

GENERAL INFORMATION

Willow Grove School is situated in a pleasant residential area of Ashton-In-Makerfield, which is accessible from all areas of Wigan.

The school caters for children from all over Wigan, between the ages of 5 and 11. Children attending the school have a range of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and may have some learning difficulties. Children stay at the school for varying lengths of time. Although it is always the aim for children to return to mainstream school as quickly as they can, it is not possible to specify a time on admission, as all children learn and develop at different rates. Parents are regularly informed about progress and are invited to Parents Evening twice a year. In addition, the child's statement of Special Education Needs is reviewed on an annual basis; again parents are invited to this meeting.

The Curriculum

Children at Willow Grove receive the same curriculum as their mainstream peers. This is particularly important if children are to return to mainstream school. Children are usually taught in groups of 8, with a teacher and a Teaching Assistant. Classes are usually for children of the same age, although at times it may be necessary to educate children in a different age group.

The school delivers the Literacy and Numeracy strategies in addition to all other aspects of the National Curriculum. Much of the work is delivered as a theme rather than as individual subjects. In addition, there is a heavy emphasis on Personal and Social Education, with children involved in group and individual activities designed to teach social skills, anger management and enhance self-esteem. The children also learn how to relax and manage their behaviour.

As part of the PSHE curriculum children are provided with tea and toast on Monday mornings and fruit every afternoon. There is no charge for this. Children also receive fruit every afternoon.

Children in Years 2 and 6, take part in the Standard Assessment Tasks during the summer term, in line with their mainstream peers. During the year, there are regular assessments of children's academic and behavioural progress. The results of these are used to identify targets for future development. These are called IEP's and are very important for the monitoring of a pupil's progress.

Sex Education

The Governors of the school have decided that sex education will form part of the curriculum of the school and will be delivered as part of PSHE or sometimes science. The programme begins very simply for the youngest children and continues every year.

Although we prefer children to follow the programme, parents may withdraw their child from lessons. This request must be made in writing to the Headteacher.

RE

RE is taught throughout school and daily assemblies are broadly Christian in content. RE follows the Wigan Agreed Syllabus and is adapted to fit in with our theme curriculum and the school year.

Children are taught about the main religions with great emphasis placed on tolerance, respect and our place in the wider community.

If parents wish to withdraw their child from any part of this aspect in school life a request must be made in writing to the Headteacher.

Staffing

We are lucky to have such a good staffing situation. Currently, the school employs 10.5 teachers and 8 teaching assistants, in addition to the Head. The school is well supported by our School Business Manager, four administrative assistants, caretaker and cleaner.

One of our teachers is a qualified Play Therapist. She is employed for 2.5 days per week to work with individual children who are having particular difficulties or parent and child together.

Another of our teachers specialises in reading difficulties and she works with individual children as well as advising staff about programmes to use.

The Cool Project and mainstream experience is delivered by a Teaching Assistant. This helps us to deliver personalised programmes for children and, at times, parents.

A Parent Partnership Worker provides support and help for parents and can be contacted directly or through school.

The school is also supported by an Educational Psychologist, who visits on a regular basis, to assess pupils and advice staff.

The speech therapy and occupational therapy services visit school as do the school nurse and doctor.

Aims

The school aims are:

To

- create an environment and ethos which will promote and foster the positive self esteem of all members of the school community;
- treat each child as an individual, with individual needs, strengths and abilities;
- provide a curriculum which recognises attainment and builds on success and is sufficiently differentiated and challenging to meet the needs and develop the potential of all pupils;
- give opportunities to develop the social skills necessary to be included in all aspects of society;
- create an atmosphere in which all are treated with respect and so develop the ability to respect and tolerate others;
- manage behaviour in a positive way, recognising and rewarding achievement and success and so develop the ability of pupils to manage their own behaviour;
- work in partnership with parents, Governors and other agencies to develop all aspects of pupil attainment;
- to give pupils the opportunity to experience inclusion in the wider environment.

The ability to achieve these aims lies very much in the relationships developed within the school. Respect and tolerance are at the heart of our school and reinforce the positive ethos, one that exists to promote success, caring and respect.

Ethos

Our mission statement is based upon respect for each other and is reflected in our dealings with parents, pupils and members of the community.

Each pupil is educated in an environment, in which pupils are treated with dignity whilst expecting high standards of work and behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to learn from each other and from the staff around them whilst becoming independent, sociable and reliable.

The relationships between adults and children are vitally important and form the basis of everything that happens in school. These relationships equally extend to those between school and home.

We expect to treat parents and children with respect and in return expect to be treated with respect. Respect encompasses all aspects of life; the work children are presented with, the environment and the opportunities given.

There are high expectations of both work and behaviour and clear guidelines as to how these are achieved. The school operates a system of positive behaviour management, which recognises and rewards the things that children do. Points are awarded for both work and behaviour. Consequences are very clear. Loss of points will result if children do not keep to the school rules. More information is given in the section relating to discipline.

Governors

The Governing body has a wide range of responsibilities and duties, including determining the aims and the curriculum policy for the school, controlling the budget, interviewing and appointing staff and fostering good relations with parents and the community.

The Governors meet regularly in small committees and as a full group.

Parents are encouraged to become Governors of the school. If you would like to become a Governor, please contact Mrs Smith, who in addition to being the School Business Manager is Clerk to the Governing Body.

HOME AND SCHOOL

Home/School Agreement

Home/School partnership is very important if children are to be treated consistently. It is very important that expectations are clear to all concerned.

A home/school agreement is now part of all schools policy and is intended as a positive sharing of hopes and concerns.

The home/school agreement for Willow Grove is included in the forms to fill in. Please read this carefully and discuss the meaning with your child. The agreement can be signed by your child at home or at school. When it has been signed by all parties, a copy will be sent to you and a copy is kept in school.

Open Door Policy

Communication is very important. If you have a concern or information, we would like to be able to share this with you.

We have an open door policy and will always try to see parents at any time. It would, however, be useful if you could make an appointment for your visit, so that we can make sure that the person you need to see is available.

Sometimes, communication can break down and a problem arises. If you do have a complaint, please contact the Headteacher. The complaints procedure is outlined in a following section.

Home to School Communication

Effective communication makes a difference to relationships, and at Willow Grove, we try to ensure that any communications are responded to as quickly as possible. There may be changes within school, or information about your child that we want to share with you, or you may want to share with us. This may happen in a number of ways:

a) Telephone Calls

The telephone is the quickest way to make contact but please be prepared to leave a message if your child's teacher is in class.

It is important that we have up-to-date information about how to contact you in an emergency. If there are any changes, please let us know.

At times, we may contact you to let you know how your child is progressing, or if there have been any problems in school. Children make better progress if we all share information and work together.

b) Behaviour sheets and certificates

Behaviour sheets are sent home on Mondays and give an indication of how many points the children have earned. They also contain comments about successes and difficulties experienced. Certificates are given to pupils at any time during the week for progress with work or behaviour. Children work hard for their rewards, please celebrate their success with them.

c) Parents' Evening

Parents' Evenings are held twice a year, usually in November and July. The first meeting is for parents to get to know the teacher and have a general discussion. The second is to discuss the progress, which pupils have made during the year, and to discuss the annual report, which will have been sent out previously.

d) Annual Review

The annual review of a child's statement is a legal requirement. The purpose is for people involved with the child to discuss progress towards meeting the targets set in the statement, set new targets and to ensure that both the statement and placement remain appropriate. Parents are invited to attend the review meeting. It is very important that your opinions are considered and that we work together for your child.

e) Newsletters

A Newsletter is produced each month and gives information about events in school and advance notice of future events.

f) Letters

Letters may be sent home in-between Newsletters. If there is a reply slip, please ensure that you do reply as soon as possible. If money is requested, please send the slip and the money in a sealed envelope with your child's name on the front.

Complaints

If you have a complaint, there is a Local Education Authority procedure for dealing with this. A copy of this can be seen in school at any time.

Complaints rarely arise, but when they do, they are often the results of misunderstandings. Usually discussion is the best way to unravel the misunderstanding. We would therefore ask parents to share their point of view and give us the opportunity to listen to you. Be assured, you will always be listened to with courtesy.

Please contact school directly, and at once, if a problem arises. If the 'problem' is a complaint, please contact the Headteacher. You are requested not to take complaints directly to other members of staff.

From time-to-time, it may be necessary to have the intervention of a third party. Parents may wish to discuss the issue with a Parent Governor or, perhaps, the Chair of Governors.

Home – School Transport

Before a pupil is admitted to our school, the Local Education Authority (LA) will decide whether or not your child requires transport to school.

The Local Education Authority is responsible for organising coaches and taxis and can be contacted by telephoning Zoe Lewis 749602.

Generally, children are transported in taxis to and from the school. Some taxis will have an escort, depending on the age and needs of the child.

It is the responsibility of parents to meet the taxi or to make arrangements with the driver. The driver or escort should not leave the taxi and cannot take pupils to their door. Taxis can only wait for a maximum of three minutes, it is therefore important that your child is ready in plenty of time.

Pupils are be given "taxi cards", as a means of monitoring their behaviour on the journey to and from school. Please ensure that your child is aware of the need to behave in an acceptable manner and to wear their safety belt at all times.

Severe Weather

It may be necessary, in extreme circumstances, to contact parents. Please ensure that contact telephone numbers are kept up-to-date.

Absences

Please contact school on the first day of absence if possible. We have a policy of checking registers and will ring home if we do not know why a child is absent. Messages can be given to taxi drivers and escorts or telephoned to school.

If your child has a medical or dental appointment, please let the class teacher know beforehand.

Children are not allowed to have time away from school for holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances. Requests should be made in writing. If the request is denied and the child is absent from school this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Breaks

Breaks are supervised by both teachers and Teaching Assistants.

Children are encouraged to join in structured activities but are also given the opportunity to play their own games.

Please ensure that your child has outdoor clothing during the coldest times of the year.

Tuck

Healthy tuck is available in school. 25p per day is sufficient money for your child. You may wish to arrange with the class teacher to send a weekly or half termly amount to avoid your child carrying money. Toast is also sold each day at a cost of 10p per slice.

Tuck items include drinks, cereal bars, malt loaf, raisins and bread sticks. All items cost 25p or less.

Children are not allowed to bring sweets into school.

Lunch

Dinner money is payable on Friday for the following week. Parents are requested to send money only on Friday, as we do not have the facility to keep money on the premises.

Parents who forget to send dinner money on Friday will be sent a reminder for the following week. If money is not paid for 2 consecutive weeks, parents must provide their child with sandwiches until the arrears are paid.

Sandwiches

Children who do not wish to eat a school meal may bring sandwiches. Please give one week's notice of any changes to the arrangement.

Sandwiches will be eaten in the dining room and pupils will be supervised. Parents are requested to supply a cup or straw to avoid pupils drinking from bottles. Glass bottles should be avoided.

Please try to ensure that the content of your child's lunch box is as healthy as possible. Sweets and chocolate are not allowed.

Assembly

Assembly is held each morning and has a broadly Christian theme. Once a month, the local Methodist Minister visits school to conduct an assembly.

Pupils are given the opportunity to contribute to assembly. Each class conducts an assembly on a rota basis. At assembly, 'special mentions' are made of pupils by teachers and of pupils by each other.

Parents can exercise their right to withdraw their child from assembly. In this situation, the Headteacher should be informed in writing.

School Uniform

The uniform for school is:

- Grey trousers or skirt (grey shorts in summer)
- Pale blue polo shirt
- Navy blue jumper or sweatshirt
- Black shoes or trainers

Uniform can be purchased from the school.

Children will need kit for PE. This should be kept in school in a kit bag and should include:

- White T.shirt
- Black shorts
- Pumps or trainers

Swimming kit is needed for the swimming lesson. Swimming shorts are not allowed by the pool staff.

All items of clothing must be clearly labelled with your child's name.

Children are not allowed extreme haircuts, including tramlines or ridges. Plain gold or silver stud earrings are allowed but all other jewellery must be left at home.

Homework

A homework policy is in operation at the school. All children will be expected to complete homework. This may include reading or writing tasks, information finding or similar activities. It is very important if children return to mainstream school that they have got into the habit of doing homework.

If homework becomes an issue between you and your child, please contact the class teacher who will be pleased to help.

Children are provided with bags to carry their homework in. Bags are named and parents are requested to ensure that their child uses the bag and looks after equipment.

Medication

The only medication which can be given in school is that relating to ADHD, epilepsy or similar conditions.

The school has at least 2 designated First Aid staff who have volunteered to administer medication.

Every care is taken to administer medication correctly, however, this is carried out at your own risk.

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school has written instructions.
- School is contacted if the dose is changed and written instructions given to that effect.

If pupils are uncooperative when taking medication, we reserve the right to refuse to administer it and parents will be responsible for coming to school, at the correct time, to administer the medication.

Other medication should not be brought into school.

First Aid

The school has at least 2 qualified First Aiders and the Governors have a written policy on First Aid which is available in school. Each Teaching Assistant is also qualified in emergency aid.

If your child becomes ill or has an accident, you will be contacted and asked to collect your child.

If a child requires hospital treatment, parents will be contacted. If possible, a member of staff will accompany a child to hospital.

Security

The school has a single point of entry with a video phone entry system. The school playgrounds are locked to prevent entry to the grounds. This is to prevent unwelcome guests – not parents!

All visitors must sign in and out and report to reception on arrival.

Health and Safety regulations are available for visitors to read.

Please ensure that your child does not bring any toys, games or other valuables into school. Problems such as breakage, swapping etc, are inevitable.

Money for dinners and tuck should be handed in on arrival at school.

The School Day

School starts at 8.50 and finishes at 3.15

Lunch is at 12.10 until 1.00

Educational Visits

Children in the Infants and Year 3 are taken to the swimming baths on a weekly basis until they are able to swim one length on their back and front. They take part in the Wigan Swimming Award Scheme. Parents are expected to provide kit for children.

A voluntary contribution of £2.00 is requested towards meeting the cost of swimming.

Children who are able to swim receive additional physical exercise in school.

Trips which are directly linked to the curriculum will be arranged as an important part of providing children with wider experiences. Parents will be notified of these trips and in some circumstances may be asked for a voluntary contribution.

Other trips will be arranged at various times to reward children's improved behaviour. Permission for taking part in these trips will be gained from parents.

Year 6 pupils are able to take part in a residential activity break in the Lake District.

Mainstream Experience

We have links with five local primary schools. Each afternoon one child from the appropriate age group is chosen to go on "Mainstream Experience." This is usually a reward for good behaviour. Children are transported in staff cars and are supervised by a member of Willow Grove staff whilst at the primary school.

General

Please do not allow your child to bring toys, books, mobile phones, MP3 players or other items into school. Anything that is brought into school by mistake, will be collected at the beginning of the day and returned at the end of school. School cannot be held responsible for items which are brought into school and are subsequently lost or damaged.

Discipline

Willow Grove adopts a positive behaviour management system, whereby the children are rewarded with points for their work and behaviour. If children earn sufficient points, they will be able to choose an activity in the afternoon. The consequence for unacceptable work and behaviour is loss of points which may lead to having to work instead of choosing the last activity of the day.

The school and classroom rules are deliberately few in number. We firmly believe that children who are happy and interested are more likely to behave and therefore the emphasis is on reward and praise, rather than on punishment. All pupils are given a booklet to share with parents, explaining how the points work. Please read this with your child.

At times, behaviour becomes unacceptable and may require sanctions apart from the points system e.g. a system of three strikes for unacceptable language.

These may include:

- Time out
- Loss of breaks
- Contact with parents
- Lunch time detention
- After school detention

If after school detention is used as a sanction, parents will be given 24 hours notice, unless a prior agreement has been reached. Parents will be notified of the reason for the detention and will be expected to collect their child from school, again unless a prior agreement is reached in which case a member of staff will take the child home.

In any circumstances, prevention is always better. The positive behaviour management system and a firm commitment between home and school to work together are vital in helping children.

Within the school are 5 Time Out rooms. These are small rooms which children use to reflect on their behaviour and then return to class. The rooms are used in the same way as a parent may send a child to their bedroom. Children can be asked to go to 'time out' if their behaviour is becoming unacceptable. The rooms are used in a positive way to prevent behaviour escalating. Children may also request time-out if they feel the need to go somewhere quiet to cool down. Children should not spend long amounts of time in the rooms. The principle is that it is more rewarding to be in class and so time out of class should be limited. If children use the time properly and return to class to work, they will not lose points.

Positive Handling

The positive behaviour system and the quiet rooms minimise the need for positive handling (physical intervention). However, positive handling may become necessary if a child endangers himself or other people, damages property or tries to leave the premises without permission. All staff undergo regular training and at all times treat pupils with respect. The system used for positive handling is called TEAM TEACH.

All incidents of physical management are recorded. Occurrences of violence are recorded and copies sent to the LEA.

Bullying

All forms of bullying are treated very seriously, with equal consideration being given to both the bully and the victim.

Children who bully, will be dealt with using the appropriate sanctions within school and will also be given the opportunity to discuss their behaviour and the effect which this has on the victim.

Children who are bullied will be given the opportunity to discuss safety issues and how to protect themselves.

Children who are found to be bullying will have their names entered in the "Bully Book". This will be entered in pencil. If the child does not bully within two weeks he/she will be allowed to rub out the name. If bullying persists the name is entered in pen and parents will be notified and will be asked to come into school to discuss the problem.

Additional Support

Children with emotional and behavioural difficulties may also need additional help besides the academic curriculum. The school psychologist will assist in identifying these needs.

The school also has a specialist reading teacher and assistant who assess children and plan specific interventions.

Behaviour problems can be helped with strategies such as 'Circle Time', anger management or social skills training. These will be offered as part of the PSHE curriculum on a class or individual basis.

Progress in behaviour is monitored and recorded after regular assessment. In the same way that targets are set for academic subjects, targets are set for behaviour. Children are involved in setting targets and earn their points for meeting these in lessons.

Behaviour and academic success are intrinsically linked. We help children to succeed academically and also to be aware of their behaviour difficulties and their capacity for change. At all times, achievement is recognised and celebrated, enhancing self-esteem and improving behaviour.

Admissions

Willow Grove school provides a curriculum similar to that of a mainstream school. Pupils attend the school because their emotional and behavioural difficulties have made it difficult for them to access the curriculum within a mainstream school. The small class sizes, additional support and use of behaviour management systems help children to access the curriculum.

Children who attend the school will usually have a statement of Special Education Needs, which have been identified by an Educational Psychologist. The statement will also identify the school which the LA feels best meets the needs of the child.

Many parents feel uncomfortable with the idea of a special school. A visit to the school is always arranged and parents given the opportunity to look around and ask as many questions as they wish. Our aim is to help your child make progress. Admission to our school is not a punishment, it is a means of giving your child access to the curriculum, which he/she deserves and the hope of returning to mainstream.

Re-integration/ Inclusion

The aim of admission to Willow Grove School is to enable children to access the curriculum by giving them the necessary help to establish acceptable behaviours. Progress is reviewed regularly, targets set and achievement recorded. At the Annual Review, or sometimes sooner, the progress and placement are discussed.

If it is felt by all parties that progress has been made and there is a possibility of re-integration being successful, a process towards this will begin.

1. Identification of a school – this may be the school from which the child came, or another local school.
2. Contact with the behaviour support team – some support may be available for pupils from this team.
3. Communication between receiving school, Willow Grove and parents, to decide on frequency and timing of visits. Hopefully, this will increase if the placement is successful.
4. Review of placement and review meeting.

The aim is for the pupil to be transferred onto the role of the receiving school. This may involve additional support. If the transfer is agreed, a trial period may be requested before the statement is changed to identify the new school.

At all stages, the needs of the pupil are paramount. All work is discussed with parents and the Educational Psychologist.

Some children may continue at Willow Grove School and complete their Primary Education. If it is felt that pupils continue to need Special Education, they will transfer to Kingshill School or Highlea School, both situated in Tyledesley.

Some children may be given the opportunity to go on “Mainstream Experience”. These children will have made significant progress but may not be quite ready for reintegration. They will be able to go to a local school, with a member of staff from Willow Grove, to practise the skills that they have learnt, in a different environment. This may be a predictor for reintegration but may also be just an experience for the children.

Access

The school is fully accessible to all people. Disabled access and toilets are provided and the curriculum and documents are worded to help those with reading difficulties.

Special Educational Needs

Children may have additional needs beside those associated with emotional and behaviour. All children are assessed on entry and their previous assessments examined to ensure that individual programmes of support can be given. All children have IEPs which identify their short term targets. These are sent home to parents and are reviewed regularly.

School Governors

Mr Philip Stansbie (Chair)	Community Governor
Mrs Carol Pye	Community Governor
Mrs Kirsty Stansbie-Brown	Local Authority Governor
Mrs Hazel Raymond	Parent Governor
Mrs Julie Fletcher	Parent Governor
Mr Fred Lever	Local Authority Governor
Mr Ken Barston	Community Governor
Mr John Carr	Staff Governor
Mrs Carol Tagg	Staff Governor
Mrs Valda Pearson	Staff Governor
Mrs Donna Smith	Clerk

All Governors can be contacted via school.



Willow Grove Primary School

Staff List September 2011

Teaching Staff

Mrs Valda Pearson	Headteacher
Mr Neil Tattersall	Deputy Headteacher/Acting Head
Mrs Jean Tulloch	Deputy Headteacher
Mr Ronald Jervis	Year 6 teacher
Mrs Debra Kirkby	Year 5 teacher
Mr John Carr	Curriculum leader, Year 6 teacher (TLR)
Mrs Gemma Ryan	Infant teacher
Mrs Joanna Murphy	Curriculum leader, Year 4 teacher (TLR)/Acting Deputy
Mrs Pamela Bolton	Curriculum leader, Year 3 teacher (TLR)
Mrs Dianne Houghton	Outreach Coordinator
Mrs Hazel Fairhurst	Year 5 teacher
Mrs Alison Woolf	Play Therapist 2.5 days per week
Mrs Gillian Seddon	Reading specialist 2 days per week

Teaching Assistants

Mrs Janine Owen	HLTA
Mrs Kirsten Stott	HLTA
Mrs Margaret Boyack	HLTA
Mrs Lynne Curson	HLTA
Mrs Anne Woods	Level 3
Miss Toni Craig	Level 3
Mrs Susan Brown	Level 3
Miss Lauren Murphy	Level 3
Mrs Laura Pilkington	Level 3
Miss Julia Gill	Level 3
Mrs Lindsey Howard	Level 3

Family Partnership Workers

Mrs Shirley Latham	HLTA
Mrs Sandra Jennings	Level 3

Administration

Mrs D Smith	School Business Manager
Mrs A O'Neill	Admin/ICT Assistant
Mrs P Lowe	Level 2
Mrs C Tagg	Level 2
Mrs C Quigley	Level 2

Premises

Mrs L Ellison	Caretaker
Mrs S Gaskell	Cleaner (MCSS)

Kitchen

Mrs D Knapkin	Cook in Charge
Mrs S Gaskell	Kitchen Assistant
Miss M Towers	Kitchen Assistant