

Policy Updated: October 2020

Review Date: October 2021



Olney Infant Academy

Curriculum Policy

At Olney Infant Academy high expectations of learning, behaviour and respect for each other underpin everything we do. Our teachers strive to create independent, articulate thinkers and learners who have the confidence to achieve their ambitions. This drives us in our pursuit for excellence every day.

Our Curriculum

The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience of the children. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential.

Our school curriculum at Olney Infant Academy is underpinned by our common ethos and shared values that we hold dear. The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objective of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives.

Olney Infant Academy is in full agreement with the values statement included in the introduction to The National Curriculum Handbook for Primary Teachers in England.

As an IFTL school, Olney Infant Academy strives to ensure that all its learners become:

- Successful individuals who have a passion for learning, making progress and achievement.
- Confident individuals who are equipped with the skills to contribute to the ever-changing world.
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.
- Ready for learning at each stage of their education and beyond.
- Engaged individuals who are persistent and creative and are dynamic and persevere.
- Purposeful learners who embrace all areas of the school and curriculum.
- Effective contributors to their own and others' learning.

Aims and objectives

The National Curriculum provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge that they need to be educated citizens. It introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said; and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

The National Curriculum is just one element in the education of every child. There is time and space in the school day and in each week, term and year to range beyond the National Curriculum specifications. The National Curriculum provides an outline of core knowledge around which teachers can develop exciting

and stimulating lessons to promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as part of the wider school curriculum.

Opportunities to enrich our Curriculum further, will be consistently developed by:

- inviting visitors into our school,
- going on educational trips – both local and further afield,
- providing opportunities for enriching learning at home,
- seeing and creating performances and presentations linked to learning.

Structure:

Olney Infant Academy is made up of two groups:

- Early Years Foundation Stage
- Key Stage One – Years 1 and 2

Early Years Foundation Stage

In 2020-21 we will continue to follow the Development Matters guidelines and Early Learning Goals to shape our curriculum as in evolves around the children. We will also be using the new Development Matters and new Early Learning Goals alongside these to prepare for fully embedding the new curriculum in 2021-2022

The Early Years learning, and development requirements cover:

- The areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in all early years settings
- The early learning goals that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five)

Four guiding principles shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- The characteristics of effective learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and becoming an effective learner. They underpin learning and development across all areas.
- By playing and exploring children find out and explore, use what they know in their play and become willing to have a go

- Through active learning children are involved and develop their concentration skills, perseverance and gain a sense of enjoyment through achieving what they set out to do
- By creating and thinking critically children have their own ideas, use what they already know to learn new things and choose ways to do things including finding new skills, strategies and techniques.

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape our educational programmes in the Foundation classes. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Our Foundation Stage also supports children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Children in Key Stages One follow the National Curriculum.

Core Subjects	Foundation Subjects
English Mathematics Science	History Geography Art and Design Design Technology Computing Languages Music RE PSHE/Citizenship Physical Education

Delivering our Olney Infant Academy Curriculum

Our Olney Infants Curriculum is a creative and thematic approach to learning that is mapped to the 2014 Primary National Curriculum to ensure comprehensive coverage of national expectations.

Our creative curriculum is delivered through Imaginative Learning Projects (ILPs) which will provide a rich menu of exciting and motivating learning activities that make creative links between all aspects of our children’s learning.

We believe in a broad and balanced curriculum where all subjects are valued. A broad and balanced curriculum will equip our children with a breadth of knowledge and skills in all areas of the curriculum. We believe children learn better when they are encouraged to use their imagination and apply their learning to engaging contexts. Our curriculum provides lots of learning challenges throughout the year that will require children to solve problems, apply themselves creatively and express their knowledge and understanding effectively across the curriculum.

We pride ourselves on having developed a curriculum which we feel offers outstanding opportunity and learning experiences for all of our pupils, both academically and personally.

Aims

- Engage children through interesting topics and hands-on activities.
- Make meaningful links between subjects.
- Develop children’s skills, knowledge and understanding of a range of themes and concepts.
- Make effective connections to the real world.
- Help children to think creatively and solve problems.
- Develop children’s capacities to work independently and collaboratively.
- Enable children to make choices about their learning.

Our approach:

- Develops children to the best of their abilities
- Helps children to find their passions and interests
- Facilitates children’s acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding
- Helps children to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically and morally
- Assists children in becoming independent, responsible, useful, confident and considerate members of the community
- Promotes a positive attitude towards learning, so children enjoy coming to school
- Helps children to acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning
- Creates and maintains an exciting and stimulating learning environment
- Ensures that each child’s education has continuity and progression
- Enables children to contribute positively within a culturally diverse society

Our curriculum is built on The Four Cornerstones of Learning:

Engage	▶	Develop	▶	Innovate	▶	Express
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adventurous • Curious • Excited 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrious • Purposeful • Resilient 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imaginative • Inventive • Resouceful 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident • Articulate • Reflective

At the "Engage" stage, children:

- Gain memorable first-hand experiences, such as going on a visit or inviting a special visitor into school.
- Enjoy ‘WOW’ experiences.
- Get an exciting introduction to a topic or theme.
- Begin researching and setting enquiry questions.
- Get lots of opportunities to make observations.
- Develop spoken language skills.
- Take part in sensory activities.
- Have lots of fun to fully 'engage' with their new topic.

At the "Develop" stage, children:

- Improve their knowledge and understanding of the topic.
- Develop and practice their new skills.
- Compose, make, do, build, investigate, explore, write for different purposes and read across the curriculum.
- Research their own questions and those set by others.
- Follow new pathways of enquiry based on their interests.
- Complete homework activities that support their learning.

At the "Innovate" stage, children:

- apply skills, knowledge and understanding in real-life contexts.
- solve real or imagined problems using everything they've learnt.
- get inspired by imaginative and creative opportunities.
- revisit anything not fully grasped at the 'Develop' stage.

At the "Express" stage, children:

- become the performers, experts and informers.
- share their achievements with parents, classmates and the community.
- evaluate finished products and processes.
- link what they have learnt to where they started.
- celebrate their achievements.

Our educational programmes in the Foundation Stage follow a similar structure to those in Key Stage One but with more flexibility around chosen topics. At Olney Infant academy we design our topics around the children's current interests in the EYFS continually flowing through the four cornerstones of learning. The aim is to ignite children's natural curiosity and focus on skills over outcome. See also EYFS policy.

SMSC and British Values

Olney Infant Academy curriculum aims to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepares all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

Our school curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and, in particular, develops principles for distinguishing between right and wrong. It develops children's knowledge, understanding and appreciation of their own and different beliefs and cultures, and how these influence individuals and societies. Our school curriculum reflects British values, develops pupils' integrity and autonomy and helps them to be responsible and caring British citizens capable of contributing to the development of a just society. It promotes equal opportunities and enables pupils to challenge discrimination and stereotyping. It develops their awareness and understanding of, and respect for, the environments in which they live, and secures their commitment to sustainable development at a personal, local, national and global level. It also equips pupils to make informed judgments and independent decisions and to understand their responsibilities and rights.

Our school curriculum promotes pupils' self-esteem and emotional well-being and helps them to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, based on respect for themselves and for others, at home, school, work and in the community. It develops their ability to relate to others and to work for the common good. It enables pupils to respond positively to opportunities, challenges and responsibilities, to manage risk and to cope with change and adversity. It prepares pupils for the next steps in their education, training and employment and equips them to make informed choices at school and throughout their lives, enabling

them to appreciate the relevance of their achievements to life and society outside school, including leisure, community engagement and employment.

We promote appreciation of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), cultures and lifestyles, through the effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, including extra-curricular activity and volunteering within the school community, to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. The curriculum prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life through a variety of subjects.

Our programme of assemblies helps promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, providing clear guidance on what is right and wrong. Each aspect of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is defined by indicators that include reference to fundamental British values.

Outdoor Learning, Physical Health and Well-being

At Olney Infant Academy we endeavour to promote the importance of physical education and a healthy lifestyle to all children across the school. We encourage participation in a range of events and experiences. We strive to offer as many experiences to the children as possible, to ensure they develop a passion for physical activity and an understanding of health and wellbeing.

At Olney Infant Academy we offer a rich and varied outdoor curriculum including Forest School for our children in Year 1. We believe that all children have the right to experience the unique and special nature of being outdoors. We further believe that it is important to enable children to use the outside environment as a context for learning.

What do we mean by Outdoor Learning?

Outdoor Learning is a broad term that includes outdoor play [learning through play], school grounds projects, environmental education, recreational and adventure activities, personal and social development, and more. Outdoor Learning does not have a clearly defined boundary but it does have a common core...

Outdoor learning can provide a dramatic contrast to the indoor classroom. There is strong evidence that good quality learning outside the classroom adds much value to classroom learning. It leads to a deeper understanding of concepts that span traditional subject boundaries and which are frequently difficult to teach effectively using classroom methods alone.

Direct experience outdoors is powerful, motivating and has impact and credibility. The results from outdoor learning can be instantaneous as well as active and therefore impact on behaviour as well as tapping into the learning styles of the more kinaesthetic learner. Through skilled teaching, outdoor experiences readily become a stimulating source of fascination, personal growth and can lead to breakthroughs in learning.

Active learning readily develops the learning skills of enquiry, experiment, feedback, reflection, review, communication, problem solving, an enterprising attitude and cooperative learning – to name only some of the benefits.

Outdoor Learning can help to bring learning alive. For that reason, the outdoors can have an impact on areas of the curriculum as diverse as imaginative writing and personal and social development. Outdoor learning also provides experiential opportunities allowing pupils to respond positively to opportunities, challenges and responsibilities, to manage risk and to cope with change.

Benefits of Outdoor Learning:

- Outdoor learning helps to ensure that children are successful learners enabling children to develop knowledge and skills in ways that add value to their everyday learning experiences.
- Outdoor learning enables children to be confident individuals and impacts positively upon young children's attitudes beliefs and self-perceptions. Outdoor learning contributes towards creating independent learners with high self-esteem and self-sufficiency.
- Outdoor learning can have a positive impact upon children's behaviour.
- Outdoor learning contributes towards the promotion and children's understanding of the importance of developing a Healthy lifestyle.
- Outdoor learning has a positive impact upon children's personal and social development. It can also bring about community cohesion and allow children to develop as responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to their wider community. It can create pride in the school and wider community and promote community involvement, renewing children's pride and creating a sense of belonging and responsibility.
- It raises learners' attainment, promotes and strengthens communication skills, team work and sense of cohesion.
- There is clear evidence that boys in particular are more active in their learning in an outdoor environment.