks to early communication. This area of the curriculum offers a breadth of stimulating literacy experiences that aim to capture and sustain children's curiosity and interest, develop their comprehension skills and nurture the capacity for symbolic and imaginative thinking. High quality text and genres are used to support learning and promote a love of stories and books.



Numeracy and Problem Solving

Numeracy and Problem Solving is an important part of everyday life and provides children with powerful ways of exploring, investigating and understanding the world. At early development a focus on cognition supports children to approach problem situations flexibly, to move from random to trial and improvement responses, and to anticipate and predict. Children working at concept and subject levels are taught through the strands of 'number and the number system', 'shape, space and measure' and 'using and applying'. They have opportunities to use Numeracy to tackle a range of practical tasks and to solve real life problems.

The potential to apply the skills of making comparisons, identifying differences, investigating relationships and establishing connections reflects the importance of the subject across the curriculum, particularly the area of scientific enquiry.

Physical Development, Health and Wellbeing

Physical development, health and well-being is integral to children's learning. Physical health and well-being is taught both through planned sessions and is embedded throughout the day. How children's needs are met will look different across the school due to the wide range of needs children have. Physical education is taught through swimming, dance, games, gymnastics as well as personalised programmes which may include MOVE or fitness. Well-being encompasses all of the essential skills and sex and relationships education.

Learning Technologies

Computing is taught through planned sessions for children to use technology to explore their ideas. They will have opportunities to make predictions and connections, which may be related to cause and effect, grouping or sequencing, and test these. Children are taught to plan and choose how to use technology as well as check and amend strategies they are using and reflect and review what they have done. Children are taught about appropriate usage of technology and on-line safety. Additionally, learning technologies are used to support access to learning across the curriculum, by enabling children to do things in virtual contexts which would be difficult to do otherwise. Children will use appropriate access to technology and for some children this will include environmental control.

Relationships, Health and Sex education

Children in the primary school are taught the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships. At this stage a particular focus is made to friendships, family relationships and relationships with others. Relationships education is additionally taught through the essential skills strand of self-care and the core area of physical development, health and well-being.

Enrichment Areas

The Enrichment Areas provide children with richness and breadth, so they have opportunities to learn and develop a wide range of knowledge, understanding and skills which facilitate cultural growth. All subjects taught in the Enrichment Areas have a Programme of study document which are based on relevant areas of the National Curriculum programmes of study. This ensures that teachers provide breadth and balance and that children have a wide range of learning opportunities. It also outlines progression and expectations for children's learning. Enrichment Areas lay focus on developing children as 'cultural omnivores' who are both taught and exposed to a wide range of experiences which extend, challenge and utilise their skills.



Science

Science is taught through planned opportunities for active and experiential play and more structured practical activities which provide children with meaningful experiences. These are designed to stimulate their senses as well as to encourage children to develop curiosity, explore and wonder at their environment. Children may ask and respond to questions through undertaking investigations that engage their interests. They have opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of how science can be used to make observations, explain what is occurring, make predictions and gather and record their findings.

Art and Design

Art and Design is taught through planned opportunities and activities that engage, inspire and challenge children using a range of different materials and tools. These equip children with the knowledge and skills to compose, experiment and create, drawing on imagination and expression in their own works of art, crafts and designs. They have opportunities to investigate art, craft and design in the locality and in a variety of genres, styles and traditions. Children will be taught to develop their technical skills and gain an understanding of how art and design both reflect and shape history.

Design and Technology

Design and Technology provides opportunities for children to use their creativity and imagination to design and make products. This encourages children to consider their own and others wants and needs to solve real and relevant problems in a variety of contexts. They will be given opportunities to select materials, use tools, refine their ideas and evaluate their work. They will be encouraged to acquire knowledge and skills and apply these to projects, including cooking and nutrition, textiles and mechanisms.

Time, People, Place & Culture including RE

Time, People, Place & Culture involves teaching children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, culture and the environment. Children will have opportunities to explore similarities and differences between various places and times starting from concrete experiences relating to themselves. Spirituality, sense of identity and belonging is taught through this area as well as addressed throughout the school day and during events related to children's experiences and culture.

Play and Leisure

Play and leisure is taught in a range of settings, contexts and environments and underpins all aspects of the curriculum. It is used as both an approach to learning across the curriculum and taught in planned sessions. Through play, children are taught to explore and learn about their world as well as developing imagination, creativity, social skills, and problem-solving skills. They are taught to practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills and learn how to control impulses and follow simple rules. Children are supported to play alone, alongside others or collaborate as they interact, talk or rehearse ideas. Through planned play, children learn to communicate with others and take risks and make mistakes. Children are offered opportunities to practice and rehearse these skills in a variety of contexts that enable them to develop interests and enjoy their leisure time.

Music

Music is taught through planned opportunities and activities that expose children to high quality music across styles, genres and how to interpret and listen to them. Children take an active role in creating music using both tuned and untuned instruments. They are taught simple notation as well as improvisation, and composition skills to play and perform as a soloist or part of an ensemble. Music at Willow Dene is used holistically to engage and motivate children and to support children's understanding.

Modern Foreign Languages

Children in the Primary phase are working on their fundamental communication skills in their preferred mode of communication. We offer children opportunities to practice, rehearse and develop language acquisition both for functional and expressive means.

Secondary Statutory Areas

In addition to areas covered in the Primary curriculum, the Secondary curriculum offers statutory subjects for children who are working at basic concept and subject levels. These statutory subjects are incorporated into the areas defined in the Key Stage 3 and 4 curriculum models. To ensure learning is meaningful, those working at early development stage and emergent concept level will not be expected to engage with these areas in a subject-specific way. Children working at a basic concept-based level will be taught secondary statutory areas as outlined below. These areas will be personalised to individual cognitive levels and understanding.

Relationships, Health and Sex education

Children are taught a variety of topics based on Key Stage 3 Relationships, Health and sex education such as 'growing up', 'our changing body', 'public and private' and 'keeping safe'. In addition to this, children are taught specific skills appropriate to their individual needs. This supports children to be better equipped to manage the outside world safely and develop understanding of the various changes occurring through puberty and adolescence. Sex and relationships education is taught through the essential skills strand of self-care and the core area of physical development, health and well-being.

Modern foreign language (French)

At Key Stage 3 and 4, French is taught through both practical and concrete means for children working at an appropriate level of communication. In French, children are taught a variety of key words, phrases and topics. They practice their newly acquired vocabulary using songs, games and practical activities. At Key Stage 3 and 4, French is taught through both practical and concrete means for children working at an appropriate level of communication. A French residential trip is offered to children in Key Stage 4 to practice their French in a real-life context.

Citizenship

Citizenship focuses on providing children with the skills and experiences to enable them to play a full and active role in society. This links closely to work on pupil voice and within the school, local and wider community. In Key Stage 4 this is put into practice through the Positive Contribution process, outlined below.

Personal Interests, Strengths and Skills at Key Stage 3

Specialist Interest Afternoons

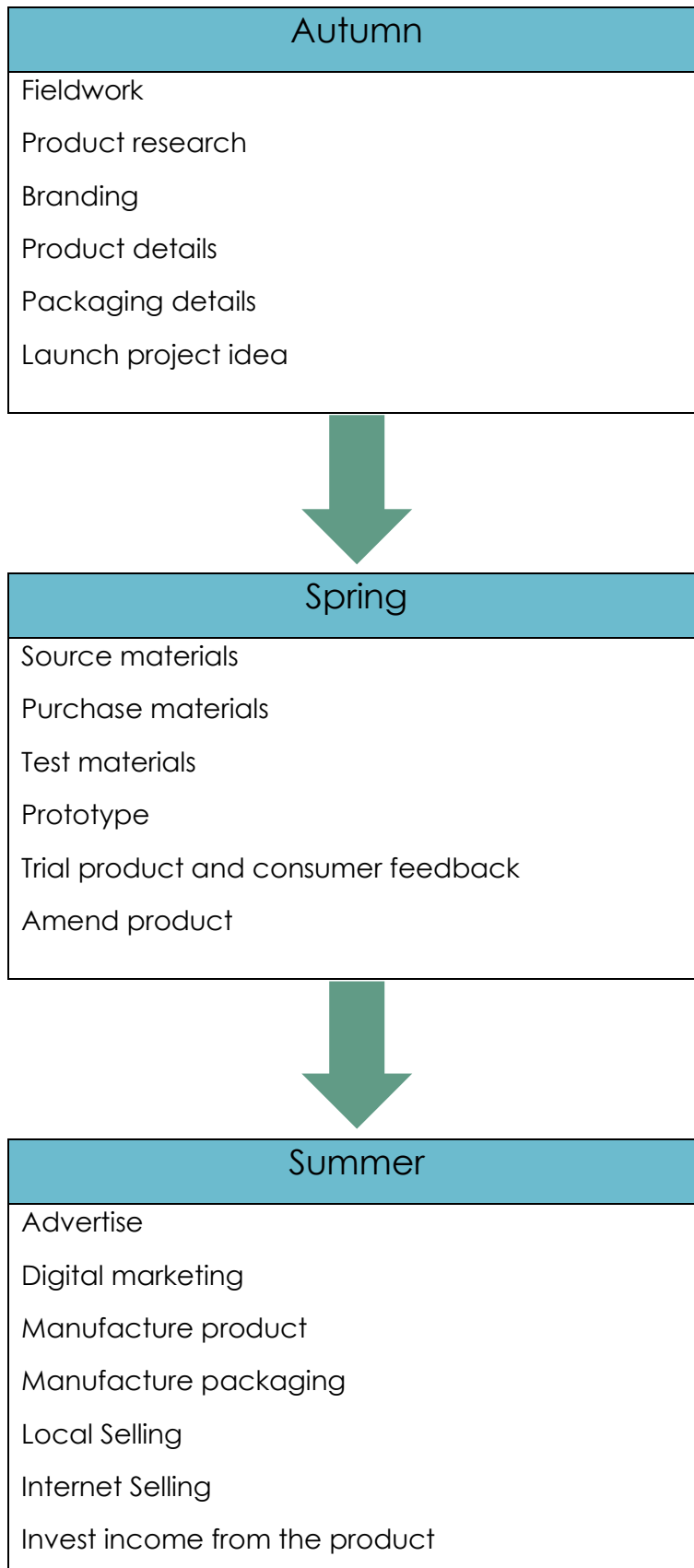
To recognise abilities, interests and talents, each child has an afternoon during the year devoted to recognising and supporting their passions. Each child's area of interest is celebrated by an event, activity or visit which allows them to explore this in more depth. Each specialist interest afternoon is shared with the rest of the year group enabling them to join in the experience. This provides opportunities for children to develop a sense of the wider community and for their strengths to be recognised and celebrated.



Enterprise Projects

To support the development of children's economic well-being and making a positive contribution, all Key Stage 3 children are involved in a collaborative enterprise project over the course of the academic year. This provides opportunities for children to work collaboratively with others and develop designs and ideas in order to create a product that they can sell, therefore developing an understanding of economic well-being. Each class creates their own project and engages with specific roles within the process. This may include areas such as market research, product design, packaging design and production. This process continues over the course of Key Stage 3.

Enterprise Projects Cycle



Personal Interests, Strengths and Skills at Key Stage 4

Accredited learning: AQA Unit Awards scheme

At Key Stage 4 the AQA unit award scheme is used to enable children to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in areas of strengths and interest. An options evening at the end of year 9 and 10 offers children, parents and teachers the opportunity to work together to identify 6 areas to focus on in the following academic year. Units are chosen or created from the following four broad areas:

- **Creative:** Photography and digital media, sculpture, painting and drawing, music and drama
- **Life skills:** using Literacy and Numeracy, access and autonomy, independence, safety awareness and healthy lifestyle
- **Physical:** Dance, physical skill acquisition, outward bounds and adventure, team games and games skills, swimming
- **Citizenship and PHSE:** Relationships, out and about, making a positive contribution, leisure time and play skills

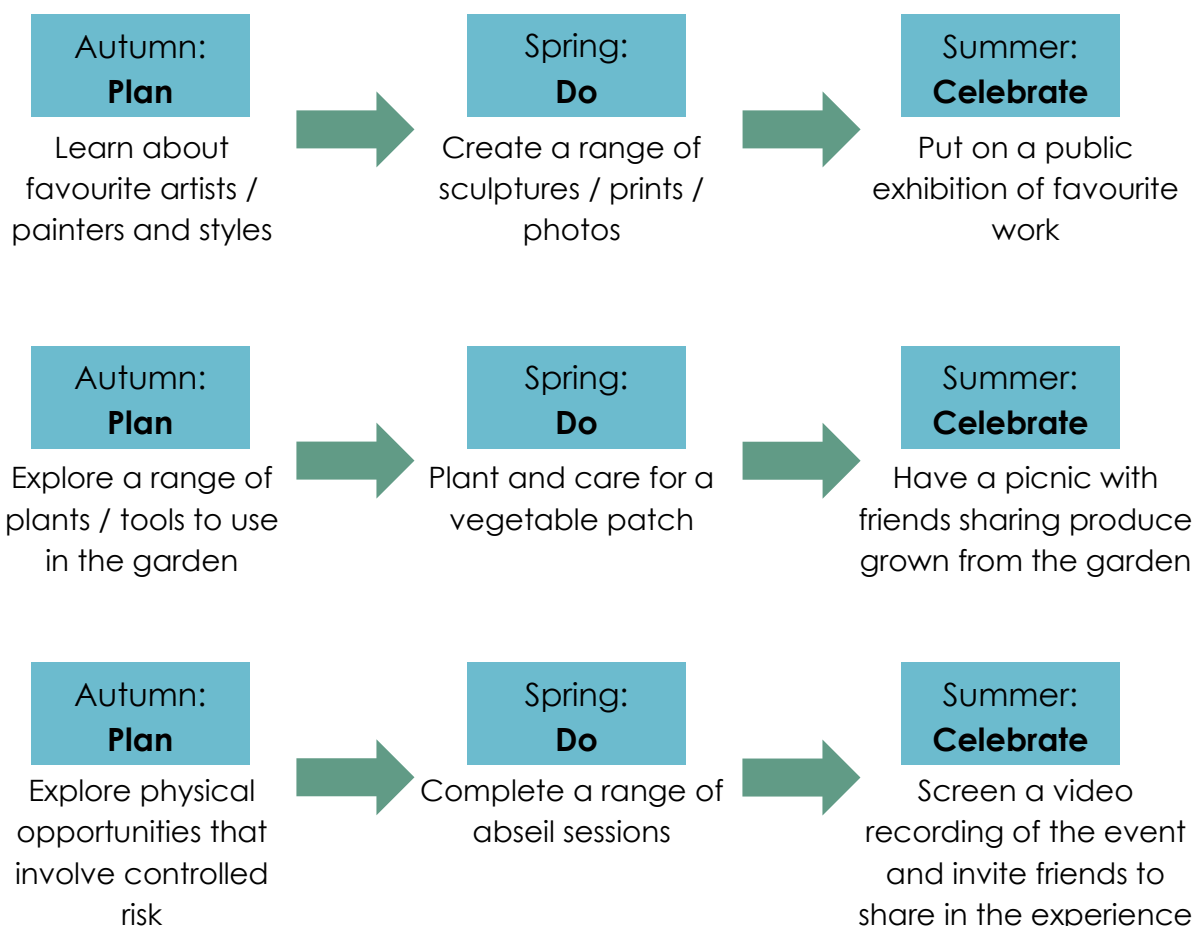
Learning technologies can be a specific focus in any of the four key areas of focus and can also act as a vehicle to access them.



The Personal Learning Profile (PLP) document is pivotal in planning accredited learning and is multifunctional. It defines context, sets targets, records progress, is a cumulative record, maps coverage and reflects EHC Plan outcomes and aspirations. All evidence of meeting targets and completing units is celebrated within a record of achievement document. This is shared in a graduation event at the end of year 11.

Futures Mapping

In Key Stage 4 the model of specialist interest afternoons is built on through Futures Mapping. Children undertake an individualised project based on their specialist interest across the three terms in year 10. It incorporates a plan, do and celebrate model. This involves children in the planning process and allows children greater autonomy and choice when shaping their chosen areas of interest. Below are some examples of what this may look like:



Positive Contribution

In Key Stage 4 Positive Contribution builds on the foundations of the enterprise project. This focuses on how children make a positive contribution to their communities. It recognises and develops the ethos of children being valued and valuable members of society. Positive Contributions may be events or opportunities to take part in work experience, volunteering, charity work, fundraising and having a positive impact on other people. This process is child centred, and takes the format of 'finding out, doing and sharing'. It reflects the needs and understanding of each child and is planned so that it has the greatest impact for all involved.

Careers

In the primary phase, children have opportunities to work with specialists and members of the community from within and beyond the school through specialist weeks and special events. In Key Stage 3 and 4 careers links into Specialist Interests, enterprise projects, Futures Mapping and Positive Contribution. AQA unit awards may offer careers related opportunities. Children have multiple opportunities for careers encounters that are appropriate to them in years 8- 11.

Summary

The curriculum is designed for personalisation, so that teachers can plan effective and meaningful learning for individual children from their starting point. It is integrated with the assessment systems used by the school which ensures structure and sequence, continuity and progression. All children at Willow Dene require repetition to acquire the knowledge and understanding of core skills, knowledge and concepts, which the curriculum facilitates.

The curriculum provides opportunities for teachers to work flexibly and imaginatively, to plan and teach their class in a way that engages and motivates. The learner centred model also takes account of vertically grouped classes by enabling teaching to focus on the child's starting point and for cross curricular skills, processes and areas which are prerequisite to learning to be taught in a relevant and highly differentiated manner.

Related Documentation

Teaching and Learning Policy

EYFS Policy

Curriculum Coverage Document

Annual Topic map

Topic Descriptors

Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy

Learning Journeys

Footsteps Guidance

Exemplars

What Learning Looks Like

Communication Policy

Maths Teaching and Learning Policy

Essential Skills Policy

Sex and Relationships Policy

Physical Activity Policy

Careers Policy

Maths in the Learning Environment

School protocols (Autism, Environment and Supporting Learning)

Rationale for class groupings at Willow Dene