

# Wiston Primary School



## Curriculum Rationale



June 2025

## **What is a Curriculum Rationale?**

A Curriculum Rationale is a position statement, created in conjunction with stakeholders, that sets out the framework for meeting the needs of all learners. It ensures that everyone involved with the school can answer the question “what do we want for our children and how will we work together to achieve this?”

This Curriculum Rationale has been developed in consultation with all stakeholders including pupils, parents/carers and staff. This works alongside our school ‘Vision, Values and Aims’ as we all work together to ensure our children succeed and reach their full potential within our nurturing school environment and beyond.

## **Our School**



Wiston Primary School is a small, rural school situated in the village of Wiston, close to the town of Biggar where there are a wide variety of amenities. Our school was rebuilt ten years ago and we have access to excellent indoors and outdoors facilities.

Currently we have 7 children who are taught by one full time teacher and one part time teacher. We have two full time support assistants and our own caretaker/cook. We place a major

emphasis on outdoor learning and take full advantage of having Wiston Lodge Outdoor Centre on our doorstep.

We share a head teacher with Libberton Primary school. The local area is a varied mixture of farms and mainly private housing. Attendance is above SLC average and 100% of our families sit within SIMD 5-7 and 14% of our children are receiving FSM.

We are part of the Biggar Learning Community which has twelve primary schools which feed into Biggar High School. Younger children attend a mixture of school and private nurseries in the area, and we work closely with them and with Biggar High to ensure smooth transitions.

Nine of our Learning Community schools are either two teacher or one teacher schools and we have developed close links to enhance learning and teaching for staff and children across these establishments.

We provide a broad general education for all of our pupils, teaching all 8 curricular areas (Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing, Expressive Arts, Religious and Moral Education, Science, Technologies and Social Studies). We strive to ensure our curriculum and the experiences provided at Wiston Primary enable our children to become Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors. We promote positive relationships within the school and foster a nurturing ethos which encourages all pupils to respect themselves and others. All pupils carry out a wide range of leadership roles, providing opportunities for them to put forward their views on their learning and how to improve our school. We have a variety of pupil leadership groups/roles. This includes Rights Respecting Schools, Young Leaders of Learning, Reading Schools and Junior Road Safety Officers. We have effective partnership working with Libberton Primary and implement an effective annual plan of joint events for the pupils of both schools.

We seek opportunities to provide extra-curricular activities for the pupils. Every year our P7 pupils are offered the opportunity to participate in a residential excursion. On an annual basis after school and lunchtime activities are offered to the pupils. We also aim to ensure our pupils participate in a wide range of celebrations and school events such as the World Book Day, Scottish Book Week, Health Week, World of Work Week, and School Shows.

## Our Vision



## Our Values



## **Our Aims**

### **Inclusivity**

- To create a safe, nurturing and supportive learning environment, where all achievement is celebrated.

### **Learning and Achievement**

- To support and challenge pupils to achieve success across the curriculum and reach their full potential

### **Creativity and Curiosity**

- To promote creativity and nurture curiosity through every aspect of our school community.

### **Wider Community/Skills**

- To inspire and nurture happy, healthy individuals who have the skills required for life, learning and work.

## What makes Wiston Primary School unique?

### Children's Views

The staff are fun, kind,  
caring and helpful.

Ursula, P3

All the stages are in  
one class.

Fraser, P7

We have a big, fun  
playground with lots to  
do.

Oliver, P7

We have lots of  
resources.

Cooper, P7

We get lots of help and  
support.

Imogen, P3

Our school is next to  
the forest, and we get  
to go there.

Lawson, P6

### Parent/Carer Views

As the school is small, the closeness  
of the children and the teachers make  
Wiston like no other. The access the  
school has to the outdoors as well  
makes it stand apart as well.

Its setting and family atmosphere: the  
ability for children of different ages to  
mix.

The staff – they take the time to  
include everyone and encourage  
growth and skill building. My son has  
come on leaps and bounds since  
joining WPS.

The personal attention to each pupil.

'No child is left behind'

The reality at Wiston

## Staff Views

All staff, regardless of role/remit, work as part of a very close team who all have a vested interest in each of the children. Working so closely together with the children and their families fosters close bonds and relationships built up over a number of years.

Being a class teacher in a multi-composite school like Wiston affords the possibility to get to know each individual learner in great depth. Personality traits, family background, learning styles etc. This leads to increased confidence, flexibility and creativity when considering how best to support each learner.

Class Teacher

Wiston Primary School is wonderfully unique. From its pupils and staff to its fairytale setting in a very supportive community. Pupils are nurtured, listened to, included, kept safe and taught in the most respectful and gentle way. The schools' staff are a tightly knitted, passionate team that have great respect for each other, their pupils and their families. The family atmosphere the school provides is a safe familiar environment for these young learners to grow and move on to their next chapter.

School Support Assistant

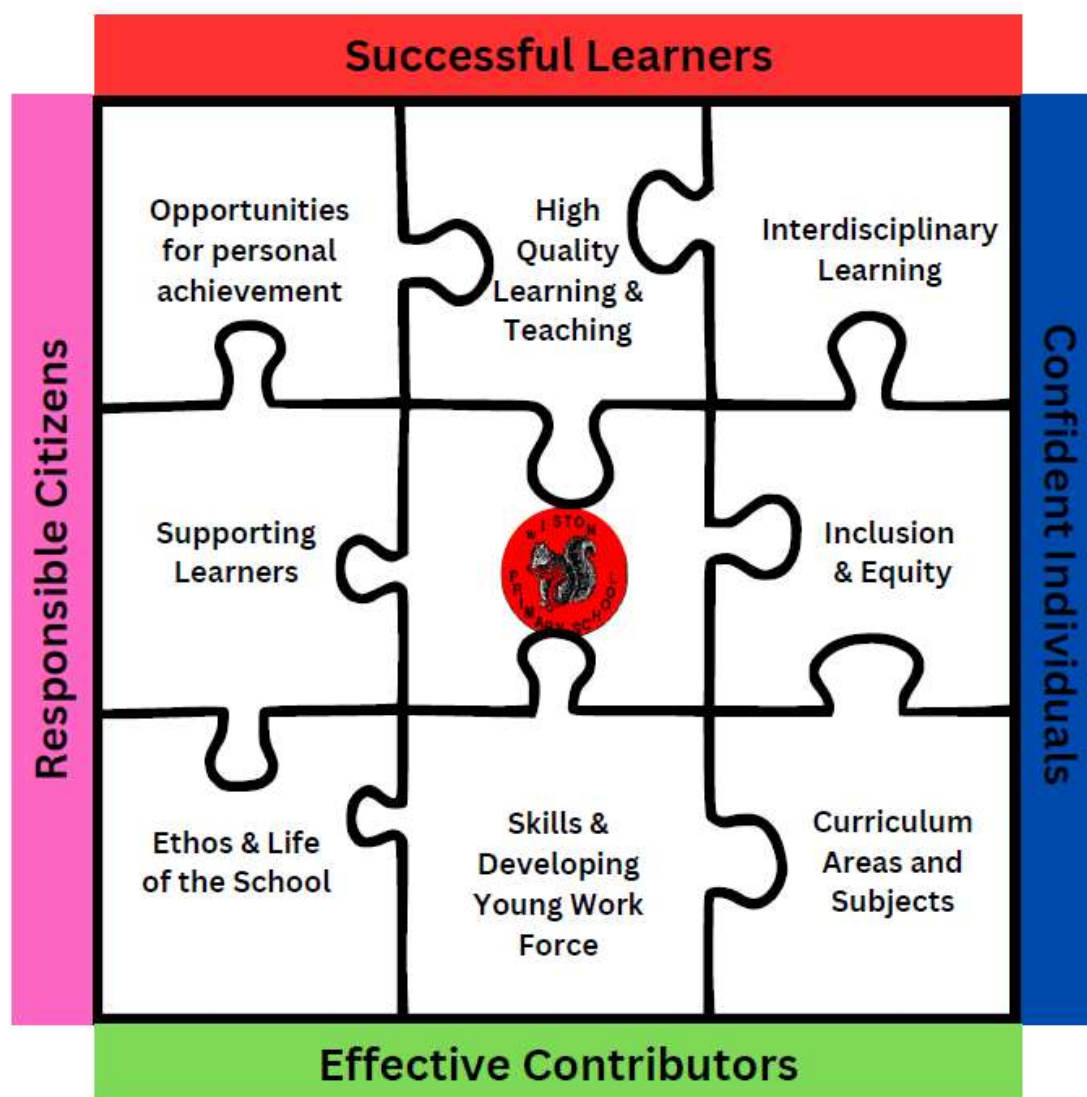
## Partner Views

Wiston is a small rural school with multi-composite classes requiring differentiation of teaching and learning for pupils of different ability levels as well as meeting the needs of children of children who are neurodiverse. There are strong, positive relationships with pupils, parent/carers and external agencies, including Specialist Support and Educational Psychologist. The school supports holistic development - social-emotional learning, leadership and responsibility.

Finally, there are good partnerships with local community providing opportunities to engage in vocational training.

Specialist Support Teacher



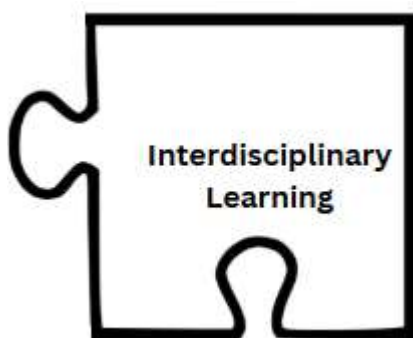


At Wiston, we create and seek opportunities for personal achievement for all learners considering their interests, skills and our rural setting. We are proud of all achievements, big and small, and recognise that this looks different for all individuals. We provide regular opportunities to celebrate pupils' personal achievements in and out of school. We encourage pupils to share out of school achievements and these



are displayed in the school. Pupils are involved in reflecting on their learning and target setting through learner conversations and pupil profiles. Parents/carers are actively involved in sharing and celebrating achievements for both their individual child and the school as a whole. The varied programme of extra-curricular activities and clubs offer opportunities for all our pupils.

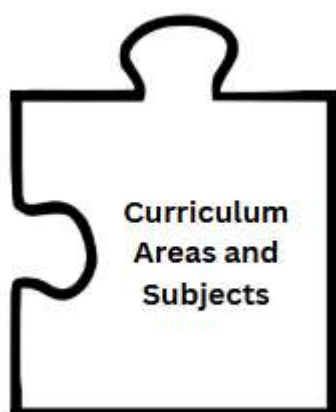
- Star of the Week
- Values Cards
- Celebrating achievements and experiences through the school app, school website, termly newsletters and SLC Education Sway
- Celebrating wider achievements through displays
- Learning wall
- Positive praise and encouragement in our daily practice
- Leadership opportunities - YLOL, JRSO etc
- After school clubs
- Involvement in showcases and assemblies
- Participation in competitions and events in the local community- Biggar Little Festival Competition, Road Safety Calendar Competition, SLC Clydesdale Dance Festival and Cross Country
- Opportunities to share jotters with the SLT
- Ownership of their pupil profiles to evaluate their learning and set targets
- Opportunities for pupil led learning
- P5-7 Music tuition
- P3-7 Swimming
- P7 Residential
- Working in partnership with organisations and the local community
- Pupils have the opportunity to upload and share achievements and experiences on the class Google Classroom stream



At Wiston Primary School, we use Interdisciplinary Learning to promote the transfer of knowledge and skills across subject boundaries. Through this we encourage connections to be made across the curriculum within relevant and enjoyable contexts.

Rolling programmes are in place with suggested themes linked to relevant bundled experiences and outcomes to ensure coverage and progression. We make use of

class discussion and KWLs to ensure we are responsive to children's needs and interests. School trips are planned to provide breadth and depth to pupil's learning. A clear focus is on developing skills for learning, life and work.



Our learners experience a Broad General Education which includes the experiences and outcomes across eight curricular areas, progressing through the levels, as far as this is consistent with each pupil's learning needs and prior achievements. Progression planners are in place for all 8 curricular areas. A strong grasp of Numeracy and Literacy skills alongside positive HWB provide a strong foundation in which pupils can build learning on.

Ensuring progression at an appropriate pace is a key focus for us at Wiston Primary, and we aim to achieve this through planning, self-evaluation, assessment and our quality assurance processes. Tracking and monitoring is in place to track the progress of all pupils in all curricular areas.

The eight curricular areas are delivered through a blend of discrete subject learning, cross curricular themes or topics and interdisciplinary opportunities, allowing pupils to develop as Successful Learners. The planning of our teaching comes directly from CfE Experiences and Outcomes from which our learning Intentions and Success Criteria are created/shared ensuring children understand their expectations of the lesson. Our assessments are planned using the Benchmarks.

Prior knowledge and personal interests of pupils are taken into account in order to make learning relevant and enjoyable. Most importantly, we aim for pupils to understand what they are learning and why, and also how they can improve. A range of learning experiences, active learning, collaborative learning and enquiry is evident in the school. Timetables and year overviews ensure all curricular areas are taught.

We have a variety of teaching and learning resources which teachers use thoughtfully to ensure the learning taking place is progressive and challenging. The varied expertise and experience of class teachers is utilised. We promote the use of a digital curriculum, and pupils make very good use of technology across the curriculum. Staff make good use of our outdoor spaces and weekly outdoor learning sessions are encouraged. Our curriculum is designed to develop the whole child and to equip them

with the skills, knowledge and attributes which they will need to adapt and thrive in the 21st century. A clear focus is evident on developing children's skills for learning, life and work.



Our pupils are encouraged to be active members of the school community from Primary 1 and are given leadership opportunities at every stage, allowing children to grow as confident individuals aware of how to bring about change.

We are a Gold Reading School, have our Rights Respecting School Bronze Award, have a gold Sports Scotland School Award and have 2 Attachment Informed Trauma Sensitive Jigsaw Pieces.

Close partnerships are formed and nurtured with key stakeholders. We foster a welcoming environment where parents feel listened to and included. Local community links have been developed over a number of years and are valued.

The experiences below ensure pupils have opportunities to put the school values into action and to develop as Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors. We seek the views of pupils on a regular basis and act on feedback and suggestions.

- All stakeholders are consulted about the Vision and Values; this is embedded in all aspects of school life.
- Parents/carers are actively involved in school life: Parent Council, School App and Parents' night
- School Leadership Groups for all pupils: Reading School, School Improvement and Rights Respecting Schools Group
- JRSO Officers
- KWL Grids
- Young Leaders of Learning
- Aifl strategies
- Breakfast Club
- After school/lunch clubs
- Pupil led masterclasses

- Opportunities for transition- P6 and P7 attend BHS transition events, and Nursery partnerships
- Outdoor learning
- Whole school nurturing approaches
- Local community partnerships – Wiston Lodge and Braw Clan
- Responsive experiences in classes
- Involvement in showcases and assemblies
- Involvement with charities
- High levels of parental attendance



The success of our curriculum is underpinned by high quality teaching and learning delivered by highly motivated, experienced staff who have a deep knowledge of the individual learners. Self-evaluation, along with collegiality, quality assurance and a commitment to career long professional learning ensure that teaching and learning approaches are up to date, relevant to our context, effective and consistently high quality.

We aim to create a learning environment which motivates, engages and challenges each individual while also remaining true to the nurturing principles which inform our relationships policy.

The multi composite nature of our school dictates that we adopt a variety of different approaches to meet the needs of a range of ages, abilities and learning styles. We are resource rich, have access to inspirational outdoor space and seek to overcome the barriers of rural isolation by organising high quality excursions and welcoming visitors with a particular expertise to further engage and enthuse our learners, providing a window to the world beyond our setting.

Our assessment calendar demonstrates a range of assessments used to evidence progress. Using the 'Fact, Story, Action' approach summative assessment data along with a variety of formative assessments and professional judgements are used to form an overall picture of individual attainment and achievement.

High quality learning and teaching includes the following:

- Highly motivated staff
- Positive relationships with all stakeholders
- Nurturing principles embedded in daily life of school
- Responsive planning
- Differentiated learning
- Assessment informs next steps
- Range of teaching approaches used
- Active learning
- Outdoor learning
- Skills based learning – skills for learning, life and work
- All stakeholders involved and consulted
- Use of progression pathways
- Wide variety of resources used
- 7 key principles of Curriculum Design embedded
- Regular evaluation
- Effective forward planning and evaluation
- Clear learning intentions/success criteria
- Range of questioning
- Pupils challenged and supported



Inclusion and equity are key to achieving the Curriculum for Excellence's goal of developing learners as: Successful learners, Confident individuals, Responsible citizens and Effective contributors. Wiston Primary School is an inclusive community where everyone will achieve success for today and be prepared for tomorrow by attaining, believing and achieving.

Our teaching is based on the belief that all children are unique, and each child has differing abilities and educational needs. We set high expectations in everything we do and continually strive to raise standards by providing stimulating activities and experiences that make learning enjoyable. Curriculum for Excellence aims to close the

attainment gap between the most and least advantaged learners. Equity is not about treating every learner the same but about ensuring everyone gets the support they need to succeed.

We ensure inclusion, equity and equality are at the heart of everything we do.

- Opportunities for families to learn together
- Targeted interventions at all stages.
- Cost of the School Day Policy.
- Robust and reliable attainment data.

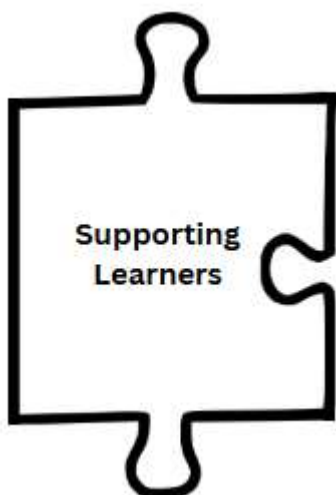


Learners need to be flexible and adaptable, with the capacity to develop skills which they will need for the rapidly changing challenges of life, learning and work. The skills for learning, life and work for are often crosscutting and transferable across the whole curriculum.

In session 2023/2024 skills development was part of our School Improvement Plan, recognising the need for a consistent approach using the SLC framework. Staff developed a shared understanding and language around the development of skills and across the curriculum children can confidently identify and recognise skills used. This is now fully embedded in day-to-day teaching and learning at Wiston. Teachers consider the context for the learning and, where possible, make links to community members or contacts who's professional or personal experiences could enhance engagement and relevance for learners.

We are also involved in the Education Scotland project Young Leaders of Learning. Last year (2023/24) we worked closely with Carnwath and Libberton Primary looking at skills development and STEM. This year we have been working with Tinto and Libberton focussing on the HGIOURS theme 'relationships'.

Every 2 years we hold a World of Work/Careers Fair inviting local businesses and trades to come in and chat to the children about their work. Children use their skills language to construct appropriate questions.



### **Additional Support - Staged Intervention and Planning**

The purpose of the staged intervention process is to provide a framework for education establishments to assess, identify and plan to address the additional support needs of all children and young people.

The school follows all SLC advice as documented in The Framework for Inclusion and Equality. SLC advocates a 4 staged intervention process:

**Stage 1** - Class Teacher/Classroom support

**Stage 2** - Establishment Interventions (SA/Nurture)

**Stage 3** - Support from Education Resources (SST/EP)

**Stage 4** - Support from external agencies (SALT/OT/PHYSIO/SW)

Specialist Support Teacher plays a consultative role throughout the process.

Throughout the staged intervention process parents and children are involved and consulted.

### **Transitions**

We recognise that transitions can be anxious times for pupils and parents and we aim to minimise this through various programme which are relevant to each stage.

#### **Nursery to Primary 1 Transition**

- A series of transition activities where staff visit feeder nurseries and pupils are invited into school
- Parent Information Meeting with HT

#### **Primary 6/7 to Secondary School**

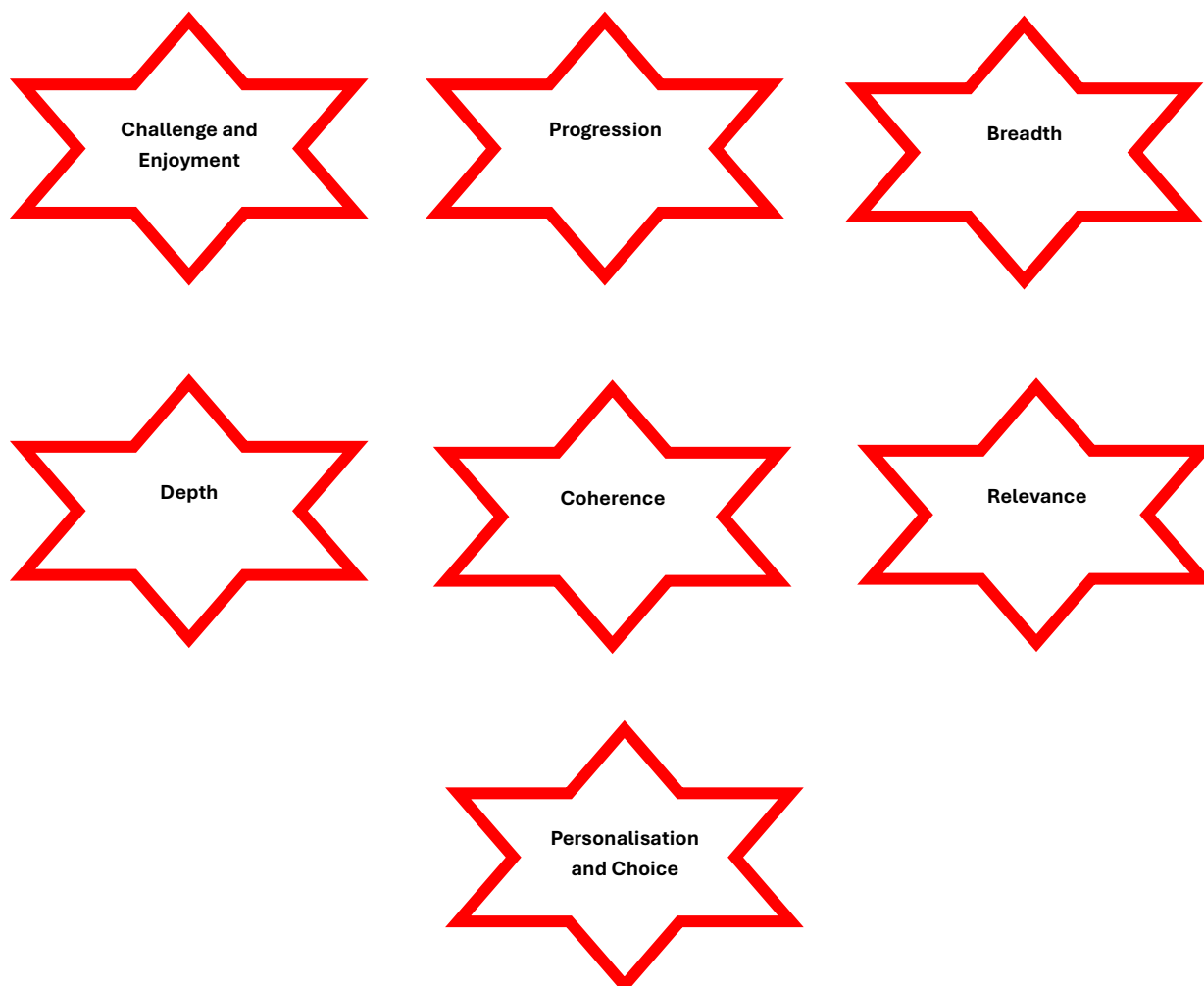
- We work collaboratively with Biggar High School who deliver a coherent transition programme
- There are a variety of events organised by the high school and Active Schools that allow children the opportunity to form friendships.



- **Our Curriculum Design**

How are we embedding the Seven Principles of Curriculum Design?

When planning for children's learning, all practitioners take into account the 7 Principles of Curriculum Design to ensure:



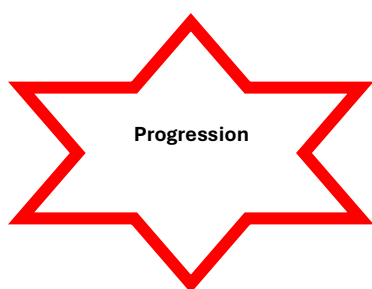
## **Design Principles of the Curriculum for Excellence**

Our curriculum is shaped by the seven national design principles to ensure it is well-balanced, inclusive, and meaningful for all learners:

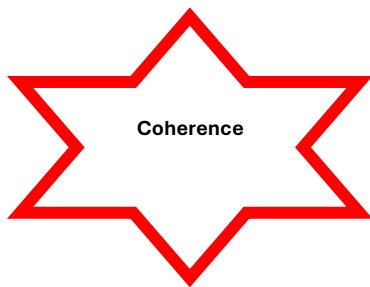
Some examples of how we do this are:

- We embed a nurturing approach across all areas of the school and nursery, ensuring our children feel ready and supported to learn.

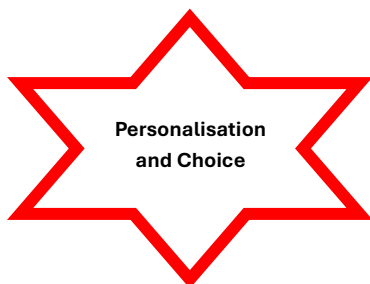
- We focus on developing skills for learning, life and work.
- We ensure high quality teaching and learning takes place at all times.
- We ensure we carry out effective planning.
- We engage in effective self-evaluation activities to identify next steps.
- We ensure we follow the staged intervention process where required.
- We ensure our pupils are provided with the appropriate support where required.
- We ensure excellent communication between all stakeholders, ensuring effective team working.
- We encourage regular pupil voice and leadership opportunities.
- We plan for differentiation to ensure ALL children's needs are met at all times.
- We use a range of different teaching styles and approaches to cater to different learning styles and needs.
- We use assessment information to inform next steps.
- We encourage regular parental engagement opportunities.
- We carry out effective multi-agency working to support our children and families.
- We celebrate and discuss achievements, both in school and out of school.



All learners experience continuous progression in their learning. Each stage builds upon earlier knowledge and achievements. Learners progress at a rate which meets their needs with appropriate support and challenge. At Wiston, we consider this carefully, ensuring progression across the curriculum every year within our multi-composite class. We make use of progression planners for all curricular areas and closely monitor progress through regular assessment and tracking meetings.



All learners experience the curriculum as a coherent whole, with smooth and well-paced progression through the experiences and outcomes, particularly across transitions. Within the multi-composite class, we benefit from a thorough knowledge of the learning and experiences that have taken place previously. We work collaboratively during periods of transition to ensure we are building on prior learning and achievement in a manner which meets learners' needs.



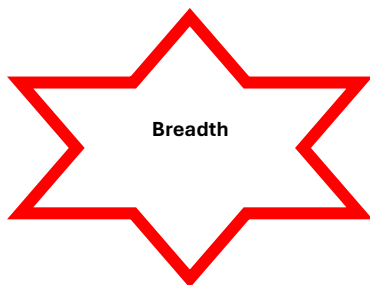
Small class sizes allow us to respond to individual needs and support interests, aptitudes and talents. Learners are involved in the planning of their learning and have regular opportunities to exercise responsible personal choice. Learners are also involved in choosing and leading extra-curricular activities based on their interests.





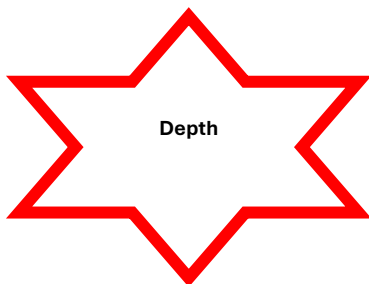
Learners are encouraged to engage in stimulating and enjoyable learning experiences that stretch their thinking and abilities.

Small class size enables personalised learning, allowing teachers to challenge each pupil appropriately while keeping learning enjoyable. Examples include - Outdoor learning, project-based tasks (e.g. farming, wildlife), cross-age mentoring, and interactive activities which can maintain high engagement and stretch pupils' thinking.

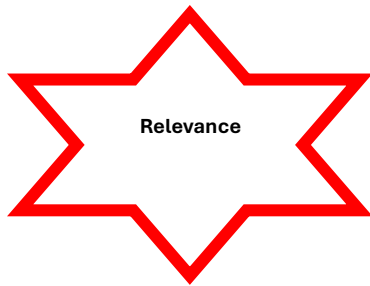


A wide range of learning experiences across all curriculum areas ensures pupils develop a broad base of knowledge and skills.

Interdisciplinary projects are planned, reviewed and updated where required to ensure pupils experience all curriculum areas in creative ways.



Pupils have opportunities to explore subjects in more detail, leading to a deeper understanding of concepts and their applications. Fewer pupils mean more opportunity for deep discussion, reflection, and sustained inquiry.



Learning is connected to real-life contexts and future pathways, ensuring that pupils understand the value and purpose of what they are learning. Rural schools naturally embed local relevance—students see direct links between school and community e.g. Involving pupils in local events, community history, environmental issues, or rural economy topics like agriculture and tourism.

