

Values and Ethos

Mission Statement

Learning, Growing, Achieving Together



At Woolenwick Infant and Nursery School we aim to

- ✓ Create a safe, purposeful learning environment where everyone can flourish, develop their individuality
- ✓ Provide excellence in teaching and learning
- ✓ Enable children and adults to acquire knowledge, understanding, skills and perseverance to be enthusiastic, independent learners
- ✓ Never stop learning and are open minded to continual development
- ✓ Help everyone to develop confidence, positive self-esteem, self-discipline and high moral values
- ✓ Encourage children and adults to value themselves, others and their environment, respecting each other's differences and ways of life, for them to work and play co-operatively, be safe and develop healthy lifestyles
- ✓ Provide opportunities for children to voice and influence decision making
- ✓ Develop successful partnership with our families and the wider community including fostering links with the Local Authority, other schools, Early Years providers
- ✓ Develop our role as strategic partners with the Chiltern Teaching School Hub and other organisations such as the University of Hertfordshire and the Royal Opera House Bridge.

Our Pedagogy

Our pedagogy is research-based and stands on the shoulders of educational giants Froebel (1782-1852) and Malaguzzi (1920-1994). Our values and principles reference the theories of Dweck (1946-) and Claxton (1947-). We understand that young children are capable and competent of constructing their own theories, giving them agency over their own learning. Children have a right to engage in experiences that are meaningful to them.

"To have discovered a quarter of the answer to his own question is of more value to the child than to hear the whole answer, half-understood, from another."

Friedrich Froebel

Referencing the Reggio Emilia Approach (Malaguzzi)

Our values and principles of enquiry-based learning reference the work of the preschools and infant/toddler centres in Reggio Emilia in Northern Italy (Loris Malaguzzi), recognised for innovative approaches to Early Years education. We

follow the pedagogy of Froebelian Education (Friedrich Froebel). We have developed a culture of learning, often in collaboration with creative like-minded individuals such as educationalists and artists who share our interests and approach.

The Key Principles of our Pedagogy:

- Democracy, the Rights of the Child and acknowledging children as competent and capable
- Educators as Co-Learners and Researchers to facilitate deeper thinking
- Parents as Learning Partners
- Environment as the Third Teacher in a child's learning
- Documentation and making learning visible
- Reflection

Our classrooms are spaces for enquiry where children and adults come together to ask challenging, open and philosophical questions. We encourage collaborative thinking and dialogue. We have noticed as our children 'think together' they develop a range of skills and attitudes including critical, creative, collaborative and thoughtful reflection through dialogue. It has helped children to listen to and learn from each other, fostering a feeling of mutual respect and collaborative learning. It has developed their ability to reason, to be open to new perspectives, evaluate the ideas of others. It has developed our practice of democracy in which children are genuinely listened to and valued.

“Stand aside for a while and leave room for learning, observe carefully what children do, and then, if you have understood well, perhaps teaching will be different from before.”

Loris Malaguzzi

Building Children's Learning Power (BLP) (Claxton)

We are committed to building children's learning power, not just what they are learning but more importantly learning how to learn. We develop children's confidence to 'have a go' at challenges without fear of mistakes – not “I can't do it”, but “I can't do it YET!” (Dweck)

By focusing on five learning dispositions, we aim to develop independent, enthusiastic, confident, life-long learners. We call these:

Resourceful
Relationships
Resilience
Risk
Resilience

Character Education

Through philosophy discussions, reflection and action projects in school and the wider community we develop the children's sense of empathy, gratitude and compassion.