

The Warmley Park School and College Literacy Curriculum

Our Vision

Aspire, Believe, Enhance, Achieve

We believe and value every individual and what they can aspire to. We will inspire them to do this by enhancing learning and encouraging everyone to achieve together.

Curriculum Intent

The Warmley Park School and College Curriculum is the planned and powerful framework for learning that offers exciting opportunities, and prepares for new learning by building on prior knowledge, skills and understanding. Our approach to learning is through a communication led curriculum, as we acknowledge this is the foundation of all aspects of life.

Our Intent in literacy for pupils and students at Warmley Park School is:

For PMLD students to develop and achieve:

- **Communication:** To **communicate** more effectively through anticipation, eye contact, tracking objects and requesting “more” or “finished”.
- **Cause and Effect and exploration:** To have an **experience** of literacy through the manipulation of sensory **investigation and creativity**. To develop **contingency awareness** through trial and error, making mistakes and linking things that happen and occur.

For SLD and ASD students to develop and achieve:

- **Communication:** To develop **functional and expressive language** and be able to effectively communicate their wants and needs. To **share** experiences, thoughts and ideas with others. To talk about stories and to give opinions and views.
- **Reading:** To develop **early reading skills and strategies** to support **independence** in learning and future life skills. To begin to develop skills in **comprehension**; retrieving and inferring information from text.
- **Writing:** To develop **fine/gross motor control** and **basic writing skills** to support learning, communication and independence.

For higher attainment students to:

- **Communication:** To have effective **language and confidence** to communicate to others in various situations. To be able to express views and opinions clearly. To be able to adapt use of language for different situations.
- **Reading:** To be able to use a **range of strategies** to **decode** text with independence to support learning and future independence. To be able to **retrieve** and **infer** through comprehension. To develop a **love** for reading.
- **Writing:** To be able to write in a range of **different genre** with independence. To be able to use a **range of punctuation, clear letter formation** and use **language effectively**.

For pupils and students at Warmley Park, our aims are also for them to achieve their best in the following areas:

- Enjoy their learning - have fun whilst learning, love coming to Warmley Park and feel valued as a member of the Warmley Park community.
- Communication - to develop a communication system that they can use in different contexts.
- Independence skills - promoting the dignity and safety of pupils by supporting them to do as much for themselves as possible.
- Social skills and awareness of others - relationships, understanding acceptable behaviour, caring for each other and being able to work with others in a team.
- Emotional development - to feel secure and happy in school, to be able to self-regulate their emotions and behaviour, manage assessed risk and be confident to have a go at new learning.
- Awareness of safe behaviour - being prepared for the world beyond Warmley Park and knowing what they can do to promote this as well as asking for help.
- Formal subject specific learning - Literacy, Numeracy, subject specific learning that can be applied in different contexts.
- Life-long learning behaviours- Experiencing new, deep-rooted behaviours: pride, enthusiasm, resilience, self-motivation, aspiration & respect, through adult encouragement and modelling.
- Feeling safe and secure- through nurturing teaching styles we promote positive relationships: students are enabled to feel safe and secure, they learn to have self-esteem and self-confidence to thrive outside of Warmley Park School

Pedagogy – Literacy at its best at Warmley Park School!

Communication led curriculum - at Warmley Park, every teaching experience should be an opportunity for communication learning. Communication is the most important aspect of our teaching as it opens the door to all other forms of learning. Language supports children to make links across areas all areas of the curriculum and within real-life situations. Using effective communication and language can help build children's communication and interaction skills: it helps to support questioning, logical thinking, decision making, problem-solving and reasoning to create confidence in and out of the classroom. It enables children with the skills needed to explain their views, experiences, wants, needs and emotions. To share thoughts and ideas. Language is an integral part of every literacy lesson but also an integral part of daily life!

Personalised learning - When we talk about personalised learning, we are referring to the relevant programmes for individual pupils which are determined by their needs, and so the focus of their curriculum will be driven by their specific requirements such as sensory or physical. This is at the heart of what we do as a special school. In literacy we look at children's strengths, needs, skills and interests, supporting them by building on their previous knowledge, making connections to give them the best opportunities to reach their full potential so all pupils can participate, progress and achieve.

Physical learning - At Warmley Park School we believe there is a correlation between motor-enriched learning and literacy. Motor skills, movement and physical activity go hand in hand with literacy teaching. We promote this by using a range of whole body and lower intensity activities in our literacy lessons to help children to learn through a kinaesthetic teaching style. We incorporate a range of physical activities during the school day for ALL of our pupils.

Wonder and curiosity - Asking questions and being asked questions is essential for learning, whether through formal questioning or a basic “I wonder....” approach. It takes learning off into new learning pathways. Through curiosity, we deepen knowledge and understanding that is sparked by an initial interest.

An Ethic of care – Creating a caring classroom and community is at the heart of our school. We promote classroom relationships where children are confident in thinking for themselves, can ask questions and take intellectual risks. Through non-judgmental environments and open discussions, our children’s motivation is increased and there is a removal of fear of failure within pupils.

Making connections – We believe it is vital to build on children’s interests, experiences, thinking and knowledge. We use our students’ thinking as a resource for further learning and misconceptions and errors as building blocks for developing deeper understandings. Our guided curriculum makes sure children revisit and review skills and knowledge in literacy throughout the year and in each key stage. It is made up of carefully planned sequences of knowledge, concepts and procedures which means it becomes deeply embedded in pupils’ memories.

Co-construction –In literacy lessons we support children in developing their collaborative skills, as well as empathy and the need to recognise working together and the achievement of others: these are important skills that student will need later in life. We use collaborative learning, scaffolding and guided learning techniques, enabling environments and creative teaching strategies to deliver co-construction skills. This enables children to work together, reflect, problem solve and supports them to form better relationships in the classroom and life skills to thrive after education.

Meta-cognition- the process of thinking about thinking. With literacy, there is inevitably a strong focus on responding and planning, and evaluating and review. The Education Endowment Foundation in their report *Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning: Guidance Report*, highlight a number of recommendations,

- *Self-regulated learners are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and can motivate themselves to engage in, and improve, their learning.*
- *Developing pupils’ metacognitive knowledge of how they learn- their knowledge of themselves as a learner, of strategies, and of tasks is an effective way of improving pupil outcomes.*
- *Explicit instruction in cognitive and metacognitive strategies can improve pupils’ learning.*

- *While concepts like ‘plan, monitor, evaluate’ can be introduced generically, the strategies are mostly applied in relation to specific content and tasks, and are therefore best taught this way.*
- *A series of steps— beginning with activating prior knowledge and leading to independent practice before ending in structured reflection—can be applied to different subjects, ages and contents.*
- *Modelling by the teacher is a cornerstone of effective teaching; revealing the thought processes of an expert learner helps to develop pupils’ metacognitive skills.*
- *Teachers should verbalise their metacognitive thinking (‘What do I know about problems like this? And What ways of solving them have I used before?’) as they approach and work through a task.*
- *Scaffolded tasks, like worked examples, allow pupils to develop their metacognitive and cognitive skills without placing too many demands on their mental resources.*
- *Challenge is crucial to allow pupils to develop and progress their knowledge of tasks, strategies, and of themselves as learners.*
- *However, challenge needs to be at an appropriate level.*
- *Pupils must have the motivation to accept the challenge.*
- *Tasks should not overload pupils’ cognitive processes, particularly when they are expected to apply new strategies.*
- *As well as explicit instruction and modelling, classroom dialogue can be used to develop metacognitive skills.*
- *Pupil-to-pupil and pupil-teacher talk can help to build knowledge and understanding of cognitive and metacognitive strategies.*
- *However, dialogue needs to be purposeful, with teachers guiding and supporting the conversation to ensure it is challenging and builds on prior subject knowledge.*
- *Teachers should explicitly support pupils to develop independent learning skills.*
- *Carefully designed guided practice, with support gradually withdrawn as the pupil becomes proficient, can allow pupils to develop skills and strategies before applying them in independent practice.*
- *Pupils will need timely, effective feedback and strategies to be able to judge accurately how effectively they are learning.*

At Warmley Park, we consider these features to be central to outstanding teaching and learning.

Mastery - A child’s ability to skilfully apply their learning in more in-depth ways is called Mastery. Mastery is not just knowing a fact, but it is using that fact in increasingly more complex situations to extend their learning. Mastery also enables children to work in ways which show a deeper understanding of a given task. Breaking down skills into individual components enables the identification of specific skills that can be addressed one at a time. The rate of progress will vary from pupil to pupil, and the time required to consolidate learning can be altered by external factors such as health. However, small step progress is progress.

What is Mastery in literacy?

In the Literacy curriculum, mastery is when a child is able to use skills, knowledge and strategies taught independently. A child would display a higher level of technical skill, fluency

and creativity in reading and writing. They have the ability to apply learning across the curriculum. Pupils believe they can achieve- they want to learn and enjoy learning.

Children are given time to think deeply about literacy knowledge and new concepts they are learning. Children are given opportunities to embed learning and concepts before moving on. Every child is supported in developing their fundamental reading and writing skills, these are the building blocks which are needed for their futures.

Mastery in literacy is an inclusive approach, emphasis is on promoting multiple strategies and methods to support reading and writing. It builds self-confidence and resilience in our pupils with particular emphasis on thinking skills and supporting pupils to secure basic skills and knowledge. Teaching literacy through mastery offers all pupils access to the literacy curriculum; differentiation using the mastery approach is offered through questioning children at an appropriate level and by breaking down larger, complex concepts into smaller steps. At Warmley Park we use 'Total Communication' to reinforce understanding for all pupils.

How would a child's **Mastery of reading** present itself?

1. **Knowledge:** showing greater: understanding; skills; secure concepts; use and understanding of appropriate strategies and language.
2. **Understanding:** showing greater: confidence; independence; connecting ideas and experiences; comprehension of language; knowledge of punctuation; knowledge of phonemes, graphemes and words.
3. **Fluency:** showing greater: word recognition; decoding; application of knowledge; confidence; phrasing and expression; confidence.
4. **Evaluating:** showing greater: monitoring; self-correcting; checking for sense; commenting, questioning and engaging with text; decision making; deeper thinking.

How would a child's **Mastery of writing** present itself?

1. **Knowledge:** showing greater: understanding; skills; secure concepts; use and understanding of language; understanding for writing for a purpose/communication.
2. **Understanding:** showing greater: confidence; independence; connecting ideas; knowledge of punctuation; knowledge of phonemes, graphemes, words and sentences.
3. **Fluency:** showing greater: control in formation; pace; application of knowledge; word memory; segmenting words into sounds; confidence.
4. **Evaluating:** showing greater: questioning; discussion making; monitoring; self-correcting; deeper thinking; editing and improving.

Reading and writing go hand in hand. Development and progress in reading will support a child's development and progress in writing. Strategies and knowledge are linked to supporting both areas.

'Children should be taught to read as writers and write as readers.'

Reflection - Reflecting on learning prepares pupils to take it forward to the next level. Quality teaching should always identify the intended learning outcomes which are communicated to pupils and can then be evaluated with them as the learning progresses. This is a vital part of learning for pupils to understand what they have done well, build their confidence, and know what the next step is.

In addition, all pupils are taught about **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education** to prepare them for life as active citizens in modern Britain. This is supported through collective worship and specific learning opportunities. Literacy is central to this as it encourages pupils to wonder, think on a deeper level, question, reflect on their learning and have a sense of personal achievement which promotes the spiritual growth of students. Literacy can be used to explain the world around us, it gives children experiences and language to communicate and understand relationships that they see in the world, and this enhances awareness of our local, national and international community, with themselves as a member of these communities. Children look at how **reading** and **writing** relates to the world around them through the use of practical and functional life skills. Children learn to work collaboratively, building positive relationships with others.

The Communication led Curriculum- opportunities in Literacy

Communication is the core focus of our teaching and we should always aim to give our pupils the opportunities to communicate in a variety of ways in every aspect of their day. Within lessons communication can be used for:

- Choice making (vocab board and commenting board)
- Vocabulary development (vocab boards and commenting boards)
- Describing a process (vocab boards, commenting boards, symbols)
- Planning (vocab board and commenting board)
- Preparing (pupils can state what they need for a lesson/experiment/art activity)
- Commenting on the activity or their own work (commenting board)
- Questions (commenting board)
- Evaluating their work (commenting board)

Pupils should be able to use the communication method they are familiar and competent with to access communication within the various subjects they take part in. All subjects will lend themselves through a range of communication routes including speech, signing, communication grids, real objects, symbols and text. Communication can be used through low tech and high tech strategies. An example being; a vocabulary grid on an iPad using Grid as well as a commenting board (this is discussed next).

Pupils will be given a word bank at the start of a unit which contains all the key vocabulary for that unit and pupils will be exposed to new vocabulary. At the beginning of the lesson, the word bank can be used to explore the vocabulary needed for that lesson and previous lessons. The word bank can be used to assess the understanding of pupils and pupils can contribute by finding the definition or explaining the word to a peer. This will be a communication strategy for some pupils, for others this will be a prompt to use new vocabulary. Pupils are

then able to explore the new language, use it in context and find the definition of words and concepts by finding synonyms.

To extend the communication further, each pupil should have access to a commenting board for each subject, this will include statements such as; I like this because... it is bright, it is happy, I don't like. The commenting board will also include questions to ensure the pupils are able to ask these using their preferred method of communication. It will include; why, what, where, who, when, how and which. Therefore pupils will be able to fully immerse themselves in the lesson.

For each unit in the curriculum there should be a vocabulary board and a commenting board.

Supporting Research:

Reading is fundamental to functioning in today's society. There are many adults who cannot read well enough to understand the instructions on a medicine bottle. That is a scary thought - especially for their children. Filling out applications becomes impossible without help. Reading road or warning signs is difficult. Even following a map becomes a chore. Day-to-day activities that many people take for granted become a source of frustration, anger and fear.

Reading is important because it develops the mind. ... **Teaching** young children to **read** helps them develop their language skills. It also helps them learn to listen. Everybody wants to talk, but few can really listen.

In terms of reading The National Literacy Trust in their 'Annual Literacy Survey' 2019 found that:

- 'Young people who enjoy reading are three times more likely to read above the level expected for their age than children who don't enjoy reading' (30.1% vs 8.1%)
- 'Young people who read daily in their free time are twice as likely to read above the level expected for their age than children who don't read daily' (37.6% vs 14.2%)
- Young people who are the most engaged with reading are more likely to read both on paper and on screen than their peers who have low engagement with reading.

'Books are the quietest and most constant of friends; they are the most accessible and wisest of counselors, and the most patient of teachers'. -Charles W. Eliot-

Writing is an essential communication skill. Writing enables you to communicate your message with precision, correctness, exactness, sureness, efficiency, and accuracy. Writing is everywhere in all workplaces, homes, school, community. People are constantly drafting letters, emails, memos, reports, statements, announcements, observations, records, reminders, documents, accounts, memorandums, lists, and reports. All of these need writing abilities so that people are capable to communicate their opinions, thoughts, and ideas effectively. Writing equips us with communication and thinking skills. ... Writing preserves our ideas and memories.

“History is written by the victors,” is a popular saying. But if we didn’t write it down, we wouldn’t have it at all.

Journalists, bloggers, speech-writers... These writers have a huge impact on how we think as a society.

Writing is complex, it uses both sides of your brain! The right side of the brain is the more creative side, while the left side is the more analytical and logical side. You need both sides to write anything, but especially creative writing. The right brain handles all the visions of what you want on the page, and the left side helps you put it down in a way that makes sense.

When looking at writing, the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education’s ‘Writing in Primary Schools’ September 2018 publication states that:

- We must ‘Model writing everywhere; linked to all areas of learning and throughout provision. Show children and parents it is inherent in daily activity. Demonstrate the act of writing but, crucially, write alongside children, articulating the thought process you are going through and strategies you draw on to articulate ideas and ways to overcome difficulties faced. Children benefit enormously from a teacher that writes, a writer that teaches. Demonstrate to children how to craft texts with the reader in mind and how to reflect critically on their own writing. They will, in turn, see how to manipulate and control writing to achieve intent as a writer for purpose and effect on the reader.’
- ‘Teachers should provide rich models for talk and writing, both through texts and as language users and writers themselves. Provide a curriculum rich in rhyme, song and poetry to foster children’s phonological development and use shared reading and writing sessions to draw children’s attention to the letters, sounds and spelling patterns within words.’

The CLPE argue that: “Developing children as writers is so much more than asking them to remember grammatical constructions or tricky spellings. It is a complicated and intricate process – and if you enable a child to become a writer you have given them a voice, supported them to communicate and provided them with a skill that is vital for all of their schooling and to their life beyond.” (Louise Johns-Shepherd, Chief Executive, CLPE).

All of the above support our view that Literacy is a vital aspect of the communication led curriculum at Warmley Park School and College. The skills learned in literacy are used widely in life, future employment, and functional skills learned (from reading and writing a shopping list to becoming a teacher) are vital in the world we live in.

Equality and Differentiation

Literacy is accessible to all pupils. The Rochford Review (2015) identified that some pupils, such as those with profound needs will not engage in subject specific learning and that *“there may be a period of lateral progress, in which, for example, a pupil does not gain new concepts of skills, but learns to apply existing concepts or skills to a broader range of contexts.”* This is highly applicable to literacy where sensory learning can take place through exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence, and initiation. For example engaging with sensory stories or tracking through eye gaze.

Through using intensive interaction activities in literacy sessions e.g. copying children’s movements, gestures and vocal noises in sand or water play; children develop early communication skills: children engage and respond in interactions of communication; taking turns in exchanges of behaviour; developing shared attention, and eye contact. Tac Pack also supports our children’s early communication skills through touch and music; children enjoy this sensory experience involving objects, music and pace- pupils learn to anticipate the sessions that are planned into their personalised curriculum.

In our literacy guided curriculum we have included activities that help children to notice visual, auditory and tactile stimulus: children use their senses to explore and investigate in literacy sessions. We develop children’s shared attention skills through musical interaction and attention autism sessions where vocabulary, pace, sounds, timbre, expressive language, and words can be explored. Pupils are exposed to stories and expressive language through sensory stories, songs and rhymes. We encourage sensory exploration of concrete objects helping children to experience, explore, handle and manipulate objects.

We develop children’s engagement, participation and involvement skills in literacy lessons. They learn to make exploratory hand and arm movements, seek eye contact with staff, other pupils or locate and follow moving objects and events, show anticipation of what might come next through vocal sounds, body movements, signing, gesturing or showing other signs of excitement. All of these are recommended activities that have been carefully planned into our Literacy guided curriculum to provide children with a sensory based provision, supporting children who are not quite ready or not able to access subject specific learning tasks.

Why is Literacy part of the curriculum at Warmley Park School and College?

Getting started..... “I can’t read” “I can’t write”

Do you listen to sounds or stories? Recognise symbols or logos? Can you recognise your name? Do you have matching games at home?

Do you like making shapes in the sand? Playing on an ipad or phone?

Yes? Then you have an appreciation for literacy! You engage with reading and writing in some form every day.

We see = we recognise, we learn, we remember, we judge, we associate.

We touch = we trigger a response, we connect, we explore.

We question = we open new thoughts, we compare, we formulate an answer.

We plan = we imagine, we interpret, we find inspiration, we select a process, we review.

We create = we express, we define, we represent, we experience, we inspire, we learn.

We evaluate = we see, we touch, we question, we plan.

Literacy is an important and highly creative discipline that helps us to understand and change the world. All pupils at Warmley Park School and College are able to experience the beauty, power and enjoyment of literacy through reading and writing. We foster positive attitudes to reading and writing and believe that ‘We can all achieve in literacy!’

We believe that teaching for a secure and deep understanding of literacy concepts through manageable steps supports our pupils to make meaningful progress in literacy. Mistakes and misconceptions are an essential part of learning and therefore we provide challenge and emotion coaching support to build resilience when mistakes are made.

It is the right of our children and young people of Warmley Park School and College to access a curriculum that supports their progression of skills over time, so our literacy curriculum is always adapted and differentiated to individual needs. We know that our children and young people are best placed to tell us what works well for them in our literacy curriculum, so we believe that it is our responsibility to listen, and be responsive to their voice.

The literacy curriculum has been written specifically for the pupils at Warmley Park School and College. We have considered carefully the resources and approach that work best with our pupils and these are identified clearly in the curriculum guidance. The curriculum supports pupils to explore, use their senses, be creative, ask questions, evaluate, problem solve and work collaboratively.

What do we want for our young people when they move on from Warmley Park? How does this link to Literacy?

- To experience awe and wonder of literacy in the world around us, and to engage with it and enjoy it.
- To be able to have an appreciation for literacy.
- To engage with stories and develop a love for reading.
- To be able to express emotions effectively.
- To be able to effectively communicate.
- To use literacy functionally, so that they are able to access community facilities as independently as possible.
- To feel a sense of pride and achievement in their skills and achievements.
- To continue to connect with the creative, active and sensory elements of literacy.
- To be inspired and want to keep developing and improving their skills.
- To continue to see errors as opportunities for learning, not just in reading and writing, but as a life skill.
- To understand reading and writing as a way of structuring and organising their lives, such as schedules, timetables, calendars, lists, letters, information.
- To know how to communicate in different ways, such as verbally in different languages, Makaton, using symbols, writing.
- To have a range of strategies that can be used to decode and communicate to others, to support them as they move into adulthood.
- To have experienced persevering in literacy take forward this experience as a life skill.
- To have an understanding and awareness of working collaboratively and seeing the benefits of discussion with people and sharing ideas and experiences.

Cultural Capital

The Cultural Learning Alliance has openly stated that the loose definition of 'cultural capital' by Ofsted allows schools to develop their own interpretation of what the phrase means in a way that is best for their school and pupils. They believe schools should define 'cultural capital' in a way to "celebrate and embrace the different backgrounds, heritage, language and traditions of all the children living in this country".

Ofsted's view: As part of making the judgement about the quality of education, inspectors will consider the extent to which schools are equipping pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. Our understanding of 'knowledge and cultural capital' is derived from the following wording in the national curriculum:

'It is the essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought and said and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.'

Ofsted School Inspection Handbook 2019

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

We are a Rights Respecting School. Our curriculum acknowledges the following articles:

- Article 29 - Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.
- Article 30 - Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, regardless of whether these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.
- Article 31 - Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

What does literacy mean for pupils and students at Warmley Park and where does it fit into Education, Health, and Care Plans?

In Early Years, we promote cognitive, physical, emotional, linguistic, and spiritual development through literacy. Children may start formal education with very different backgrounds and experiences. Learning is set very much through a play framework where a wide range of stimulating resources are readily available for children to interact with. At the other end of their education, students in the college are preparing for life in the wider world, with an emphasis on equipping them with communication skills that they can use functionally, independence strategies, social interaction skills, an awareness of safe behaviour, and how to look after themselves physically and emotionally. An ambitious and well sequenced curriculum that enables the broadening of knowledge, skills, physical, creative, cultural and imaginative value of mathematics is therefore enriching for all of these life essentials.

There is often talk of fostering a love of the reading and writing. For pupils with SEND they may need to have this prompted by adults who believe in the richness and value of literacy. As a subject area, it lends itself well to sensory exploration which comes way before purposeful subject knowledge and should always be the starting point. As an example, some pupils may just love the feel of paint, it is not about the intentional mark making, but the sensation of smearing paint using their hands that they are connected with. Or the interest in the sound an object makes, not about the intention of linking a sound to an object, but sensation to the ears.

The experiences children have with auditory, tactile, visual and movement stimuluses in literacy sessions help them to develop their use of the seven senses of the body: touch, sight, taste, smell, hearing, vestibular and Proprioception. Children learn to feel, investigate and explore opening up a new world of sensations on and inside their bodies. This supports children with sensory processing and sensory integration difficulties, helping to make it possible to use the bodies more effectively within their environment.

Children experience social development opportunities through play session with other peers where they can enjoy sensory play, songs, rhymes and stories with a group of children. They learn to explore large sensory shared trays e.g. "5 little ducks with water, plastic ducks and water sprays etc. Or through sensory group stories; sharing props and taking turns to use talking tiles, vocas or other communication devices to express or request throughout the rhyme/story.

Literacy can be widely incorporated into Education, Health and Care Plan provision and outcomes as it enriches opportunities for development of:

- Communication
- Fine motor skills
- Hand eye coordination
- Gross motor skills
- Social skills
- Creative thinking
- Emotional expression and connection
- Mental wellbeing
- Cognition - acquiring knowledge and understanding
- Sensory exploration
- Problem solving and persistence
- Collaboration and team working
- Planning and evaluating
- Observation

"Imagination is more important than knowledge." – Albert, Einstein - German theoretical physicist- (1879-1955)

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn." – Benjamin Franklin- (1706–1790)

What principles is the literacy Curriculum at Warmley Park based on? What does the content reflect in terms of our values and aims?

Literacy is creative, imaginative, visual, and highly expressive. It has evolved throughout the centuries and will continue to evolve through the development of technology. Literacy it is essential to everyday life, it is critical to be able to communicate to others and interpret information around us to make sense of the world. Literacy is the building block for learning, it is a vital component for the whole curriculum. We need to be able to communicate our needs, understanding and experiences.

We intend to deliver a curriculum that;

- Recognises that literacy underpins much of our daily lives and therefore is of paramount importance in order that children **aspire** and become successful in the next stages of their learning.
- Gives each pupil a chance to **believe** in themselves as readers and writers, to develop the power of resilience and perseverance when faced with challenges in reading and writing.
- Allows children to be a part of creative and engaging lessons that will **enhance** their learning and give them opportunities to master their skills.
- Engages all children and entitles them to the same quality of teaching and learning opportunities, striving to **achieve** their potential within our school community and at each stage of their learning.
- Provides equal opportunities for all children to access reading and writing, develop their skills and knowledge and flourish.

Culture

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development and British Values are held as central to the curriculum for all pupils. Children and Young People at Warmley Park School participate in exploring and communicating experiences. All pupils should have opportunities to engage with stories from different cultures, different views and opinions, symbols we see in the community, reflection on discoveries and the use of creativity and imagination in their learning.

Imagination and Experimentation

Literacy is explored by children very early on, before they come to school. They pick up, mouth, throw and drop objects, listen and take part in songs and stories. They communicate through facial expressions and noises. They mimic, observe and use gestures. At these early stages of imagination and experimentation children rarely have inhibitions. Our aim is to allow pupils to express their individual needs and interests, thoughts and ideas alongside building resilience, confidence and critical thinking skills. We equip our pupils with the knowledge and skills needed to continue to learn through imagination and experimentation.

Self-esteem

As a school we want to harness the resilience that young children experience through their natural exploration of early communication and mark making. Children need assurance that they can continue to learn through a mixture of experimentation, responding to their errors and adult support. We do this through providing the tools they need, recognition of their efforts and support to build their resilience across the curriculum. All adults need to be enablers, model positive attitudes, and support mistake making as a valuable tool for learning. We want pupils to feel resilient to try out new concepts and share learning, including learning from mistakes, with others. Pupils are expected to work individually and collaboratively and be reflective and evaluative in their work.

Thinking skills

Writing strengthens clear, logical thinking skills. Writing out what you want to communicate forces you to organise your thoughts. Writing helps with problem solving, writing the problem down helps critical thinking and problem solving.

Writing strengthens creative and critical thinking. Creative thinking occurs when pupils writes stories, poems. Critical thinking involves the pupils learning to recognise or develop a written argument, view or opinion.

Reading strengthens flexibility of thinking, critical thinking and problem solving skills. Pupils need to think through various strategies to help decode text; to problem solve when they become stuck. Reading a range of text can inspire pupils to challenge there creative thinking, views or opinions or problem solve to find answers.

Communication, including Language Development

Communication is an essential part of reading and writing and literacy education. Communication is a way of sharing ideas, thoughts and clarifying understanding. Through communication, ideas be reflected on, discussed, refined and amended. The communication process also helps build meaning and permanence for ideas.

Language can be broken into distinctive areas;

- Specific vocabulary linked to topics/every day words (cup, bear)
- Expressive language (I want, I feel)
- Creative language (Once upon a time...)
- Writing and Reading specific term language (punctuation, phoneme)

Reading and writing both involve communication and promote language development.

Motor Skills

Writing and reading both use a range of motor skills from holding a pencil to tracking words on a page. These skills develop through repetition and practise. It takes time to build up strength, dexterity and accuracy. Gross motor skills need to be developed first before progressing onto fine motor skills.

There are many skills involved in writing including vision, eye-hand coordination, muscle memory, posture, body control, as well as pencil grasp and letter formation.

When reading, a pupil needs to be able to hold a book, turn a page, one to one match. Eye-hand coordination is an important skill. A pupil needs to be able to control gross motor skills like crossing the mid line to turn the page of a book.

Wellbeing

Children learn best when their wellbeing is good, when they experience enjoyment, self-confident, self-esteem, resilience, are at ease, are able to be spontaneous and are free of emotional tension. We aim to capitalise on wellbeing when teaching reading and writing, and reduce environments that would raise anxiety.

Resilience is key in literacy as we encourage pupils to face challenges, reflect on problems and try different strategies. Resilience is important in all aspects of a child's life at school and in the future, and we believe that focusing on this aspect of wellbeing through literacy is essential.

Confidence and self-regulation are also extremely important so that our pupils feel emotionally able to access literacy lessons. We tailor our teaching styles according to the SEND needs of our pupils so that individual needs can be met. For example, every child is different and will learn to read using preferred strategies and methods that work for them. Literacy needs to be a cultural activity, embedded in children's experiences, rather than being about children correctly performing reading and writing skills. The emphasis for our curriculum is on flexibility, skills building, critical thinking and reasoning.

Socialisation

It is natural for children to be interested in what other children and adults are doing, and with the emergence of their communication skills, to engage socially with others. In this way, ideas, strategies and opinions are shared and discussed, and new learning can take place. In terms of our literacy curriculum, adults play a part in determining the knowledge and skills through modelling their attitudes and actions for the children. Throughout activities, adults act as positive role models for children to support literacy development. Literacy offers lots of opportunities for working collaboratively, involving delegation of tasks, and working jointly through problem solving tasks and evaluating and discussing together and with an adult.

Cognition and learning

Literacy is taught as a discreet subject and cross-curricula which enriches our pupils' experience, knowledge, skills and understanding of literacy in its broader, functional application. We believe that children and young people need work within their zone of proximal development which means that our literacy lessons are individualised to their needs. Within the zone of proximal development children will inevitably make mistakes and we support them to be resilient to manage their feelings towards mistakes and help them to learn from them and progress.

A bit of basic guidance..... Aka the Warmley Park way of doing reading and writing.

Never, ever, ever assume that children are not taking in all of the literacy vocabulary, language and knowledge that is being provided around them day to day. Children can suddenly 'connect' and everything that has been taught before just clicks into place and makes sense! Make sure ALL children have the experience of a rich reading and writing experience.

Never, ever, ever just use closed questioning in literacy lessons, children need a variety of questions to help them to think logically, creatively and use their fluency and communication skills. "I wonder..." is a good starting point.

Reading and writing are valid in whatever form from mark-making to recognising a logo or symbol. Reading and writing is part of everyday life. Make links to the pupils' experiences and life skills. Use pupils' interests to help inspire and engage with learning.

Always celebrate the small steps... Copying a letter sound to making a meaningful mark to represent a name!

Always give children enough time to 'have a go' themselves or to respond to a question or instruction you have said. Children's individual language processing skills need to be considered in every literacy session, never rush pupils to answer or finish what they are doing. Make sure visuals are used as these are needed to support language and understanding.

Provide a range of 'Total Communication' in your literacy lessons, children should use these whatever age they are. Do not remove these concrete objects or symbolic representations from children when they get in to secondary or collage: 'Manipulatives support understanding, reasoning and conceptual development across all ages and through all Key Stages'. The mastery approach means manipulatives are for everyone to use for concept exploration. Even if children appear to have grasped an idea, manipulatives support and extend learning further.

And remember have fun, be creative and imaginative in literacy. Make sure you use physical, visual and sensory activities to support learning in literacy lessons, reading and writing should be enjoyable and exciting for ALL pupils!