



Character Education at Walter Infant School and Nursery

Walter Infant School and Nursery is an equitable, safe, secure and happy place to learn; our children grow as individuals in a stimulating and exciting environment which values respect, empathy, kindness, honesty and resilience.

Our BIG Curriculum! At Walter Infant School and Nursery we consider ourselves to be a “**BIG School for LITTLE PEOPLE**”. We have designed a ‘**BIG**’ curriculum to excite, inspire and foster a desire to learn; we want our children to know more about the world around them and to be happy, confident and successful. We will encourage our children to have very positive behaviours for learning and to ask **BIG questions** and for our staff team to support our children in finding authentic, age-appropriate answers to those questions and inspire them to want to know more. Our children will learn through real-life and practical experiences, as well as through wonderful, awe inspiring fiction texts in which they can ‘see themselves’ and exciting and purposeful non-fiction texts. Our children will learn inside and outside the classroom, fulfilling and exceeding the requirements of national age-appropriate curriculums in a stimulating, fun and memorable way.

Issue to consider	Current Situation	Next Steps
<p>What kind of school is Walter Infant School and Nursery?</p>	<p>We are a state-maintained, community infant school with a nursery. We are a values-based school with 5 key values: Empathy, Respect, Resilience, Honesty and Kindness. These values underpin everything we do. We are a ‘big school for little people’: the children’s well-being and safety are paramount and those needs come before any other need. We put the children first in all our decision making and safeguarding ‘trumps’ everything else! We know our children well; we understand that each child is an individual and needs a bespoke, personalised curriculum to meet their individual needs. We provide wraparound care for our children from 7:30 am until 6:00 pm. We are at the centre of our community and we ensure that all our stake holders feel valued and able to contribute to the school; everyone has a voice and is actively listened to. We believe that every interaction can be an intervention; we do not want to miss a single opportunity to enable our children to feel safe, happy, secure and to know more ‘stuff’. We encourage our children, staff, governors and parents “To be the Best they Can Be” to reach for the stars, to strive for their dreams, there is no glass ceiling at our school. We all have a growth mind-set.</p>	<p>To ensure that when we are recruiting that all new recruits (wherever they fit within the staffing structure) can demonstrate by example, that they share our values.</p>





We are consistent in our approach BUT adaptable each situation and stressor; we do NOT make knee-jerk decisions! We carefully consider cause, effect and impact. We strive to be equitable at all times. We assess risk dynamically and encourage our children to be brave and learn from their mistakes (as we do). Our school ethos is built on **trust**; our children (and their families) need to trust us, therefore we are open, honest, authentic and sincere. We are approachable and have an open-door policy; no concern or question is irrelevant. We are available 7 days a week to support and 'signpost' during times of need or worry. We measure good mental health and good physical health as equal. The well-being of our staff is paramount; if our staff are not happy and supported in the work place, how will they best support and care for the children in their charge? <http://www.safehandsthinkingminds.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Values-section-expanded.pdf>

What are our expectations of behaviour towards each other?

We expect all adults to be calm and respectful at all times; everyone should reflect all our school values at all times, whatever the relationship between them, teachers or learners, friends, family, colleagues, acquaintances, visitors, volunteers or strangers. We have very high expectations for behaviour that we encourage everyone to aspire to (within their cognitive understanding and development) as a result our children's behaviour is exemplary. Our **'Expectations for Behaviour'** are:

- **Treat each other with respect (V:Respect)**
- **Be kind and polite to everyone (V:Kindness)**
- **Tell the truth (V:Honesty)**
- **Look after the school and the things in it (including the people) (V:Empathy)**
- **Move around the school sensibly (V:Respect)**
- **Always try your best (V: Resilience)**

We have a robust Behaviour Policy (reviewed January 2020) which is used

To remove any stigma relating to poor mental health and to ensure that good mental health and good physical are considered equally important and that all necessary support is in place for all members of our school (children and adults).





consistently by all our staff; our children leave us knowing what is acceptable in and out of school and how to take responsibility for their own actions. We have a positive approach to behaviour management in school and recognise that every type of behaviour is an attempt to communicate. We present calmly and respectfully, listen actively and try to show empathy and understanding to the children who have behaviours that challenge us. No adult will shout at a child in school for any reason (loud voices are reserved for dangerous situations only). On a recent tour of the school by a new Governor (22/03/2021), we were delighted to hear how impressed the Governor was by the behaviours for learning and the children's behaviour in general. The school was calm and focussed, but there were lots of smiles and plenty of opportunities for interaction.

All our class room based staff have completed Supporting Well-being and Mental Health in Schools and a large number have also completed Psychological First Aid. We have two Mental Health First Aiders (who are also Mental Health Champions) and we view good mental health equally with good physical health.

Our school culture is built on trust; we show our children that they can trust the adults in school to keep them safe and well, by showing honesty, commitment, consistency and reliability. Likewise, the SLT and SMT are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of staff (at all levels) so that they feel trusted and supported too.

How do our curriculum and teaching develop resilience and confidence?

Resilience is one of our five core values and our children are encouraged to learn from their mistakes and to keep on trying (Don't give up). Our staff use authentic praise freely and enthusiastically and we actively celebrate achievement in many ways including positive feedback and achievable next steps (either verbal or written), stickers, Headteacher awards, values badges and 'Star of the Week' certificates. Throughout Lockdown, we offered a variety of home learning awards and celebrated home learning success in our weekly newsletter. We have WOW boards, sharing pieces of work that show resilience, for example how much improvement (progress) they have made and the perseverance they have invested to 'be the best they can be!'

Our curriculum is always differentiated to meet the needs of every child in the

Our new Foundation Stage Garden will enable the children to be more independent and to take morerisks; we will ensure that we teach the children to use the equipment safely and to challenge themselves.

Many members of staff have completed Psychological First Aid training and will begin to





	<p>school; these adaptations make learning accessible to everyone. The children who need support to learn will receive it through Quality First Teaching and our teachers and support staff never stop learning either!</p> <p>Our children are encouraged to share their successes from home with school too; this could be in sport, music, dance, art or any of the core subjects. The children's work is displayed everywhere in our school, including our website. We have celebrated the BEST joke ever as well as the best handwashing hero posters, which were displayed in all the local shops and supermarkets. We have introduced strategies from Voice 21 to help children to share their own voice confidently; this has been affected by the pandemic BUT we will be using the lessons learned to develop the children's confidence to share their thoughts and ideas. We have a Kindness Tree which celebrates impromptu (random) acts of kindness and a celebration shelf in the library for all our joint achievements. We have a school council, which becomes bigger over the year as more children are invited to produce their personal manifesto and present their ideas to the class. We have live performances including nativities, Christmas Concerts and a Year 2 Production. As part of our curriculum offer, the children learn about resilient people who didn't give up and changed the world; Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parks and Robert Falcon Scott (of the Antarctic).</p> <p>We rejoice in the diversity of our community asking the children to share their personal experiences so that we can learn from them and celebrate empathically. We have introduced Jigsaw (PSHE) to be taught alongside our PSRHE curriculum; this links very closely to our school philosophies and is very age appropriate, with songs, toys and enjoyable, adaptable lessons and resources. This is soon to be shared with parents to develop their understanding of our 'Relationships' education.</p>	<p>implement their learning to support our vulnerable children in develop their resilience and confidence.</p> <p>We will provided an information event for parents on the new compulsory elements of the Relationships Curriculum in Personal, Social, Relationships and Health Education (PSRHE)</p>
<p>How good is our co-curricular provision?</p>	<p>Our hope for our children is that they have a wide reaching, rich, memorable and enjoyable experience during their time at our school. Our aim is that all our children love coming to school and have the best start to the educational journey and that they are well-prepared for their next steps.</p> <p>Our curriculums are broad, balanced and relevant with a strong focus on what our children enjoy learning about (which is a very varied topic base).</p>	<p>Back to our business as usual, open door approach to our day to day management (Learning from the trials and tribulations of lockdown).</p>





Alongside our curriculums for the key areas of learning we promote creativity including dance, art, design, music and particularly singing! We are excellent singers and perform regular live concerts and performances for families and the local community (Including our One Love Festival in 2019) and yearly concerts for the members of Wokingham Dementia Club (this was done virtually during the pandemic).

We are a very active school; we have a large outside space, which we make the most of at every opportunity. We have a large pitch for ball games including football and basketball. We have three running tracks, a climbing wall, a trim trail, two large climbing frames and a wide selection of outside toys and PE equipment for outside which is regular updated to ensure it is fit for purpose, clean and safe. We have developed our inside PE provision by investing in beautiful, new age appropriate gymnastics equipment to develop travelling, balancing, jumping, sequencing, patterns and manoeuvring as well as mindfulness and yoga.

Our children have a session each week with our sports coaches, linked to the age appropriate curriculums as well as additional PE lessons taught by their class teachers. WE have yearly sports days for families to attend and avail ourselves of the fields from the school next door for Key Stage One which is very exciting and appropriately competitive. We encourage our families to walk, cycle or scoot to school and have been awarded the Modeshift Bronze Award and the Most Sustainable large Primary School in Wokingham by the Big Pedal.

We are also a healthy school.

We have won the Wokingham in Bloom 'Best in Town' school garden, Gold award 4 times and have invested greatly in our wonderful school gardens, where we grow our own fruit and vegetables as well as flowers and herbs, but we also provide habitats for birds, bees and insects as well as hedgehog houses! The children maintain the gardens throughout the year, including daily watering, from our water butts during the summer months. We have many trees which allow our children to access the science curriculum for Year 2 but we also help our site controller by collecting thousands and thousands of acorns each autumn!

We have many different extra-curricular activities available for our children to access

No more lunch time clubs.
No more early morning clubs.





(every PPG child has an extra-curricular club of their choice funded by the school); our offer includes football, multi-skills, tennis, Spanish, French, Violins and I-Rock. We also have a gardening club and a music club. Since the pandemic began, we have provided a curriculum that has even more opportunities for our children from 3 years to 7 years to learn through play! We have invested in wonderful resources to stimulate small world and imaginative play as well as problem solving and collaboration; this links so closely to our values base and our positive approach to managing conflicts between children.

How well do we promote the value of volunteering and service to others?

We have a school council made up of representative from F2, Year 1 and Year 2. The council grows in size over the year to enable as many children as possible to be a representative, should they choose to volunteer. Selection is a democratic approach, the children keen to be selected present a manifesto and each term a secret ballot selects two children from each class (in Foundation 2, the adults vote for the children who they feel will be good representatives. Our school councillors take great pride in their roles and carefully choose issues that they feel should be addressed, such as rough play or fundraising for new resources for the playground or classrooms. We have raised money to sponsor guide dogs and benefitted from visiting dogs and their owners and trainers.

Our children can begin to volunteer for roles as they progress through school, beginning as trainee playground pals in the summer term for Year 1. Once in Year 2 the children can volunteer to be Playground Pals, Litter Pickers and Fruit and Milk Monitors.

Younger children volunteer to tidy up the classrooms from being in our nursery. A choir of children have visited the Dementia Café Members at Wokingham Hospital twice and taken part in a virtual concert also. This was a wonderful experience for the children and for the Dementia Club members and we intend to maintain the connection for years to come.

We have high expectations for metacognition; we help our children to learn how to learn (age appropriately) and to help others learn too.

We take part in national and local fund raising events for charities, including Children in Need, Comic Relief and Genes for Jeans and celebrate our contributions and

The return of whole school assemblies
 The return of fund raising events
 The reduction and ceasing of 'Bubbles'!





successes in our school reception area for visitors to school to see. We also collect for the Wokingham Food Bank at Harvest, but most recently we have collected for food parcels, Christmas presents and Easter Gifts for the children in our own school whose families have been vulnerable in a variety of ways during the pandemic. Two of our children have donated their hair to be made into wigs for other children who have lost their hair through illness!

Our children learn about empathy from the very start of their time with others and start to understand how it might feel to be in 'someone else's shoes'. We also record acts of kindness and reward children with kindness leaves for our kindness tree.

How do we ensure that all our pupils benefit equally from our offer?

Our practice in every area of our school is 'tilted' to ensure equality of access and opportunity for every child. We have a large and very diverse population with more than forty different languages spoken at home. 30% of our community speak English as an Additional Language and are from Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic Groups. We have adapted the focus books in our curriculums so that the children from all back grounds and heritages can see themselves reflected. All our Foundation Stage and Year 1 classrooms have small world play and home corners so that the children have common starting points for their shared play. Our values reflect the Universal 'British' Values as well as our core values and we promote tolerance and acceptance of differences. We encourage our children to recognise that we may look different on the outside, but on the inside we are very similar indeed. We carefully choose texts to help children understand how to care for others, how to show empathy, how to demonstrate kindness and how to understand a rainbow of emotions.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher greet every child in the morning and bid farewell to them in the afternoon. They know the name of every child in the school, who their parents are, any concerns or special needs and idiosyncratic information personal to the child and or their siblings. We are a community school with the needs of every child and their families (as well as staff and their families) at the centre of everything we do.

We are committed to ensuring that every single child makes progress in every area

The number of children who have developed anxiety over the lock down period is much higher than in previous years and we do not have capacity with CAL to meet all their therapy needs. We will have our own school therapy dog to support the children specifically with separation anxiety and attachment disorders. We will work in partnership with an experienced Therapy Dog Trainer from September 2021.

We will have a bank of resources to support children at home, for example books, paper, crayons, glue etc. as well as providing access to the learning platform and the internet (e.g Kindle Fire





of learning (including social, moral, emotional and physical) from their starting points. We ensure that every child is treated as an individual, but where possible, with in cohorts they can collaborate so that as many needs are met as possible. We are committed to preparing every child for their next steps in life, be that the next term, the next year group or to be Junior School Ready. It is our aim that every child will be a reader, a writer and a mathematician when they leave us, as well as polite, kind, caring and ambitious for themselves.

Every lesson is differentiated to at least three levels of ability and all our children experience Quality First Teaching; in phonics the least able children are taught by the most able adults to ensure gaps close quickly.

All teachers are held accountable for the progress and attainment of every child in their class (with a no excuses approach); this means that the buck cannot be passed to someone else. By this, we can monitor the progress of the children and the impact of additional support, including one to one reading, nurture plans, PPG provision, SEND Learning Plans etc. Our Inclusion Manager monitors the progress of SEND children and seeks rapid responses and support from outside agencies. Our EAL Leader manages the provision of resources, access to the curriculum, including Communicate in Print and attends networking sessions to learn from others expertise. Our Pupil Premium Lead is the Headteacher, who carefully monitors the personalised provision for every child through their plans and by having a fully comprehensive understanding of all individual circumstances, knowing when to provide financial support, signposting to other services, in house support and or counselling.

We have two Mental Health champions who are also Mental Health First Aiders. Good Mental Health is viewed on a par with good Physical Health (with NO stigma) and all adults care deeply for the children who our vulnerable (whatever their need); we have noticed increased levels of anxiety in our young children and all staff have had access to training in emotional well-being and Psychological First Aid in addition to this we have a Canine Assisted Learning Dog (called Charlie) who visits 5 of our most vulnerable children each week.

We ensure that no child is left behind by identifying every barrier to learning and

Tablets).





finding a way to climb it and hopefully overcome it (we often regret that we only have the children for 4 years but we maintain very strong links with the junior school). Our Learning Support and Teaching Teams have produced a bank of bespoke resources for our children, which enhance their access to the curriculum and extend their understanding, for example wooden spoons for telling stories, story boxes, puppets, visual aids etc. These are exceptionally beautiful and extremely stimulating and encourage the children to 'get involved' and to learn more. WE have strived to build very positive relationships with our families, enabling us to tackle even the most difficult conversations to ensure the best possible provision and experience for their child.

