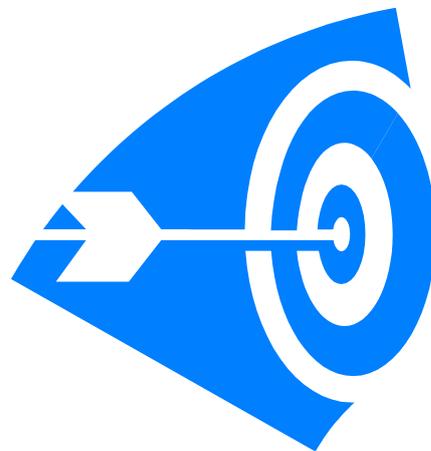




## School Aims Document

# Woodfield School

Our aims in practice



**Reviewed: October 2020**

## How our school aims are interpreted in practice

With its motto of '**Sharing, Caring, Achieving Together**' Woodfield aims to:

- Inspire and motivate our pupils by providing a stimulating and relevant curriculum which challenges them to take responsibility for their own learning and enables them to realise their potential.
- Develop pupils' confidence, self-esteem and independence by providing a safe, supportive and happy environment.
- Foster effective partnerships with parents, carers and the wider community enabling pupils to become valued and respected members of society.
- Develop strengths and skills by valuing everyone as individuals and treating each other with dignity and respect.
- Enable pupils to develop the most appropriate communication skills so that they are empowered to exercise some control over their own lives.

### **Background:**

In the autumn term 2012 the whole school staff, pupils, parents and governors were involved in an exercise to develop a new set of school aims which reflected our school ethos and vision for the school.

Through the collation of ideas given, discussions and several consultations we were able to write 5 aims which covered all the principles put forward. The 5 aims were agreed by all stakeholders. However, whilst we have condensed all the ideas and principles expressed into 5 aims it is important to remember what these aims mean in practice. We therefore spent some time in staff meetings and in TA training sessions looking at what our aims actually look like in practice.

Our aims are regularly reviewed to ensure they continue to reflect the ethos and vision for the school.

This booklet looks at each of the aims in turn and asks the question:

"If we put this aim into practice what will actually be going on in the classroom which improves what we offer to pupils, staff and the wider school community?"

*Inspire and motivate our pupils by providing a stimulating and relevant curriculum which challenges them to take responsibility for their own learning and enables them to realise their potential.*

By putting this aim into practice we ensure that:

- We use a total communication system so that our pupils are able to access the curriculum and respond appropriately to it
- We provide a balanced curriculum that meets the needs of pupils in all areas of their development and enables them to be successful learners
- We adopt a positive attitude to learning and encourage our pupils to respond appropriately
- We challenge our pupils to stretch themselves in their learning
- We use a variety of teaching methods
- We make learning fun and motivate the pupils
- We help our pupils to learn about taking responsibility both for their behaviour and when carrying out tasks and requests
- We give our pupils the skills to handle increasingly difficult situations
- We help our pupils to develop the ability to solve simple problems for themselves
- We are enthusiastic about activities and act as role models for the pupils
- We encourage pupils to ask questions
- We plan differentiated lessons so that our pupils are offered activities which challenge them, which help them to learn and progress as individuals
- We use a range of resources so that our pupils are regularly offered new experiences
- We encourage pupils to explore and experiment with new and familiar resources so that they can learn by doing
- We encourage pupils to try new things so that they can discover their own capabilities
- We provide opportunities for our pupils to experience special events within school or outside in the community (*currently limited due to Coronavirus pandemic*)
- We offer older students accredited courses (AQA Award) which give them the opportunity to take control of their own education through options and modules

*Develop pupils' confidence, self-esteem and independence by providing a safe, supportive and happy environment.*

By putting this aim into practice we ensure that:

- We recognise that achievement is relative to the abilities of each pupil and assess performance individually for each pupil
- We recognise that achievement can be demonstrated in many different areas of our pupils' lives not just academic work
- We recognise that for some pupils the demonstration of effort is an achievement in itself
- We pitch our lessons so that each individual is stretched and challenged to achieve
- We set high expectations for our pupils in all areas of learning
- We allow pupils to make mistakes in a supportive environment so that they learn from them
- We encourage our pupils to evaluate their own work and to be involved in setting new targets for themselves whenever appropriate
- We are not afraid to let the pupils know we have made mistakes so that they can accept mistakes as part of the learning process
- We ensure that staff are available to talk to pupils about their worries and fears and that we make real efforts to listen and to act on their concerns
- We encourage all feedback and do not criticise 'wrong' answers
- We give credit for all attempts to participate and never make pupils feel uncomfortable when they cannot – we celebrate success however small
- We ensure that we pitch work correctly so that all pupils can succeed. We ask the right questions.
- We know that if a pupil cannot understand it is the teaching not the child which is at fault
- We use support staff to enable pupils to feel confident in taking part in lessons which might otherwise cause concern
- Through the appraisal process we encourage staff to set targets for development
- We foster a climate in which all staff are supportive of each other, where everyone can ask freely for help, advice and support they need and offer the same to others

***Foster effective partnerships with parents, carers and the wider community enabling pupils to become valued and respected members of society.***

By putting this aim into practice we ensure that:

- We maintain good communication with parents through the home school diaries/emails
- We teach our pupils self-help/daily living skills so that they can play a useful role in family life and be as independent as possible
- We offer our pupils many opportunities to socialise in the local and wider community so they can learn to adapt to new situations (*currently limited due to Coronavirus pandemic*)
- We teach our pupils how to behave towards other pupils both in school and in the local community
- We offer older students placements on college and work experience schemes so they can learn real life responsibilities. We offer Supported Internships to our Year 14 students. (*currently limited due to Coronavirus pandemic*)
- We help our older students prepare for post school opportunities and help them think about their lives when they leave school. We give opportunities for careers education and guidance
- We encourage our pupils to experience a variety of leisure interests as a preparation for life after school
- We take our pupils into the local community where we teach and model appropriate behaviour (*currently limited due to Coronavirus pandemic*)
- We work with parents and students to help them find the most appropriate post school placements so that they can become part of a community which uses their skills and values their contribution
- Parents are encouraged to be part of the target setting process
- We foster links with local schools for integration and businesses for work experience placements (*currently limited due to Coronavirus pandemic*)
- Parents are invited into school for formal consultations and open evening and for a variety of more informal events during and after school (*currently limited due to Coronavirus pandemic*)
- Parents are encouraged to work at home with their children to further their education
- The school premises are used by local people for hirings – meetings, training (*currently limited due to Coronavirus pandemic*)
- We develop a positive image in the local press by highlighting the achievements of our pupils and the contributions they make to society

*Develop strengths and skills by valuing everyone as individuals and treating each other with dignity and respect.*

By putting this aim into practice we ensure that:

- We build in progression in the curriculum and also in the way we treat pupils as they become older – using age appropriate language and resources
- We know our pupils so well that we are able to recognise the smallest amount of extra effort. We praise our pupils for work well done and for effort shown in any area
- We keep photographic evidence for all pupils and pieces of work in order to help pupils maintain a record of their achievements covering all aspects of their school life
- We celebrate pupil and staff achievements in assemblies
- We award stickers and certificates for a range of achievements including good work, good behaviour and for showing kindness or helpfulness to others
- We use an externally accredited award scheme for older students which is tailored to the needs of individuals so that everyone can have their success accredited
- We teach our pupils that they have choices and that it is sometimes ok to say 'no'
- We encourage our pupils to form positive relationships with other pupils and with familiar adults; and to enjoy the company of others
- We encourage pupils to develop tolerance towards other people and to show respect for what others try to do, locally, nationally and internationally
- We teach our pupils that other people have rights and needs that they can sometimes help with
- We teach our pupils that sharing and turn taking are necessary in order to live with other people
- We set clear guidelines on what constitutes acceptable behaviour
- We encourage staff to act as role models - to see themselves as learners and ensure that they have their training and development needs met
- We encourage staff to contribute fully to the development of the school, ensuring they know their contributions are valued
- We do not forget that staff are as much a part of the school community as the pupils and that they too need praise and encouragement in their work
- We try to ensure good lines of communication so that all staff are well informed and feel involved in and part of the whole community
- We ensure the views of the school council are given serious consideration and that they are consulted whenever possible on school issues

*Enable pupils to develop the most appropriate communication skills so that they are empowered to exercise some control over their own lives.*

By putting this aim into practice we ensure that:

- We use a total communication system so that our pupils are able to access the curriculum and respond appropriately to it
- We give our pupils the means to communicate in the most appropriate way for them as individuals
- We listen to what our pupils actually communicate and let them know that we are interested in and value what they have to say, sign or gesture
- We initiate communication with all pupils and encourage them to respond
- We use symbols as well as words for signs, notices and labels to ensure that all pupils have a chance to access the information
- We know that if a pupil cannot understand, it is the teaching, not the child which is at fault
- We help our pupils to understand that they have rights and give them the confidence to speak for themselves whenever possible
- We give pupils appropriate ways, such as using feeling boards, to enable them to communicate how they are feeling
- Any necessary technological communication aids are in working order, accessible and programmed appropriately for the individual pupil
- Symbols/PODD books needed for communication are accessible at all times so that pupils can tell the adults what they need or want
- Pupils have the opportunity to practise their communication skills in a wide range of motivating situations both in school and within the wider community
- We give pupils the skills to be able to interact and communicate with each other and become confident communicators
- We are good role models in the development of communication skills and promote appropriate communication at all times