



Outcomes
First Group

CURRICULUM POLICY

Waterloo Lodge School



Waterloo Lodge
School

1. Purpose and Rationale

Waterloo Lodge School is a specialist setting for autistic pupils who may also have a range of complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Many pupils join the school following disrupted educational experiences, significant anxiety around learning, persistent absence, exclusion, unmet need, or difficulties accessing learning within mainstream education. As a result, pupils often present with uneven learning profiles, gaps in knowledge and skills, reduced confidence as learners, and varying levels of independence.

Our curriculum is designed to remove barriers to learning and provide a pathway towards successful adulthood. We recognise that meaningful progress extends beyond academic attainment alone. Success includes developing communication, emotional regulation, independence, self-advocacy, resilience, positive relationships, and the ability to participate actively within the wider community. The curriculum is ambitious, needs-led and carefully sequenced to meet pupils' developmental needs. We believe every pupil can make meaningful progress when supported by strong relationships, high expectations, skilled teaching and a curriculum that is relevant, purposeful and engaging. Learning is delivered through appropriate pathways that reflect pupils' strengths, needs, EHCP outcomes and aspirations for adulthood, ensuring access to a broad and meaningful curriculum.

2. Curriculum Intent

At Waterloo Lodge, we aim to provide an ambitious, broad and meaningful curriculum that enables every pupil to achieve success from their individual starting points. We are ambitious for every pupil and seek to ensure that each young person leaves school with the knowledge, skills, qualifications and confidence needed for their next stage of education, training, employment and adult life.

The curriculum is broadly aligned with the National Curriculum and has been adapted to reflect the strengths, needs and developmental profiles of our pupils. It is designed to remove barriers to learning while providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities across a broad range of subjects. Through carefully sequenced learning pathways, pupils develop subject knowledge, acquire recognised qualifications and accreditations where appropriate, and build the communication, literacy, numeracy and digital skills needed for future success.

Alongside academic achievement, we place equal importance on personal development. We support pupils to develop emotional regulation, independence, self-advocacy, resilience and positive relationships, recognising that successful preparation for adulthood requires both academic success and the ability to thrive in everyday life. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and supports them to become respectful, responsible and active members of society.

The curriculum supports progress towards EHCP outcomes while promoting the wider Preparing for Adulthood outcomes of employment, independent living, community participation, and health and wellbeing. Through this approach, we aim to ensure that pupils leave Waterloo Lodge as confident, capable and aspirational young people who are well prepared for their future.

3. Curriculum Implementation

The curriculum is delivered through different pathways designed to provide the appropriate balance of academic challenge, personal development and preparation for adulthood. Pupils are placed within class groups according to their developmental stage, learning profile and ability, enabling teaching to be pitched at an appropriate level whilst maintaining high expectations for all. Classes are carefully structured to ensure that pupils can learn alongside peers with similar learning needs

and levels of independence. Placement within pathways is reviewed regularly and may change over time as pupils develop and their needs evolve.

For pupils able to access a more subject-specific curriculum, the formal pathway provides a broad and balanced education aligned to National Curriculum expectations and individual learning needs. Pupils study a range of subjects including English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities, Religious Education, Art, Food Technology, Horticulture, PSHE/RSHE and Independent Living Skills. As pupils progress through the school, they work towards appropriate qualifications and accreditation, including Functional Skills qualifications and Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 awards, enabling them to achieve recognised outcomes and prepare for their next stage of education, training or employment.

For pupils who require a more contextualised approach to learning, the semi-formal pathway retains high expectations, but delivers learning through thematic, cross-curricular experiences that promote the acquisition and application of knowledge and skills across subjects. Pupils spend more of their time within a consistent class base, benefiting from a highly structured approach that supports engagement, communication, confidence and independence. Learning is carefully planned to ensure breadth across the curriculum while enabling concepts and skills to be revisited and applied in meaningful contexts. Pupils within the semi-formal pathway may also work towards appropriate accreditation, including Entry Level qualifications, where these provide an appropriate and meaningful measure of achievement.

Across the different pathways, learning is practical, engaging and purposeful. Pupils learn through a range of experiences including practical tasks, outdoor learning and community participation. Reading is prioritised across all pathways and is recognised as a key foundation for learning, communication and independence. Teaching is adapted to reflect pupils' individual communication, sensory and developmental needs. Through the use of visual supports, concrete resources, manipulatives, task breakdowns, modelling and graduated scaffolding, staff reduce barriers to learning and enable pupils to access an appropriately challenging curriculum. This supports pupils to develop confidence, independence and the ability to apply their learning in a range of contexts. Alongside academic learning, personal development is embedded throughout the curriculum through RSHE, SMSC, careers education, enrichment opportunities and everyday experiences within school and the wider community.

Targeted intervention programmes provide additional support where required. Interventions may focus on literacy, reading, communication, numeracy, emotional wellbeing, self-regulation or social development and are informed by assessment information, EHCP outcomes and individual need. These interventions complement pupils' curriculum entitlement and are regularly reviewed to ensure they have a positive impact on progress.

The curriculum is further supported by the school's multidisciplinary team. Education staff work closely with therapists and other professionals to identify barriers to learning and support pupils' communication, emotional wellbeing, sensory regulation and engagement. Where appropriate, targeted interventions and therapeutic strategies are integrated into pupils' programmes to enable them to access learning successfully and make progress towards their individual outcomes.

Assessment is used throughout the learning process to identify starting points, inform planning and monitor progress. Teachers use assessment information to adapt learning, provide appropriate challenge and identify next steps, ensuring that pupils continue to make progress academically, socially and personally.

4. Curriculum Impact

The impact of the curriculum is measured through the progress pupils make academically, socially and personally from their individual starting points. We recognise that progress may be demonstrated in different ways and therefore evaluate achievement across academic learning, personal development, independence and progress towards EHCP outcomes.

Academic progress is assessed and reviewed termly through subject-specific progression frameworks. Teachers use assessment information to identify strengths, address gaps in learning, inform planning and ensure that pupils receive appropriate support and challenge. Progress data is analysed at pupil, class and whole-school level to monitor attainment, identify trends, evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and support curriculum development.

Pupils' progress is evidenced through classwork, practical activities, teacher observations and Evidence for Learning (EfL). EfL is used to capture learning across both academic and personal development outcomes, providing a comprehensive picture of pupil progress over time. It plays a particularly important role in evidencing progress towards EHCP outcomes and recognising achievements that may not always be reflected through traditional forms of assessment, especially for pupils following the semi-formal pathway.

Assessment information, intervention outcomes and EHCP progress are reviewed regularly to ensure provision remains appropriate and responsive to pupils' needs. Where barriers to learning are identified, targeted interventions and additional support may be implemented and their impact evaluated over time.

Parents and carers are kept informed about their child's progress through regular communication with school. This includes an annual written report, annual review meetings and ongoing contact throughout the year. Staff may also communicate with families to celebrate significant achievements, share successes and discuss any concerns so that parents and carers remain active partners in their child's learning and development.

The effectiveness of the curriculum is evaluated by leaders through analysis of academic progress, EHCP outcomes, attendance, behaviour, wellbeing, accreditation outcomes and destination information. This information is used to review curriculum effectiveness, inform school improvement priorities and ensure the curriculum continues to meet the needs of pupils whilst maintaining high levels of ambition and aspiration.

5. Monitoring and Review

The Head of School and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the curriculum and ensuring it remains ambitious, relevant and responsive to pupils' needs.

Curriculum quality is monitored through a range of quality assurance activities, including lesson observations, learning walks, work scrutiny, pupil voice, staff feedback and analysis of assessment information. Leaders also review progress towards EHCP outcomes, attendance, behaviour, wellbeing, accreditation outcomes and destination data to evaluate the impact of the curriculum.

The curriculum is reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to meet statutory requirements, reflects current best practice and supports pupils to achieve the best possible outcomes.

