



The Academy of Woodlands



Our School Prospectus





Welcome

The Academy of Woodlands is a community school, situated in the heart of Gillingham, Kent. As a three-form entry primary school that also welcomes children from the age of 2 into our nursery, we are passionate about the difference we can make to the lives of children, families and the local community not only now but for the future. Being situated in a diverse community we provide a caring and secure environment in which children are valued as individuals and where we can celebrate as well as develop an appreciation and understanding of the cultures and beliefs of others in our school community and beyond.

Here at The Academy of Woodlands, every individual is valued and challenged to succeed in all they do, whilst being encouraged to become life-long learners.

It is a great privilege for me to have the opportunity to lead a school that has an ethos which is to provide an inclusive, caring community in which everyone is valued and encouraged to grow. Our learning community is built upon the shared belief that the development of each child must be at the heart of everything we do. As a school, we are committed to providing a safe, happy and supportive environment in which everyone is encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and be inspired to 'be the best at what they do'. Our team of talented, professional and dedicated individuals really do care for the children and their families, therefore strive to develop strong and meaningful relationships with them all.

As a school, we strongly believe in the importance of developing a supportive partnership between home and school. This is essential if children are to achieve their full potential and to flourish as individuals. Working together, we can help your child to develop the skills that they will need in later life.

I hope that you will share our ambitions and aspirations for your children and enjoy 'The Woodlands Way'.

Mrs C Brown- Head of School



“Being both a parent and a teaching assistant at the school is really lovely. The children are helped to differentiate between my two different roles. The school are very supportive of making sure the work/home life balance is made. The school have also made sure that there is wraparound care available for when we are due to have any afterschool training. The school's values are really important, and they help the children to become the best they can be, but also teaches them that if it doesn't go well at the start, you can always try again”.

~ Parent voice ~

“The Academy of Woodlands provides my children with a learning environment where they both feel safe, secure, and happy. The school has positive engagements of their development, helping them to do their best and always look for ways to help them improve. They have formed great relationships with teachers throughout the school developing trust, mutual respect, emotional support, and effective communication. As a parent it has been lovely to see them gain so much confidence, feel valued and develop a passion of wanting to learn and succeed.”

~ Parent voice ~



Our Values

Flourishing as an individual (human flourishing) is a widely accepted life goal.

Our Values, which are aspirational attributes and attitudes, are the foundation for everything we do at The Academy of Woodlands. These can be nurtured to help people discover the very best of themselves, enabling them to be good citizens and prepare them for life beyond our school.

At The Academy of Woodlands, our school values underpin everything we do and are core to the ethos of our school. Our aim is to develop a community of respectful learners who not only demonstrate togetherness and resilience and perseverance in their work, but who also show kindness, respect and pride towards themselves one another.

Resilience
Empathy
Self-awareness
Pride
Excellence
Communication
Togetherness



Doing things the 'Woodlands Way'

Here at The Academy of Woodlands, every individual is valued and challenged to succeed in all they do, whilst being encouraged to become life-long learners. As a school we have devised the Woodlands Way as a set of expectations that are important to our staff, children and families.



Our School Uniform

Our uniform consists of:

- White polo shirt with collar or white shirt
- Grey trousers or shorts
- Green sweatshirt or cardigan (with or without school logo)
- Grey skirt, this should be of an appropriate length
- Grey pinafore dress or green gingham school dress during the warmer weather. This offers a lighter and more comfortable alternative while still adhering to our uniform policy.
- Footwear: Plain black shoes or smart black trainers
- Jewellery - only small stud earring/s are permitted. Please discuss any other items with your class teacher.
- Nail varnish, fake nails and make up of any sort are not permitted.



P.E kit consists of-

- A t-shirt in your child's community colour (red, green, yellow or blue). Your child's community will be in their home school contact book. The only logo permitted is the school logo.
- Either black or blue shorts or tracksuit bottoms (weather dependent).
- Either a black or blue jumper or hoodie (weather dependent).
- Appropriate footwear, either black plimsolls or all black or white trainers.
- Football kits/ football shirts are not allowed.
- Trainers are allowed. No football boots
- No football or rugby boots for PE lessons for the safety of children.

Forest school kit consists of-

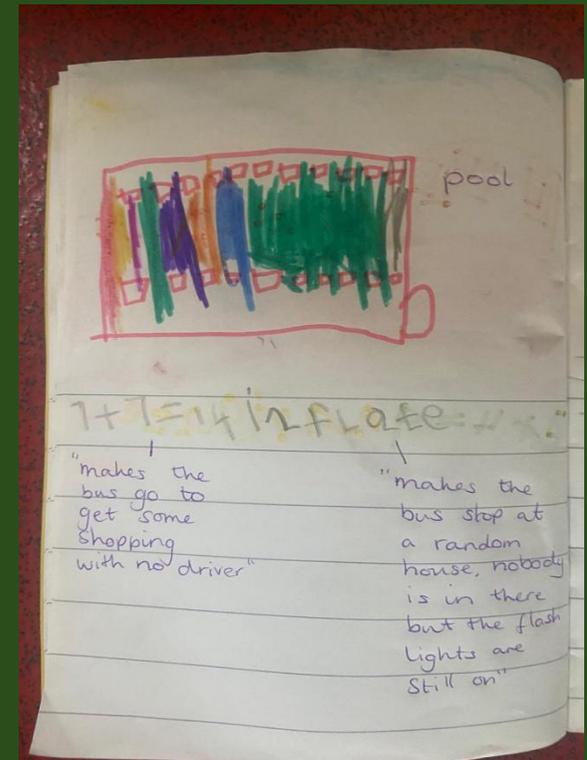
- Wellies.
- Waterproofs – either an all-in-one and/or a waterproof jacket and trousers combo. Please provide this kit in a named bag, to remain in school if possible.
- On the day of Forest School, please send your child in wearing comfortable clothes (e.g. joggers/leggings and a sweatshirt) and their usual school shoes to wear in school after the session has finished.



EYFS- ensuring strong starts

We offer a broad and balanced, child-led curriculum that is fully inclusive of all learners with a strong focus on the prime areas of learning and a love of reading. We recognise the importance of play; the joy it brings to our children and role it plays in child development. Our curriculum enables children to build skills for year one and indeed for life, by allowing them to be on a pathway to self-regulation, curious about the world, independent learners, great communicators to prepare them for the future. We are very proud of our early years provision and we strive to ensure that our team of highly dedicated and passionate staff continue to maintain high standards of education for the youngest children in our care, giving them the very best start in life.

Daily activities include Drawing Club, which sparks creativity, storytelling and imagination through the three Ms; mark making, making conversation and mathematics through weekly language-rich texts. Children have focused sessions on Mastering Number to build strong early maths skills, which are developed through enhancements in our continuous provision. Children also benefit from daily Read Write Inc. Phonics lessons, laying a solid foundation for reading and writing. Each week, pupils enjoy Physical Education sessions and take part in Forest School, encouraging physical development, outdoor exploration, and a love of nature.



Outdoor learning is a large part of our curriculum. We ensure every child has the right to play and experience the world beyond the classroom as an integral part of our children's learning and development. Under direction of our Forest School Leader, we also aim for all our children to experience the outdoors and nature in a practical, safe and supported environment. The EYFS team recognise the importance of community and are committed to working in partnership with parents and carer to support children's progress. Community involvement is an essential part of our curriculum, and we celebrate the diversity within throughout each year.



Forest School

Here at The Academy of Woodlands, we prioritise the personal development of our children and one way that we have achieved this is through adding a full time Forest School teacher to our team to lead on the delivery of Forest School. Below you will find more information about why Forest School offers unique and exciting experiences which help individuals to develop a connection to the outdoors and the natural world. We are lucky enough to have our very own Forest School site here at Woodlands, which we use all year round, and in all weathers. Every child accesses a weekly session over two terms each year, allowing them time to explore and experience the changing weather, the seasons and to follow their own interests in a natural environment. Forest School also encourages the children to appreciate, care for and respect the natural environment. This regular immersion in a natural setting is beneficial for physical, emotional and social wellbeing.

Forest School is an inspirational and nature-based process. It has a child-led ethos, meaning that the children themselves drive what they want to do. They have the time and the space, with access to a range of natural resources, to use their imagination and interests to create, build, question, explore, play, wonder, investigate, and much more. The roles of the Forest School leader and the supporting adults are to observe the children as they play and learn, and to offer support, resources and experiences to build on their individual learning and interests. Learning new skills outdoors such as shelter building, cooking over a fire, and tool use give children valuable opportunities to learn new skills. It also gives children the chance to learn how to problem solve as well manage acceptable risk, always with supporting adults on hand.



Forest School is an integral part of our wider curriculum. Class-based learning is supported and enhanced through discrete links to the curriculum in relevant subjects throughout the year. It supports all aspects of children's development, including their personal, cognitive, emotional, physical and social development. All children continue to develop the personal attributes and the attitudes which reflect the overarching values of Woodlands school. These experiences provide opportunities for children to develop resilience; to try again when they encounter a problem and to move on positively when something goes wrong. Time in nature helps to develop empathy for living things as well as for each other in the Forest School learning community. The space that Forest School provides can support children to develop self-awareness, to discover previously unknown interests and skills. They are supported to feel proud of what they can achieve outside, just as they are in the classroom, and to strive for personal excellence, to be the best they can be.



Music at The Academy of Woodlands

At The Academy of Woodlands, we foster a love and understanding of music through listening, performing and composing. Music celebrates our differences and connects us with our world, each other and ourselves. It triggers the release of feel-good chemicals into our brains, helps with concentration and affects how we feel. To ensure our pupils have the best opportunity to acquire and nurture their musical talents, we use 'Charanga', a program that teaches the children to listen and respond to a variety of musical genres, through the medium of singing, playing instruments, exploring form and composing their own musical creations. We have a wide range of instruments here at The Academy of Woodlands which the children all have the opportunity to use and create music with. We also have weekly singing assemblies with our key stage groups where children can learn and sing songs altogether.

Our extra-curricular music opportunities are second to none. We offer free instrumental tuition for four different instruments, performing opportunities at the Central Theatre and Rochester Cathedral with Medway Music Association, Rocksteady tuition and for the Year 6 children, a chance to perform in an end of year musical in our very own Oak Theatre. Previous musicals we have performed are Matilda, High School Musical and Frozen which have all involved singing, dancing, acting and lots of lasting memories for the children.



Sports and PE at The Academy of Woodlands

At The Academy of Woodlands, we have created a competitive yet inclusive sporting ethos and culture. As a school, we ensure that all children have access to a broad and balance curriculum, from football and basketball to dance and gymnastics. We have also integrated unfamiliar activities such as OAA (Outdoor Adventurous Activities), Tri-golf, Boccia and FMS (Fundamental Movement Skills) for our younger learners to help build core skills. Each child has 2 hours of structured high-quality Physical Education lessons that are led by a specialist PE teacher, Mr Collins and Mrs Stone, who solely teaches PE and School Sport.

From year 3 to year 6, each class has 6 hours of swimming lessons at Medway Park. This is to ensure we are working towards the National Curriculum aims of ensuring that all children can swim 25 meters confidently and competently before they leave for secondary school.

As a school, our children compete in sports festivals and Mini Youth Games for tri-golf, hockey, badminton, table tennis and many more. These festivals and events are accessible for children from year 1 to year 6. We also participate in local leagues for football and basketball, and we participate in trust events that include a few of our local schools for football, boccia and athletics. We also link with local community clubs to provide additional specialist coaching during after-school clubs.

We celebrate the end of every academic year with a sports day event for each individual year group and a sports award assembly to celebrate individual talents and efforts in particular areas of the curriculum.



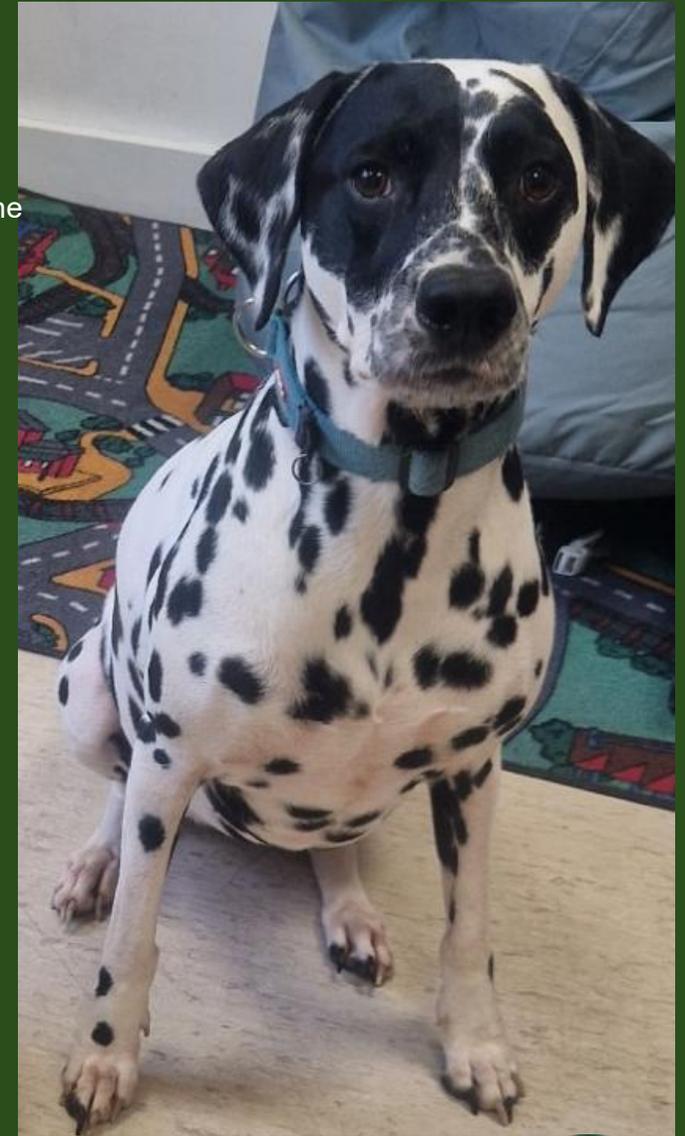
Our School Dog- Dottie

We love having Dottie around school. She is a trained therapy dog who works alongside Mrs Page, she lives with her too.

Dottie is here to help with:

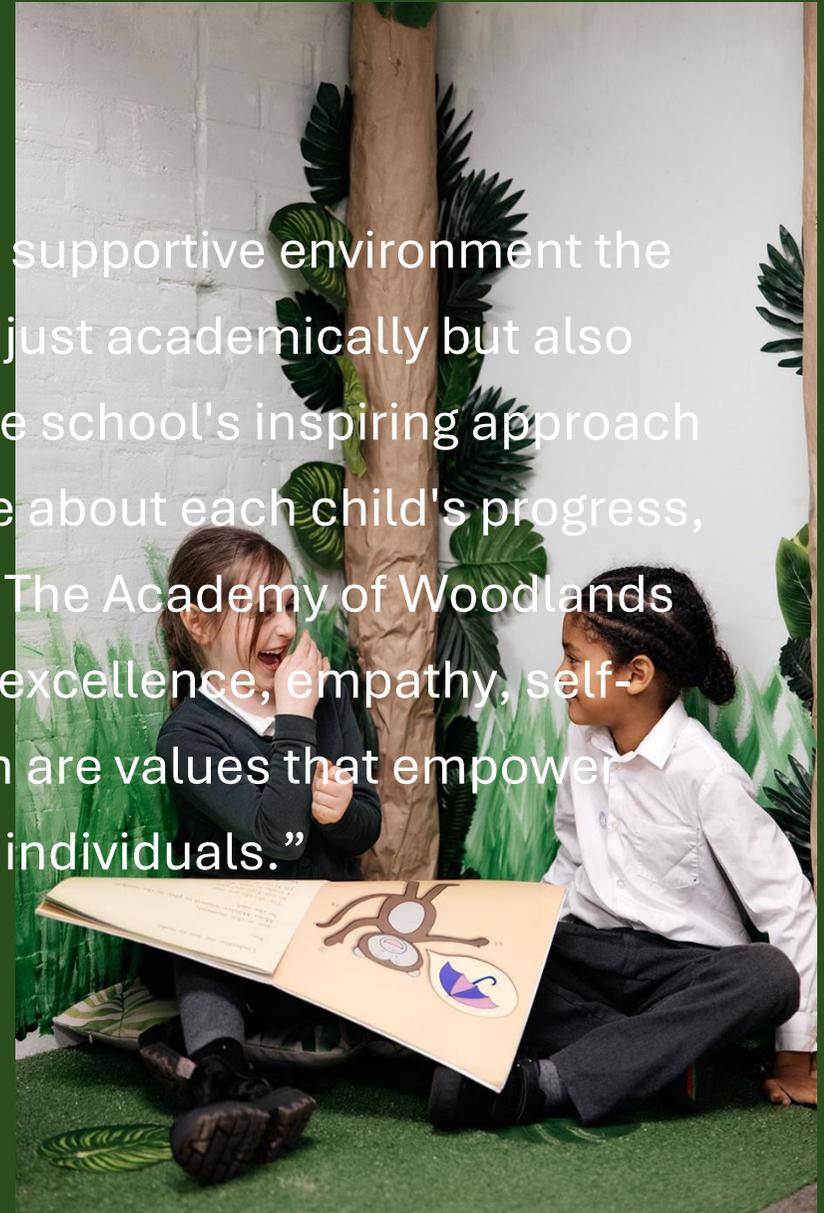
- Anxiety reduction
- Attachment and relationship building
- Communication and social anxieties
- Attention and behaviour challenges
- Social interactions

Children across our whole school will get to engage with Dottie when she is around school or welcoming families on our school gates. Some children will take part in more intense work with Dottie as part of an intervention programmes.





“As a parent, I see first-hand the nurturing and supportive environment the school provides. My children thrive here, not just academically but also socially and emotionally and this is thanks to the school's inspiring approach to education. The dedicated staff genuinely care about each child's progress, making it a wonderful place to learn and grow. The Academy of Woodlands promotes respect, resilience, togetherness, excellence, empathy, self-awareness, communication and pride which are values that empower children to grow into confident individuals.”



Enriching Curriculum

At The Academy of Woodlands, we are committed to providing our children with experiences that enhance their learning experiences. This includes WOW moments, education visits and school-based workshops.

Some examples of these are trips to landmarks and museums in London, exploring our local community, visits to various places of worship and much, much more.

As our children begin year 6, they will have the opportunities to attend a week-long residential visit and those that do not wish to attend will experience a staycation.

We welcome our families into school at least 3 times a year to experience some of the learning opportunities, experiences and fun our children experience within our curriculum offer. These are called '**Learn with me, Celebrate with me**' session.



Extra-curricular activities

Not only do we ensure an engaging and developmental learning experience during school hours, but we also commit to an extensive offer of extra-curricular activities that are free of charge.

Our children and families value the opportunities our children have to develop interests, hobbies and try out new things during these clubs that are predominantly run by school staff.

Example of extra-curricular activities that run from 15:10-16:20 most day are-

- Computing club
- Cooking club
- Scrabble club
- Recorder club
- Eco club
- First Aid club
- Football club

These extra-curricular activities are also used to invite selected children that are recognised for a particular skill or interest to practice and prepare for any upcoming competition or events.

