

Curriculum Policy



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FreshSteps Independent School

Curriculum Design

Curriculum Intent Statement

FreshSteps Independent School provides an alternative and adapted curriculum for pupils with special educational needs. We recognise that many of our pupils have faced challenges in their education prior to their arrival at FreshSteps, which have severely impacted not only their progress but additionally their social, emotional and mental health. Therefore, we provide a broad and varied curriculum that develops academic skills, creativity and behaviour and social skills; In many cases it is necessary to focus on the later in order to improve academic achievement. To this end the curriculum is flexible and personalised to meet the needs of the individual at the point at which they arrive.

The curriculum is designed to provide an environment where pupils can reengage with learning. Our pastoral support systems empower pupils with the skills required to overcome barriers and promotes a love of learning. This is achieved using internal and external interventions. The inclusion of therapeutic learning is evident across the curriculum.

At FreshSteps, we recognise the importance of developing core skills in reading, writing, communication and maths. We understand that these skills are fundamental to learning. Furthermore, many of our pupils arrive performing below their expected ability. As such, the intervention programmes featured across the curriculum are targeted, rigorous and impactful.

When planning the curriculum FreshSteps recognised that pupils learn best when activities are varied and tailored to meet their specific needs. We aim to develop pupils who love the challenge of learning, are resilient and curious, and these qualities should not be hindered by pupils' starting points.

Our curriculum is designed to support pupils in developing the knowledge and skills they need to function effectively in the community and succeed in future life. To this end, the curriculum provides specific learning days and enrichment activities where pupils' learning focuses on topics such; careers, aspirations, staying safe, promoting literacy and British values. Weekly assemblies and pupil voice provide a platform where pupils learn to take responsibility for their school community and participate in decision making.

Principles:

- Provide an alternative personalised curriculum accessible to all.
- Learning and teaching is ambitious and raises attainment for all pupils regardless of their starting points.
- Prioritise reading, writing, communication and maths across the curriculum and use targeted interventions to narrow gaps.
- Provide activities and interventions that support pupils in the use of strategies that will enable them to improve their behaviour.
- Develop pupils' creativity and artistic knowledge.
- Embed sports as part of the curriculum to promote pupils' social, emotional and physical development.
- Develop pupils socially, morally, culturally and spiritually as members of the school and wider community in modern Britain.
- Prepare pupils for the next phase of learning and adult life.

- Promote and emphasis wellbeing, healthy living and safety.

Implementation

The school is currently organised into 6 teaching groups:

- One key stage 1 class
- Two key stage 2 classes
- Two key stage 3 classes
- One key stage 4 and post 16 class

Differentiation & Personalisation

FreshSteps seeks to ensure that an alternative curriculum is delivered and lessons are well planned, engaging and challenge all pupils regardless of ability. The school is flexible in its approach to grouping pupils by aptitude, believing that one size does not fit all. Staff use a variety of approaches to differentiation, ensuring pupils individual progress is maximised and individual needs are met.

Primary Phase – Key Stage 1 & 2

At the primary phase teaching and learning focuses on developing literacy and numeracy through daily phonics interventions, guided reading and mathematics programmes. FreshSteps uses ICT-based resources such as Reading Eggs, Mathletics, Prodigy and Twinkle to aid learning.

Pupils are also taught Science, PSHE, Humanities and ICT. The use of ICT is embedded across all subjects in the Primary phase.

Wellbeing healthy living and safety are taught and promoted through Science, PSHE, Humanities and ICT, as well as during play activities.

Pupils learn about relationships focusing on; Families and people who care for me, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe. At the primary phase sex education focusing on preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings and how a baby is conceived and born.

Local outdoor spaces are used daily to engage pupils in structured play.

PE lessons taught by our PE coordinator and school-based mentors are differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils. Primary pupils also attend weekly boxing and horse-riding sessions, as well as football with the Tottenham Hotspurs Foundation.

Year 6 transition

At FreshSteps we understand that it is vital to appropriately prepare pupils for the next phase of learning and development. Therefore, pupils in year 6 undertake a period of transition to the Secondary phase which takes place during the summer term. They learn about the changes, challenges and joys of the next phase. This includes periods spent experiencing the secondary teaching curriculum, sharing social spaces and activities. During the transition pupils are supported by the whole school community, including parents who are kept informed of pupils' progress.

Secondary Phase – Key Stage 3 and 4

English

In English, FreshSteps places a strong emphasis on equal opportunity and providing an environment in which all pupils are encouraged to become independent in their thinking and the expression of their ideas. The three main components of speaking and listening, reading and writing are taught interdependently and students are expected to take responsibility for their learning, as individuals and as part of a team. Teaching and learning takes place in a collaborative environment of stimulating interactive lessons and extra-curricular enrichment activities.

Pupil will learn how to:

- Demonstrate skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing that are necessary to communicate with others confidently, effectively, precisely and appropriately.
- Express themselves creatively and imaginatively.
- Become critical readers of a range of texts.
- Use reading to develop their skills as writers.
- Understand the patterns, structures and conventions of written and spoken English.
- Understand the impact of variations in spoken and written language and how they relate to identity and cultural diversity.
- Select and adapt speech and writing to different situations and audiences.

Facilities are designed to support a fun hands-on approach to English. These include a wide range of highly visual and interactive resources, some of which are ICT based.

English teaching and learning is enhanced by:

- Educational trips for all key stages
- After school and Holiday revision sessions
- Saturday School exam preparation
- Literacy Clubs
- Homework Clubs
- The use of online programmes such as; BBC Bitesize and Reading Eggs

Pupils in upper key stage 3 will follow Entry level Functional Skills. **At key stage 4 and post 16** pupils will follow Functional Skills levels 1 – 2 or GCSE specifications for the AQA examination board, depending on their ability.

Additionally, pupils at **post 16** can follow English or literacy related ASDAN courses.

Mathematics

FreshSteps provides a mathematical environment in which a pupil may reach his or her maximum levels of achievement and understanding. Pupils are helped to develop an appreciation and enjoyment of mathematics as a subject in its own right, thus enabling future progression in the subject.

Pupils in upper key stage 3 will follow Entry level Functional Skills. **At key stage 4 and post 16** pupils will follow Functional Skills levels 1 – 2 or GCSE specifications for the AQA examination board, depending on their ability.

Additionally, pupils at **post 16** can follow Maths related ASDAN courses.

Facilities are designed to support an interactive approach to mathematics; this includes the use of ICT which is a strong feature in the maths department.

Mathematics teaching and learning is enhanced by:

- Educational trips for all key stages
- Maths club and competitions
- After school and Holiday revision sessions
- The use of online programmes such as; BBC Skill wise, Nrich, Maths, BBC Bitesize, Cool Math, Kahoot and Prodigy.

Science

In Science pupils are taught to understand the nature of the changing world in which we live.

Teaching and learning in science aims to equip pupils with the fundamental skills required to function in everyday life as well as instilling a sense of responsibility to our environment through the exploration of ethical, cultural and moral issues. FreshSteps aims to develop in pupils a curiosity about the scientific skills required by; engineers, chemists, doctors, computer scientists, physicists and others specialists who contribute to the world's future.

At Key stage 3 our schemes offer an alternative science programme that supports the aims of the National Curriculum:

- Pupils develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics.
- Pupils develop understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science through different types of science enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them.
- Pupils are equipped with the scientific knowledge required to understand the uses and implications of science, today and for the future.

Facilities are designed to support an interactive approach to science; this includes the use of ICT which is a strong feature in the department.

Pupils in upper key stage 3 will follow Entry level Functional Skills. **At key stage 4 and post 16** pupils will follow Functional Skills levels 1 – 2 or GCSE specifications for the AQA examination board, depending on their ability.

Additionally, pupils at **post 16** can follow Science related ASDAN courses.

Science teaching and learning is enhanced by:

- Science Practical's
- Group activities
- Science quizzes for assessments
- Making use of the wider community for field trips and Ecological studies
- Educational trips (Science Museum, Coca-Cola factory)
- Science club
- After school and holiday revision sessions
- The use of online programmes such as; BBC Bitesize and Kahoot

Design and Technology

Studying design and technology at FreshSteps makes an important contribution towards the pupils' preparation for living in a contemporary, changing and multi-cultural society. Furthermore it enhances their understanding of the world of manufacturing and its impact on the environment.

At Fresh pupils will learn about materials and their properties, and designing and making principles, through the completion of project based work. Social moral and ethical issues are embedded and explored within each project. Pupils are empowered to develop confidence in the use of a range of practical equipment, including; machines, computer aided design and computer aided manufacture.

At Key stage 3 our schemes offer an alternative design and technology programme that supports the aims of the National Curriculum:

- Develop the creative, technical and practical expertise needed to perform everyday tasks confidently and to participate successfully in an increasingly technological world.
- Build and apply a repertoire of knowledge, understanding and skills in order to design and make high-quality prototypes and products for a wide range of users.
- Critique, evaluate and test their ideas and products and the work of others.

At key stage 4 and post 16 Pupils will follow The Unit Award Scheme or GCSE specifications for the AQA examination board, depending on their ability.

Additionally, pupils at **post 16** can follow DT related ASDAN course.

Design and Technology teaching and learning is enhanced by:

- Practical based tasks
- A well-equipped workshop
- The use of Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided Manufacture
- DT Club
- Educational trips
- After school club
- After school and holiday revision sessions
- The use of online programmes such as; BBC Bitesize, technologystudent.com, Mr DT and DT Online.

Personal, Social & Health Education

In PSHE at FreshSteps pupils are taught skills in; critical reflection, decision-making and managing risk and developing relationships and working with others. PSHE is also used to explore many of the issues that impact our pupils and the wider community in which they live.

Pupils study the following themes:

- Personal Goals and Aspirations
- Equality
- Personal Safety
- Making a Difference
- Health & wellbeing
- Relationships
- Living in the wider world

Sexual health workshops are run by our Enfield community nurse for pupils at key stage 4.

Pupils at upper key stage 3, key stage 4 and post 16 follow the AQA QCF Award and Certification in PSHE from Entry 2 to Level 2. For this award, pupils choose from a range of topics to study such as; Personal Action Planning, Drugs Education, Personal Relationships, Careers, Diversity, Prejudice and Discrimination, Healthy Lifestyles, Applying for Jobs and Courses, Relationships, Behaviour and Practices in the Workplace, Emotional wellbeing, Personal Safety and Personal Finance.

Pupils learn about relationships and sex education, focusing on; Families, respectful relationships, including friendships, online and media, being safe, intimate and sexual relationships and including sexual health.

Additionally, pupils at **post 16** can follow PSHE related ASDAN courses.

PSHE teaching and learning is enhanced by:

- Interactive group activities
- A range of highly visual resources
- The use of ICT to enhance learning
- External speakers
- Educational trips
- A specialist nurse to support Relationships and Sex Education in the secondary phase

Information Communication Technology (ICT)

At FreshSteps pupils study Functional skills ICT, Entry 1 to Level 2. The courses are designed to equip pupils with the skills they require to operate confidently, effectively and independently when using ICT in learning, life and work. Pupils learn how to use

Pupils will develop understanding and skills in:

- Using ICT;
- Finding and selecting information;
- Developing, presenting and communicating information.

Pupils learn through a range of activities including short focused tasks and project-based work.

Health & safety and online safety are taught both explicitly and implicitly throughout all courses. This includes the need to have respect and regard for others, keeping yourself and personal data safe and protecting electronic devices.

Pupils are taught to question the reliability and validity of the information they come across by applying critical thinking skills. In addition, they learn to look for possible hidden agenda's when communicating online.

Pupils are taught to use different types of software to explore and solve problems. These include word processing, spreadsheets, presentation, internet browser and email programmes. Pupils use the Microsoft Office Suite to develop and present their work. Activities include producing multimedia presentations, entering, editing and presenting data in different formats using spreadsheets, creating flyers, leaflets and posters, using the internet to research and solve problems and using databases to organise data. Pupils also learn how to format their work making it appropriate for a given audience.

Pupils in upper key stage 3 will follow Entry level Functional Skills. **At key stage 4 and post 16** pupils will follow Functional Skills levels 1 – 2 for the OCR examination board.

Additionally, pupils at **post 16** can follow ICT related ASDAN courses.

ICT teaching and learning is enhanced by:

- A well-equipped ICT suite
- A range of highly visual resources, including those which support functional skills
- ICT club
- Educational trips
- An effective system managed by external ICT specialists
- After school club
- After school and holiday revision sessions
- The use of online programmes such as; Thinkuknow, BBC Bitesize,

Physical Education (PE)

Our pupils attend weekly school based PE sessions, football coaching with the Tottenham Hotspurs Foundation, horse riding and boxing. Additionally, gym fitness sessions are targeted to meet the needs of individuals and swimming takes place during the summer months.

At FreshSteps PE is used to:

- Improve physical health and promote healthy living
- Develop and promote good behaviour
- Develop team work and sporting attitudes
- Support good mental health and wellbeing
- Develop sporting skills

PE teaching and learning is enhanced by:

- Qualified school based teaching staff
- The use of external specialist experts and their facilities
- The use of trained coaches
- The use of local facilities

Cooking life skills

Pupils in secondary will learn how to use basic cooking equipment to make a range of food dishes. They will also focus on health & safety and nutrition.

Music

Pupils will be taught music by a specialist. The lessons are used to teach music skills and for therapeutic purposes. Those pupils that show aptitude can study for grades and certificates with certain instruments.

Languages

Pupils in secondary will be taught a language by a specialist teacher. We aim to provide them with basic communication skills in a foreign language, develop their awareness of other cultures and build confidence in oracy.

Therapeutic Curriculum Activities

At FreshSteps a range of therapeutic activities are undertaken to help pupils develop socially, emotionally, mentally and academically. Additionally, therapeutic strategies are embedded across the curriculum to attend to the needs of individuals during teaching and learning and in social activities.

Therapeutic activities include:

- Horse-riding
- Art therapy
- Lego/construction-based Therapy
- Play Therapy
- Boxing
- Tottenham Hotspur Foundation Sports and Mentoring
- Music therapy
- Regular visits to local attractions

Interventions for Academic Progress

While literacy and numeracy are promoted and reinforced in every subject with an emphasis placed on Spelling, Punctuation, Grammar and Maths, FreshSteps recognises that pupils acquire Literacy and Numeracy skills at different times and at different rates of progress. Therefore pupils who are performing significantly below their expected ability in these areas will be targeted for intervention.

Interventions:

- One to one support from in class
- One to one reading programmes
- One to one literacy programmes
- One to one numeracy programmes
- Targeted literacy lessons – group 3
- Targeted literacy lessons – group 1 & 2
- Targeted numeracy lessons - Primary
- Multi-sensory Phonics and Reading scheme
- Catch-up lessons in maths, English, science, ICT and DT
- Targeted speech and language therapy lessons
- Revision classes – after school, holidays and Saturday school.

Preparing for the world of work

Careers and Work experience

The Careers Education and Guidance programme at FreshSteps aims to prepare young people for the world of work and to provide them with a general understanding of its opportunities and challenges. The school has an up-to-date and comprehensive stock of careers literature, both general and specific. All pamphlets, brochures and books are available for pupils to browse through

and borrow. Pupils begin their careers programme in Year 9 by discussing career options and exploring potential courses they would like to study.

Guidance at key stage 3 is generally through the PSHE curriculum. However, careers advisers from LBE are available for consultation. Our careers advisor visits the school at least once a month or as required for key stage 4.

Pupils continue their learning during weekly tutor periods. The sessions offer pupils the opportunity to consider the world of work and their own role in it. They are encouraged to use the information services and staff to fully research areas that are of interest to them.

This programme continues into Year 11. During this time all students are interviewed by Careers Advisers. Pupils receive follow-up help and guidance until they are decided about their future career paths.

FreshSteps also provides work experience and has a number of well-established links in the world of work, the local community and across London.

Activities:

- Pupils at key stage 4 undertake individual and group sessions with a local authority careers advisor.
- Pupils at key stage 4 have the opportunity to undertake 1 to 2 weeks of work experience in a field of personal interest.
- Pupils at key stage 4 are supported in exploring the world of work in the local community.
- Pupils at key stage 4 have the opportunity to undertake a Level 2 coaching qualification through the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation.
- All pupils take part in aspirational days.
- All pupils take part in subject days where departments promote and share information about careers in their field.

Break and Lunchtime Activities

At FreshSteps we consider break and lunchtime to be an extension of the curriculum. Pupils have the opportunity to practice transferrable skills through structured play and creative activities. These include table tennis and chess tournaments, board games, Lego club and drawing and colouring. During these periods our mentors actively engage pupils in order to develop their social, emotional and mental health through their interaction with their peers.

Social, Moral, Spiritual & Cultural Development and Fundamental British Values

At FreshSteps the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of all pupils is enhanced through our weekly assemblies and Student Voice sessions which are held on separate days. The programme for assemblies covers a comprehensive list of topics, many of which fall within the four themes of the Fundamental British Values.

During Student Voice pupils engage in discussion and debate relating to the school and its community. Pupils are taught to share and respect one another's ideas and opinions. They take responsibility for their school and participate in decision making as a team.

SMSC including Fundamental British Values is embedded across the curriculum so that is taught implicitly. This is evidenced through the use of a range of teaching and learning strategies that develop social skills and foster the positive attitudes required to function successfully in modern Britain.

Additionally, SMSC is specifically addressed in PSHE and other subjects such as in DT where pupils learn about the social, moral and ethical issues of design and manufacture and in science where pupils are required to consider ethical issues in a range of topics and the beliefs of others.

Pastoral support from all staff and our specialist teaching assistants and behaviour mentors also centres on pupils' development of SMSC including Fundamental British Values.

Specific Learning Days and Enrichment Activities

Specific learning days and enrichment activities provide the opportunity for pupils to spend a day engaging in activities focused on range of topics. The topics are selected based on pupils' needs, interests and current issues impacting the wider community.

Topics include:

- Careers and aspirations days,
- Staying safe and online safety,
- Promoting numeracy day
- Promoting literacy day
- Anti-bullying days

Clubs we offer:

- Lego
- Media
- Music
- Board Games
- Drama
- DT
- ICT

We actively encourage our pupils to attend free after school sessions at Edmonton Eagles Boxing club where they can learn a variety of skills and self-discipline.

School trips

Educational visits, field trips and reward/celebratory trips are featured across the curriculum and are used to acquire knowledge and develop social and personal skills. At FreshSteps we take full advantage of our local surroundings including wildlife and heritage places of interest which are utilised regularly throughout the curriculum to enhance the learning experience.

Homework

Pupils across all phases are set regular homework. This is designed to consolidate learning, develop independence and instil a love of learning. It also provides an opportunity for parents/carers to engage with the curriculum.

Impact

The impact of the curriculum is evident in the outcomes for all our pupils. This includes academic achievement, improved behaviour and enhanced social emotional and mental health; All of which improves their ability to engage positively in the school environment. Such improvements are documented in EHCPs resulting in the reforming of targets and modification of the support required.

