Last Updated | 03/09/2026

Walton Primary Academy

Our Curriculum Overview

Waterton Academy Trust

Our Vision

Moving Forward Together

At Walton Primary Academy, we believe that every child deserves to feel safe, valued and inspired to achieve their very best. We are committed to nurturing children who are courageous in the face of challenge, curious about the world around them, truthful in their actions and kind in their relationships. We combine high aspirations with a deeply inclusive approach, recognising that every child is unique and that success looks different for each individual. Through excellent teaching, meaningful opportunities and strong partnerships with families and our wider community, we support all children to flourish academically, socially and emotionally. As the founding school of Waterton Academy Trust and a proud part of our community, we honour our heritage whilst continually looking ahead. We strive to develop confident, compassionate and resilient citizens who leave Walton with the knowledge, character and self-belief to embrace the opportunities and challenges of an ever-changing world.

Our Aims

Our aims are underpinned by our values of Fortis, Doctus, Amicus and Verus. Through these values, we aim to:

- Promote high standards of academic excellence and achievement, ensuring that every child is challenged, supported and inspired to achieve their very best.
- Foster curiosity, independence and resilience, equipping children with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to succeed in an ever-changing world.
- Recognise and celebrate the uniqueness of every child through a highly-inclusive approach that enables all pupils to flourish socially, emotionally and academically.
- Encourage children to develop positive relationships and demonstrate kindness, honesty and respect towards themselves, others, their community and the wider world.
- Provide a safe, nurturing and aspirational environment where children and families feel valued, supported and empowered to thrive.

Our Community

Schools are built on people, not just places, and the Walton community is something we are incredibly proud of. We achieve the very best for our children when we work together, building strong partnerships between school, families and the wider community. Walton has a rich heritage and a special place in the history of our local area and the world, once home to the pioneering naturalist and conservationist, Charles Waterton. Inspired by this legacy, we encourage our children to be curious, courageous and proud of where they come from.

Our Trust

Since September 2014 we have been a proud member of Waterton Academy Trust, providing even more opportunities for our pupils to thrive. As part of the Waterton family, we ensure that success is a shared experience.

Our Values

Our values are the lifeblood of our school - the golden threads that run throughout the curriculum, and every part of daily life at Walton They underpin everything that we do, and represent everything that we aspire and challenge our children to be.

Our School Rule: Ready, Respectful, Safe

Fortis

Fortis (Strong, Courageous, Determined) – We are strong when things are difficult, courageous enough to try new things and determined to keep going, even when we face challenges.

Amicus

Amicus (Friendly, Loyal, Caring) – We are good friends who look after one another, work together and make sure everyone feels that they belong.

Verus

Verus (Honest, Trustworthy, Kind) – We tell the truth, do the right thing and show kindness and respect to everyone around us.

Doctus

Doctus (Wise, Knowledgeable, Thinking) – We love learning, think carefully about the world around us and use our knowledge to make good choices and solve problems.

Our Curriculum

Our Intent (Why?)

At Walton, our curriculum is designed to give every child a broad, ambitious and knowledge-rich education, providing them with the foundations they need for future learning and life beyond our school. Our curriculum is deliberately progressive and sequential, ensuring that children build new knowledge and skills upon what they already know. Key concepts and knowledge are revisited and developed over time, enabling children to make meaningful connections between their learning and develop increasingly secure and sophisticated understanding. We believe children learn best when learning is meaningful, memorable and brought to life. High-quality texts, practical learning, visits, visitors and real-life experiences enrich our curriculum, broaden children's horizons and help them understand the wider world. Reading and vocabulary are central to our curriculum, giving children access to new knowledge, ideas and perspectives across every subject. Alongside a strong emphasis on the core curriculum, children experience the full breadth of the National Curriculum and an extensive programme of wider and extra-curricular opportunities. Ultimately, our curriculum is designed to ensure that every child knows more, remembers more and can do more, developing the knowledge, confidence and curiosity they need to continue Moving Forward Together.

Our Implementation (How?)

Our curriculum is taught through mixed-age classes on a carefully sequenced two-year cycle, ensuring all children experience the full breadth of the National Curriculum. Using Cornerstones Curriculum 22 as our foundation, subjects are taught through a mixture of weekly lessons and blocked learning. Some subjects are blocked to provide greater depth and make meaningful connections, while subjects such as Computing, RE, PSHE, Music, MFL and PE are taught weekly through a 'little but often' approach. Our Big Ideas help children make connections between discrete subjects and different aspects of their learning. Teachers use the Cornerstones Engage, Develop and Innovate stages to structure learning, providing opportunities to explore, acquire knowledge and apply learning. Assessment is used throughout to identify prior knowledge, address misconceptions and move learning forward. Strong relationships and teachers' knowledge of their pupils ensure learning is adapted appropriately, so that every child can succeed and Move Forward Together.

Our Impact (So What?)

Through our implementation, we aim for children to leave Walton with a rich body of knowledge and skills that they can apply confidently across different contexts, fully prepared for the next stage of their educational journey. We want every child to leave as a fluent reader with a love of literature, a positive attitude towards their own wellbeing and the confidence and resilience to succeed. We aim for children to achieve highly academically, while developing into thoughtful, knowledgeable and active members of their community, equipped with the foundations they need to keep Moving Forward Together.

The Core Curriculum

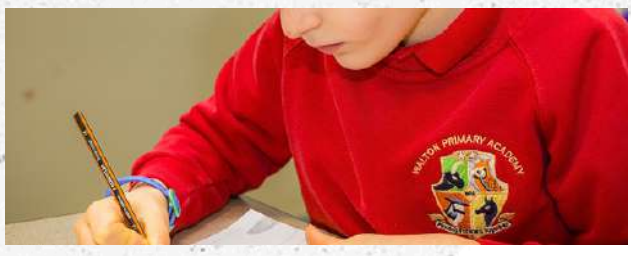
Through our core curriculum offer, we aim to provide children with key knowledge and skills that can be applied across the curriculum and in every aspect of their lives.

Phonics & Reading

We believe that learning to read is not a target, but a non-negotiable for all children. Learning to read fluently is the greatest gift that we can give any child. The ability to read opens up a world of possibilities for children. As a school, we have adopted the **Little Wandle Letters & Sounds Revised** Synthetic Systematic Phonics scheme. In KS2, we have a range of high-quality texts that are matched to each year group, and we ensure that every child has a book matched specifically to them, whilst retaining choice and personal preference.

Writing

Writing at Walton is built upon secure foundational skills that develop progressively throughout school. We place a strong emphasis on handwriting, transcription and composition, developing accurate spelling, fluent and legible handwriting, and the ability to organise and communicate ideas effectively. High-quality texts provide meaningful models and contexts for writing. Our three-step process, Explore – Build – Produce, enables children to practise and secure essential knowledge and skills before applying them independently to increasingly ambitious and purposeful writing.



Maths

For maths, we use the NCETM curriculum approach, established in KS1 and progressively being introduced across KS2, alongside Mastering Number in Reception. We prioritise secure foundational skills, particularly number sense, fluency and automaticity, providing firm foundations for future learning. A Concrete–Pictorial–Abstract approach develops deep conceptual understanding, while mathematical vocabulary, reasoning and problem solving are explicitly taught to develop confident, fluent mathematicians.

Our Wider Curriculum

In order to support the delivery of a high-quality, sequenced and progressive curriculum we use a variety of established and nationally recognised schemes as base models. All of our subjects are taught as discrete subjects to retain their integrity; however, some are taught weekly and some blocked with thematic links.

Weekly

The following subjects are taught on a weekly/fortnightly basis:

- PE
- Music
- PHSE & PD
- RE
- Spanish
- Computing

**May be blocked when appropiate*

Blocked

The following subjects are taught as blocked units, all based on Cornerstones Curriculum 22 and inter-connected through the 'Big ideas':

- Geography
- Art
- DT
- History
- Science

Curriculum 22

At Walton, we have adopted Cornerstones Curriculum 22 as the foundation for our wider curriculum. Curriculum 22 is a creative and thematic approach to learning, mapped to the 2014 Primary National Curriculum to ensure comprehensive coverage of national expectations. It is delivered through Knowledge Rich Projects (KRPs), which provide engaging learning experiences and purposeful connections across the curriculum, while retaining the integrity of each discrete subject. We believe children learn best when they build securely on prior knowledge and have opportunities to apply their learning in meaningful and engaging contexts. Our curriculum provides opportunities for children to solve problems, think creatively and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in different ways. Curriculum 22 provides a rigorous knowledge and skills framework, with clear progression across school. At Walton, this is carefully mapped across our mixed-age, two-year curriculum cycle, ensuring learning is progressive, avoids unnecessary repetition and prepares children effectively for their next stage.

Big Ideas

We believe that children deserve a balanced curriculum that enables them to develop a deep understanding of all subjects and the interconnections between them. The rationale for the Cornerstones Curriculum 22 takes the form of **10 big ideas** that provide a purpose for the aspects, skills, knowledge and contexts chosen to form the substance of the curriculum. These big ideas form a series of multi-dimensional interconnected threads across the curriculum, allowing children to encounter and revisit their learning through a variety of subject lenses. Over time, these encounters help children to build conceptual frameworks that enable a better understanding of increasingly sophisticated information and ideas.

Humankind

Understanding what it means to be human and the cause and effect of human behaviour.
This big idea invites children to find out what it means to be human, including the workings of human anatomy and how to keep safe. They explore ways that the human race is interconnected and explore the human experience and identities through a range of subject lenses. They discover the cause and effect of human behaviour and develop an understanding of the relationships between individuals, societies, faiths and communities. Through this big idea, children discover the ancient secrets of past civilisations and see the multitude of ways in which they influence modern-day life.

Processes

Understanding the many dynamic and physical processes that shape the world around us.
This big idea invites children to find out about the diverse and dynamic physical processes that are present in, and have a significant impact on, places, the environment and the world around them. They explore the physics of force and movement and investigate the phenomena of electricity, light and sound. Through this big idea, children discover how physical processes such as weather and erosion can transform a place or landscape.

Creativity

Understanding how everyday and exceptional creativity can inspire and change perceptions.
This big idea invites children to discover the place of everyday and exceptional creativity, including the qualities of persistence, determination, originality and resilience that form the basis of the creative process. They explore different ways in which their ideas and imaginings can be realised and communicated, and pursue enquiry by asking questions and finding connections between seemingly separate ideas. Through this big idea, children develop an appreciation of the importance of experimentation, trial and error, original thought and self-expression.

Investigation

Understanding the importance of asking questions, formulating hypotheses, gathering information and analysing evidence.
This big idea invites children to be curious and search for answers in response to original, familiar and more complex questions. They explore ways to create hypotheses, gather evidence and begin to evaluate data. They experiment with different ways to present information and ideas and make informed choices to solve problems. Through this big idea, children start to think critically, make meaningful connections and reflect thoughtfully on evidence and ideas.

Materials

Understanding the unique and physical properties of all matter and how we interact with them.
This big idea invites children to explore the properties of all matter, including that which is living and non-living. It explores how materials are both formed and change. Through this big idea, children develop an understanding of the uses of materials and their unique, physical properties that make them fit for purpose.

Nature

Understanding the complexities and interdependence of the plant and animal species that inhabit the world's many ecosystems.

This big idea invites children to find out about the diverse natural environments of the world and the plethora of species, both plant and animal, that
live in them. They explore the characteristics and features of a range of habitats and study how living things interact within them. They examine the effects of economic and technological development on the natural world and consider the impact of human actions. Through this big idea, children discover the conditions needed for living things to thrive and survive.

Place and Space

Understanding the visual, cultural, social and environmental aspects of different places around the world.

This big idea invites children to explore the visual, cultural, social, and environmental aspects of places in their locality and the wider world. They examine how human activity and social interactions shape places and enable them to discover the unique identities and features of towns, cities, countries and continents. Through this big idea, children develop an appreciation of both the natural and urban landscape and begin to understand the bond between people and place or setting.

Comparison

Understanding how and why things are the same or different.

This big idea invites children to compare ways
that things are the same or different. They identify simple and more complex patterns and make connections. Through this big idea, children develop an understanding of different ways to represent data using classification systems, comparison tables or charts and hierarchical taxonomies.

Significance

Understanding why significant people, places, events and inventions matter.

This big idea invites children to explore the importance of significant people, places, events and inventions. They examine why things are meaningful to some and not to others, based on their values, beliefs and experiences. Through this big idea, children develop an understanding of key people, places, events and inventions that have changed their everyday lives and the world at large.

Change

Understanding why and how things have changed over time.

This big idea invites children to find out about the causes and consequences of change and evolution. They investigate and explore how events unfold and develop an understanding of timelines and chronology. Through this big idea, children begin to make meaningful connections between past, present and future and begin to appreciate the unique position of their place in time.

National Curriculum Programmes of Study

Subjects
(Disciplinary concepts and aspects)

Progression framework
(Knowledge and skills statements)

Sequence of Projects
(Yearly overview)

Sequenced Lessons
(Medium & short term planning)

Activities & Resources
(Including knowledge organisers, quizzes and tests)

The Planning Sequence

Engage

Engage is a short stage in which children take part in a memorable experience to stimulate their curiosity, ask questions and make links to their prior learning. It provides an opportunity for cultural and real-world experiences and promotes discussion about the concepts introduced in each lesson or project.

Develop

Develop is a longer stage of learning, where children delve more deeply into the knowledge and skills required to understand and build their conceptual understanding. Learning is well-sequenced and interconnected.

Express

Express gives children a structured opportunity to reflect on their learning, test their knowledge and celebrate their achievements.

Innovate

The Innovate stage provides crucial opportunities for children to retrieve previous knowledge and skills in order to apply them in new contexts.

The Teaching Sequence

Most learning sequences (a lesson or number of lessons) at Walton follow our teaching sequence. Once a project has been planned and adapted through the planning sequence, our teaching sequence is used to deliver the actual content. This sequence gives a structure to lessons, and provides children with opportunities to be in control of their own learning, to think about how to think, and how they learn. Our sequence is rooted in research and based on the work of Alistair Smith and the Accelerated Learning Cycle, with engagement at it's heart. Engagement is a key focus at Walton- we aim for every child to be actively engaging in learning, using a range of strategies to light the spark that develops a love of learning.

Our teaching sequence adds structure and a clear path for learning. The Accelerated Learning Cycle provides Early Career Teachers with a clear route for lessons, whilst still allowing our most experienced staff the creativity to explore.

Adapted from Accelerated Learning: A User's Guide (Alistair Smith, Mark Lovatt, Derek Wise)

Links

The links phase is all about helping children to see the big picture. What do they already know? What have the already experienced? . It's also about creating a moment for children to connect with the learning environment, and make clear links to prior learning.

Activation

In the activation phase we help children begin their journey with their new knowledge. This is where the 'explicit teaching' happens. In our model, however, the the aim is for children top be challenged to 'activate' their thinking through a range of activities and delivery methods.

Activity

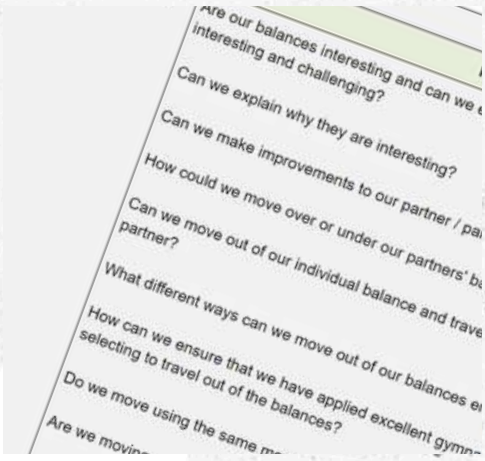
The activity phase is where children have the chance to work independently, collaboratively or closely with an adult. It's the moment where children have activated ideas in their minds. It's where they start to share their new knowledge and help each other to improve and develop it.

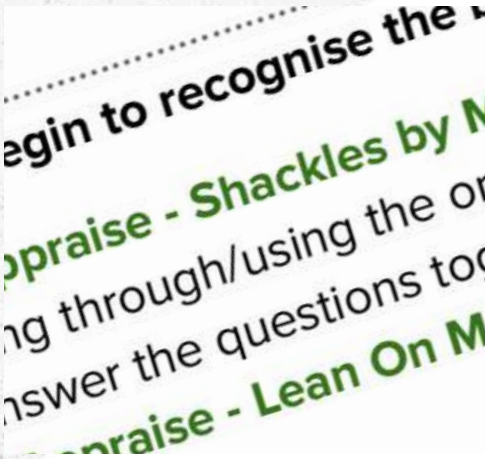
Prove It/ Consolidation

This is the phase where children reflect on what they've learnt. It's where we give them more time to look at their new knowledge and evaluate it, a chance to 'prove it' and consolidate their learning.

Lesson Sequences

Through Curriculum 22, and our other partner schemes, teachers are provided with a lesson-by-lesson sequence of learning. However, we know our children best - and staff adapt these sequences based on assessment and their knowledge of children.





The Environment

We believe that the learning environment is a key tool in the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, but also in helping children to remember more from previous learning. Every part of our environment is purposeful, and designed to maximise learning opportunities.

Internal

All of our internal displays (in classrooms) are used daily as working walls. These are designed to showcase the learning journey through a project - highlighting key vocabulary, tasks, images and developing as the project develops. The idea behind our working walls is that items can quickly and easily be added and removed.

We spoke to our children, and thought how we could make working walls even more accessible - so all borders of internal displays directly match the colour of the exercise book that project belongs to.

External

Our external displays around communal areas are designed to showcase children's work in eye-catching and engaging ways! External displays all showcase work from the previous term's topics - acting as a constant reminder to children about what they have learnt previously.

We also encourage handwriting wherever possible on displays, even down to our Golden Award & Value Award displays; children hand-write their own name on their card and hang it with pride each week!

Every Child, Every Time

Inclusion is central to everything we do at Walton. We offer a whole-school, Quality-First Teaching approach guided by our Special Educational Needs policy and Code of Practice. We aim to empower all of our children and recognise and celebrate all successes. Our experienced class teachers and support staff ensure that all our pupils with Special Educational Needs are given access to the curriculum as well as accessing the specialist-level provision provided within our school; ensuring our pupils are educated alongside their peers within the mainstream classroom, applying strategies from our wider provision. We offer a range of curriculum adaptations, and where applicable, personalised provision including a range of pathways for progression: informal, semi-formal and a formal curriculum.

Quality First Teaching & Interventions

We firmly believe that Quality first teaching is the most powerful tool to facilitate progress for our children. Quality First Teaching ensures that all children are provided with opportunities to thrive. A number of our children require additional to, and different, provision to enable them access to a range of learning opportunities in order to make progress. This includes a highly focused environment and visual supports, and a range of interventions: Nessy, WELLCOMM, Narrative Therapy KS1 & KS2, Little Wandle Keep Up, Little Wandle Catch up, Same Day Intervention Maths and ELSA support.

Memorable Experiences

We aim to make all learning memorable, and this is supported by a wide-range of what we call 'Memorable Experiences' for our children. These may be trips out of school, visitors in school or other events to give learning a real-life context. We run a three day experience for our Y6 children to Robinwood Outdoor Centre and from 2026/27 we will also run an annual visit to London for our School Council to visit the Houses of Parliamant.

Extra-Curricular Provision

We believe that learning doesn't start at 8:45am and finish at 3:20pm! We are immensely proud to offer an incredible range of after and before school activities for our children. These activities provide them with the opportunity to extend learning, or to further develop their interests. All clubs are either free, or heavily subsided by school, particularly for our disadvantaged children.

Making Connections

Connections between knowledge is key to children knowing more, and remembering more. Our values and 'Big Ideas' enable children to build these connections, and we aim for children to form relationships between ideas within subjects.

Horizontal

Horizontal connections are links made between ideas/ concepts/ knowledge in a range of subjects, but all within the same curriculum year - the links stretch across the curriculum. For example, applying knowledge of measurement when studying contour lines in geography.

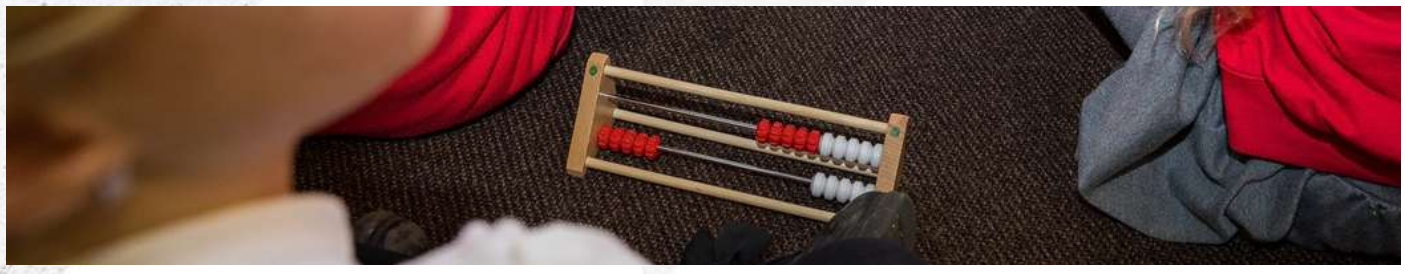
Vertical

Vertical connections are links made within the same subject, and linked to prior and future learning, moving 'up and down' the curriculum. For example, using knowledge basic spreadsheets to create a database in Computing.

Diagonal

Diagonal connections stretch the length and breath of the curriculum. They are oinks that are forged over a number of curriculum years, and over a range of subjects. For example, learning from a Y1 PE lesson that can then be applied in a Y4 science lesson.

Adapted from Responsive Teaching: Cognitive Science and Formative Assessment in Practice (Harry Fletcher-Wood)

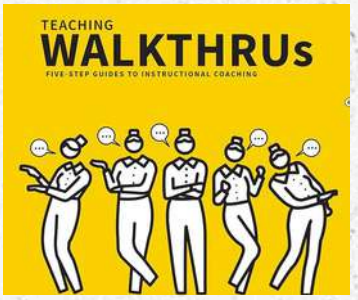


Monitoring & Evaluation

As part of our culture of school improvement, monitoring & evaluation is a key aspect and tells us what is working well, what can be developed further and how we can continue to develop marginal gains to provide sustainable improvement and ensure every penny we spend as a school has impact. We take a tiered approach to monitoring, always starting with a line of inquiry and the question *'is this working for our children?*

Coaching

From 2026-27 we are developing our approach to instruction coaching, through the use of StepLab and Teaching Walkthrus. This will form a significant part of our approach to staff CPD and developing staff, and tie in directly to our monitoring process.



1

Preparation

Our monitoring process starts with our Monitoring & Evaluation calendar, and linking monitoring to our teaching calendar to ensure it is the most beneficial time. Staff have a range of tools to monitor, with a base sequence of planning checks, lesson drop-ins, books looks and pupil voice.

2

Activity

Staff decide on their lines of inquiry, area of school (if applicable) and carry out a monitoring activity, before discussing their findings with SLT, and then communicating these to staff via a SEF Evidence form and individual feedback. Staff look for a golden thread through all monitoring activities.

3

So What?

Leaders identify where practice is strong, identify where there are areas for improvement and offer support for staff to further develop and put improvements into place. Leaders then work with SLT to analyse where more in depth support may be required.

4

Evaluate

Where no individual support or specific follow-up is required, staff evaluate their monitoring process and continue the cycle, all whilst offering continuous support and check-ins with staff.

Ind. Support

Where it is identified that a member of staff may require some support to further develop, the subject leader is supported by SLT in delivering individual monitoring and support with set actions, all in a supportive way with our children at heart.

Assessment

Assessment is another aspect of our approach to quality first teaching. Assessment helps us to ensure that our teaching is appropriate and that our children are making progress against key curriculum concepts and knowledge. All staff have received EBE Assessment Essentials CPD.

In-Class

Assessment is used all day, every day in class through various means - questions, tasks, discussions, independent work, and formal assessments. In 2026-27, we are developing entry and exit quizzes for wider curriculum subjects that show the acquisition of knowledge and skills over a projects. Teachers also use their knowledge of children to continuously adapt their teaching, and to provide valuable data in relation to pupil performance.

Retrieval

Retrieval practice is embedded throughout our curriculum, helping children know more and remember more. Teachers regularly revisit key knowledge from current and previous learning through quizzes, discussion, practical activities and collaborative tasks, strengthening long-term memory, identifying misconceptions and helping children make connections across their learning.

Environment

We use our environment as an assessment tool. All displays in classes are 'Working Walls' and used to assist in questioning pupil, promoting independence and referencing current knowledge. All of our external displays are based on the previous term's topic - giving children a constant refresher of previous learning and staff use these to ask questions and promote recall.

Parents

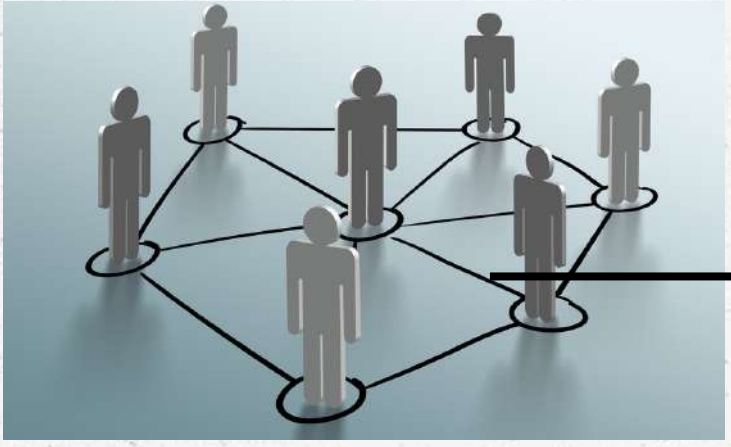
Staff communicate all children's development to parents at two parents' evenings per year, and through their annual report. This includes how well children are doing in relation to the taught content and national curriculum objectives, as well as what parents can do to support at home.

Support for Staff

Our motto of Moving Forward Together is not limited to our children. We believe that in order to provide the very best for our children and community, we need to invest in developing the best teachers in the world. Like our children, our staff are learners too and through a range of CPD and support, further develop their skills and pedagogical knowledge to ensure every child can succeed. We don't believe in standing still - our staff are always looking forward to find new, exciting and research-driven methods to improve teaching & learning.

In-School Support

We believe that support starts in school - using our staff expertise to support and develop each other. Our school is using StepLab & WalkThrus to support the development of instructional coaching to create a culture of improvement. Our 2-year curriculum cycle also ensures that staff can reflect and review each year, and constantly improve the offer for our children. We provide teachers with the means to become experts in their year group and subject, as well as leaders at all levels delivering regular CPD.



Networks

Our teachers and leaders are all part of a range of networks, designed to enable them to work closely with colleagues in other settings and share best practice. We work with both our academy trust, local collaboration and wider local authority. We also have strong relationships with a number of settings nationwide, and we use these relationships to make W the best place to learn and work.

Other Support

Our leaders are part of multiple professional organisations to further support them - whether that be AfPE, Historical Association or the IOL. We also work towards a range of national awards such as the PSQM, Arts Mark and many more. Being a school open to all development, we also take part in a number of supportive external reviews and peer reviews to ensure that everything we do is the best it can be for our children.

External CPD

We also value external CPD, and see the benefits this can have on our staff. We have a significant number of staff who have either completed, are ongoing or soon to start National Professional Qualifications, as well as accessing history-specific CPD when appropriate.

Our Values & The Curriculum

Our school values are a golden thread running throughout our curriculum. In phonics and early reading, they shape how our children approach learning, respond to challenge, support one another and develop the confidence and knowledge to become successful, fluent readers.

Fortis

Our curriculum encourages children to embrace challenge, persevere when learning becomes difficult and develop the confidence to try new things. Children learn that determination, effort and resilience enable them to overcome barriers and succeed.

Amicus

Learning is something we do together. Our curriculum provides opportunities for children to collaborate, listen to others and share ideas, developing positive relationships and an understanding of the importance of supporting those around them.

Verus

Our curriculum helps children develop respect for themselves, others and the wider world. Through exploring different people, places, cultures and perspectives, children learn to be thoughtful, honest and kind members of their community.

Doctus

Knowledge sits at the heart of our curriculum. Children build increasingly rich knowledge across subjects, make connections with previous learning and develop the curiosity and thinking skills needed to question, explore and understand the world around them.