

Computing Policy

Intent

At The Willows, our computing curriculum is designed with the intent to foster an appreciation for technology and its diverse applications while ensuring a sense of enjoyment and confidence among our students. We aim to cultivate their understanding of technology's potential for creation, management, organisation, and collaboration. We are committed to nurturing students' confidence in adapting to new technologies, recognising this as a crucial skill in today's rapidly evolving tech landscape. Our goal is to equip students with digital competency and a repertoire of transferable skills essential for future workplace success, all while promoting responsible online citizenship.

Recognising education as the primary tool for mitigating technology-related challenges, we integrate comprehensive E-safety education throughout the academic year, evolving in complexity as our pupils progress through their schooling. Acknowledging technology's capacity to facilitate creative expression and enhance accessibility, we strive to strike a balance between a knowledge-rich curriculum and opportunities for students to creatively apply their learning.

At The Willows, we are dedicated to ensuring that our students:

- Understand and apply fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, encompassing abstraction, logic, algorithms, and data representation.
- Develop problem-solving skills through practical experience in writing computer programs.
- Analyse and apply information technology, including emerging technologies, to address challenges analytically.
- Become responsible, competent, confident, and creative users of information and communication technology.

Implementation

All teachers at The Willows are committed to delivering inclusive and high-quality instruction in Computing. Following the National Curriculum guidelines, we primarily utilise the Purple Mash Scheme of Work to support teachers in planning and assessing student progress. Our curriculum is structured across six phases of learning, ensuring equitable opportunities for all students to acquire vocabulary, knowledge, and skills in a clear and sequential manner. Students are explicitly taught the necessary vocabulary, knowledge, and skills, with support and challenges tailored to their individual needs. Quality teaching is enhanced through ongoing monitoring, feedback, and assessment strategies, enabling timely intervention and support as needed. Support strategies include personalized learning activities, targeted resources, and adult assistance, both before and after instruction.

We've designed a comprehensive long-term sequence outlining key learning milestones for pupils at the end of Early Years, Key Stage 1, and Key Stage 2. In Early Years, children have access to various technologies, including tablets and desktop computers, engaging with apps and programs to support their learning across different subjects. In Key Stage 1 and 2, students independently use desktop computers, laptops, and tablets for a variety of educational activities, including internet research and practice exercises in core subjects. Our assessment practices vary across Early Years, Key Stage 1, and Key Stage 2, with ongoing assessment integral to the learning process. In Early Years, assessment for learning occurs throughout the day, in Key Stage 1 and 2, in-the-moment feedback is prioritized during lessons to maximize its impact on learning outcomes. Students are taught how to upload and save their work on an online platform, facilitating ongoing monitoring by teachers and leaders. Our monitoring cycle is aligned with the school's broader improvement plan, ensuring that computing receives appropriate attention and resources for thorough review and evaluation. Even when computing is not the main focus, leaders conduct light-touch monitoring in accordance with established action plans, maintaining a continuous commitment to quality and improvement.

Impact

Leaders and staff at The Willows collaborate closely to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the computing curriculum, employing various strategies including Learning Walks, Pupil Voice assessments, review of children's work, and gathering feedback from stakeholders such as parents, carers, staff, governors, and the wider community. The aim is to demonstrate that by the culmination of each key stage, students have acquired, applied, and comprehended the substantive knowledge and skills outlined in the computing National Curriculum for both KS1 and KS2. While computing isn't explicitly outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, opportunities abound for young learners to utilize technology for problem-solving and creative endeavours.

The carefully structured curriculum offers students a diverse and enriching learning journey, fostering creativity, personal achievement, and overall well-being. By strategically integrating computing skills across multiple subjects and utilising a range of resources, learners deepen their understanding and skill set progressively.

Our computing curriculum is characterized by its high quality and thoughtful design, with a clear focus on demonstrating progression in both knowledge and skills. Vocabulary progression is also embedded within each unit of work, ensuring comprehensive development. Ultimately, students at The Willows emerge equipped with a diverse array of skills to engage actively in an increasingly digital world. They are nurtured to become critical thinkers capable of making informed digital choices, understanding the significance of computing in their education and personal development. Moreover, they grasp the importance of maintaining a balanced approach to technology usage, while also being well-versed in online safety protocols and equipped to address any related issues effectively.

Our E-Cadets strive to inform their peers of the challenges that face today's children in the ever-changing technological world. Meeting regularly, they plan and deliver assemblies and collaborate with our school council members to ensure the safety of all pupils at The Willows. Alongside educating their classmates, they are also on a quest to raise parents' awareness of the benefits and dangers of the digital world, contributing to the school newsletter with regular updates.

See also our Online Safety Policy.