

Woodhouse Primary School

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: 2021/22

Context

PRIORITY 1: Ensure that there are better, more frequent opportunities for a minority of pupils who struggle learning to read, so that they more swiftly master phonic knowledge and phonological awareness by the end of KS1

Leaders are determined that reading remains a constant focus of the school's work. This can be seen in our displays, the books in class libraries, and high-quality texts used as part of our English curriculum and at story time. As a result, pupils develop an enthusiasm for reading because they know it is an important part of their education. There is a consistent approach to teaching phonics, and pupils work towards leaders' clear expectations of the phonics' knowledge they need to acquire at key points from Reception through to Y2. However, some pupils who are behind with their reading are not consistently provided with additional opportunities to practise phonic skills, apply their knowledge, and build a robust foundation of phonological awareness. Consequently, the impact of phonics teaching is diluted for this small group of pupils. This is because, within our current bespoke long term phonics plans - having taken the best of various published schemes – not all books are appropriately matched to pupils' phonic knowledge.

We therefore intend to overhaul our teaching of phonics, initially by researching - then procuring – a single scheme, with a fully decodable, aligned progression of reading books. Its introduction to staff and parents will be underpinned by high-quality training and regular checks of impact on children's phonics skills and application of these within their wider learning. We will also concurrently review all aspects of existing phonics provision, however strong – such as teachers' use of assessment to group pupils based on their existing phonics knowledge and the progress they need to make – to ensure that struggling readers (including those with SEND) are provided with sufficient practice in intended learning. These combined elements, set out in our plan, will support this small group of pupils to secure and embed their learning at a faster pace.

We recognise that there is no alternative approach to phonics as children will never be able to learn enough words by sight, and they must have a strategy to tackle unknown words. Our plan acknowledges that decoding and language comprehension are two different dimensions that require different teaching strategies and different resources. Whilst the phonics check tests accuracy, it does not check pupils' fluency in reading, and does not mean that they have mastered phonics. This robust, root and branch review of phonics teaching - underpinned by rigorous monitoring of teaching approaches linked to a new, single scheme – will therefore be extended to the wider teaching of reading and writing. Consequently, we can make certain that all leaders and staff are expert in helping all pupils, but particularly those who struggle, in learning to read as soon as they should.

PRIORITY 2: Retain our focus on recovery of the full curriculum so that provision of a high-quality education is sustained

Leaders are committed to providing a high-quality education for pupils because we are determined that pupils develop as rounded individuals. Our curriculum is ambitious, including for pupils with SEND, and disadvantaged learners supported by pupil premium funding. Subject leaders have been developing curriculum plans for their subjects over the last few years. Leaders have identified the knowledge and skills which pupils need to secure in order to reach ambitious end points. Leaders have set out how this knowledge is sequenced over pupils' time in school, so that knowledge is built cumulatively. Consequently, pupils at Woodhouse achieve well in a range of subjects over time, and the knowledge they gain prepares them well for the next stage in their learning.

Following the full reopening of school to all pupils in March 2021, pupils are once again studying the full range of curriculum subjects. Leaders only reintroduced French more recently to allow for a focus on a recovery curriculum on pupils' return. The impact of lockdowns and bubble closures on pupils' learning was minimal due to proactive actions taken by leaders. Nonetheless, we recognise that the planned development of middle leaders was significantly impeded throughout the pandemic. We must therefore continue to ensure that all subject leaders are equipped with the skills to effectively check that the curriculum remains sufficiently well planned and sequenced, ambitious, and demanding - so that pupils make good progress from their starting points, steadily rebuilding resilience and fluency.

Effective, manageable, and impactful assessment of foundation subjects will be key to this to accurately pinpoint next steps in learning. There will be a particular focus on the lowest attaining pupils to determine what can be done to help them catch up with their peers, so that equality of opportunity is evident throughout pupil outcomes for all groups of learners. The new *Early Years* framework – especially expectations – will be a fundamental tool to KS1 starting points in each subject scheme of work. As we return to benchmarking against a national suite of assessment data for core subjects, we can make certain that our successful curriculum is sustained through effective use of assessment. Strategies set out in the plan will ensure that teachers understand its limitations, and avoid both misuse and overuse, so that assessment systems support the teaching of the curriculum, but do not substantially increase teachers' workloads by necessitating too much one-to-one teaching or overly demanding programmes that are almost impossible to deliver without lowering expectations of some pupils.

Tracking and assessment will, therefore, form a key part - but not exclusive part - of our monitoring activities. As usual, it will be triangulated through learning walks that encompass analysis of pupils' work, lesson observations and pupil interviews, so that leaders and governors can effectively check progress towards pupil outcomes. However, outputs identified in the plan – in terms of staff attitudes, knowledge, understanding, and skills - are crucial in supporting pupils to reach their targets. We will therefore also evaluate the impact of key strategies through a range of feedback mechanisms alongside regular checks on the effectiveness and impact of training, mentoring, and coaching - in terms of acceptability, fidelity, feasibility, and reach. These rigorous, combined approaches will support leaders and governors to evaluate the extent to which we successfully develop teachers' content knowledge and teaching content knowledge over time. As a result, teachers will be able to deliver better teaching to sustain, and further improve, outcomes for pupils.