

Friern Barnet School

Curriculum Policy



Last Reviewed:	January 2025	Next Review:	January 2027
Approved by:	Head Teacher	Date:	9/01/2025

Rationale

The curriculum at Friern Barnet School must be flexible, personalised and fully inclusive, supporting students' learning, progress and achievement. It must raise standards, stretch the most able, and narrow any gaps in achievement and attainment for all our students.

The curriculum focuses on cumulative knowledge attainment and is designed so that students develop the depth of understanding required to access all GCSE subjects as they progress through the school.

Curriculum intent

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum that fosters a love of learning and enables all students to achieve their highest academic potential.
- To prepare students for the rigours of the GCSE examinations.
- To ensure that students undertake study of a full and varied range of subjects at KS3 in addition to core subjects (including Modern Foreign Languages, Creative Arts, Humanities, Physical Education and Technology) so that all future avenues of study and employment remain open to them.
- To meet the needs of individual students, adapting the core curriculum where appropriate and within the constraints of time and resources to provide a personalised curriculum that supports individual achievement.
- To provide a range of learning experiences both in and outside of the classroom, going beyond statutory requirements in order to enrich learning for all students.
- To develop students as independent and resilient learners, instilling the ability to work both autonomously and in groups.
- To enable all students to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

The curriculum at Friern Barnet School enables all students to develop:

- a sense of enquiry; the ability to question, solve problems and argue rationally
- a positive attitude towards learning and engagement with lessons
- knowledge, skills and understanding relevant to adult life and employment in our changing world
- functional skills in mathematics, English and IT
- creativity, critical awareness, empathy and sensitivity
- a recognition of their own and others' achievements, in school and beyond
- self-worth, self-esteem, self-awareness and self-confidence
- the skills of working as an individual and as a member of a group or team
- appropriate moral, social, cultural and spiritual values, tolerance of others, to value each individual and to learn to live together in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect
- an awareness of their place within the local, national and global community and opportunities for service to each other and to these communities
- strong verbal and written communication skills.

Curriculum implementation

Each department must have schemes of learning related, where appropriate, to the National Curriculum and to examination board requirements. Schemes of learning must be followed by all departmental staff and monitored by Heads of Faculty and Heads of Department. Schemes of learning must establish how the course content is structured, so that students' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed progressively.

Our teachers will have a detailed understanding of the curriculum structure and sequence, recognising how each lesson's learning fits into the pupils' broader development within the subject. Teachers will know what skills students are expected to have gained at each stage of the curriculum and how these cumulatively prepare students for the rigours of the GCSE exams in their subject.

Relevant and appropriately challenging home and project based learning must be provided for all students, with appropriate time given for students to complete the tasks set.

Teachers are expected to use Firefly, the school Virtual Learning Environment, to support implementation of the curriculum. This could include recording home learning set for students, supplying feedback on work submitted, giving students access to supra-curricular materials to support their wider understanding of a subject and providing additional learning opportunities to further enrich students' learning.

Pupils who enter at below average levels of attainment will be supported to narrow the gap, so they can access, and be successful in, our curriculum.

The school has an active Able & Ambitious programme targeting those students who are working above average level for the year group across a range of subjects or who are who are showing consistent application and engagement, and as a result are making strong progress towards high attainment. All members of staff are made aware of students in the Able & Ambitious cohort and are expected to ensure that a range of extracurricular projects and opportunities are available to extend their learning, in addition to ensuring that suitably challenging work is set within every lesson.

Curriculum Content

Key Stage 3 offers a rich and varied curriculum designed to prepare students for the 'step up' to Key Stage 4 and to develop key skills across all subjects. There is a strong focus on breadth of curriculum, with students studying a full curricular range in addition to the core subjects. As a result, students experience all subjects in order to develop their individual areas of interest and to make informed choices when deciding upon GCSE options subjects in Y9.

Students are well supported in choosing their individual curriculum pathway and parents are involved throughout this process. In addition to the core subjects, the majority of students select four option subjects. The school acknowledges that some students may struggle to balance the workload of four options subjects. In this case students participate in the ASDAN programme in place of a fourth option, working towards acquiring a Personal and Social Effectiveness qualification. Students are identified for this pathway during year 9 as part of the discussions around Options choices. Discussions will take place with the students and their parents prior to the student being assigned to the ASDAN course.

Key Stage 4 focuses on depth of learning, with students guided to develop their knowledge of key concepts and to understand the underlying links between different subjects and ideas. There is a clear emphasis on the in-depth development of the key skills and knowledge required for exams, whilst still

ensuring subjects are engaging and enjoyable for students. Where students are not expected to meet the minimum pass grade in the core subjects of English, maths and science, they are supported in achieving an entry level qualification in these subjects.

The school also has an Alternative Resource Provision (ARP) for SEND students with cognition and learning needs. The ARP currently caters for year 7 students only but the intention is to replicate this provision in all year groups by 2026. These students, who are working significantly below the level of their peers, work through a bespoke curriculum incorporating the core subjects of English, maths and science and a variety of additional subjects including creative arts and humanities lessons.

Subject	KS3	KS4
Art	*	+
ASDAN Social and Personal Effectiveness		+
Business Studies		+
Computing	*	+
Dance	*	+
Design & Technology	*	
Drama	*	+
English	*	
English Language		*
English Literature		*
Film Studies		+
Food Technology	*	+
French or Spanish	*	+
Geography	*	+
History	*	+
Mathematics	*	*
Media Studies		+
Music	*	+
Physical Education		+
Core PE	*	*
Product Design		+
Religious Education	*	+
Science	*	*
Combined Science		+
Chemistry		+
Physics		+
Biology		+
Textiles	*	+

Compulsory = *

Optional = +

Personal Development

Careers education: the school's Careers Officer ensures that students receive excellent impartial careers guidance from Year 7 to Year 11. Careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG)

starts in Yr7 and continues up to and beyond Yr11. In addition there is a one week work experience placement for all students in year 10.

Pastoral curriculum: this is delivered through tutor times, assemblies, drop down days and the use of specialist outside agencies. A full curriculum of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) lessons is in place for all year groups and is delivered by form tutors twice weekly, helping young people to be safe, healthy and prepared for life's opportunities.

Extended curriculum: there are a wide range of opportunities within and beyond the timetabled curriculum. The school's curriculum, coupled with opportunities provided by the school's many strong partnerships, provides highly positive, memorable experiences and rich opportunities for high quality learning. These are provided through extensive extra-curricular opportunities and through a wide range of events, trips and visits to local, national and international destinations.

Promoting British values: the school pays careful attention towards promoting students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a wide variety of activities; students thrive in the supportive, highly cohesive, inclusive learning community. The school promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance throughout the curriculum and pastoral time, including assemblies and school trips and visits.

Groupings and settings

Classes are taught in mixed ability teaching or ability grouping depending on need and circumstance.

Some subjects are taught in tutor groups. These are mixed ability groups that have been put together with the aim of producing a balance of gender, ethnicity, ability, students with statements and students from different feeder primary schools.

Students may be allocated into groups other than their tutor group. The reasons may be:

- To create more teaching groups to reduce class size
- To create ability sets to maximise achievement
- To manage carousels of subject components to make efficient use of resources and staff
- To maximise student choice at KS4
- To manage peer dynamics to create the best possible learning environment
- To manage the requirements of students with special needs

In all teaching groups teachers will use a range of techniques and resources to differentiate the curriculum to meet the needs of all students.

Whenever ability groups are created the following criteria will apply:

- Students must be placed in an appropriate set to enable them to access the curriculum
- Students must not be penalised from accessing the most appropriate level of entry for an exam
- Students must be placed according to ability, not attitude or behaviour
- Higher ability sets may be larger than lower ability sets to ensure students' needs are met most appropriately
- Blocking of tutor groups should not place an unacceptable constraint on the timetable

Alternative Provision

All students are entitled to receive a full and varied education. Where necessary, the school uses Alternative Provision (AP) to ensure that students have maximum support in achieving the outcomes they are capable of.

AP may take the form of students being assigned to work in the Hub for a predefined period of time. Students working in the Hub will be assigned work that follows the curriculum by subject specialists.

Cross curricular

In our curriculum there are overarching, cross curricular themes that we believe are important for individuals and society, and provide relevant learning contexts such as:

- The arts
- Individual identity
- Equality, equity and cultural diversity
- Healthy lifestyles
- Community participation
- Enterprise
- Global dimensions and sustainable development
- Technology and the media
- Creativity and critical thinking

Creative Arts

Through art, dance, drama and music we provide opportunities for creative expression, performance, group work, communication, leadership and appreciation of other cultures and points of view, and further enable and encourage pupils to engage in all areas of the curriculum. All aspects of school life benefit from the positive impact the Creative Arts have on teaching and learning.

We believe that the Creative Arts enrich the lives of our students whilst at school and in their future adult life. Students are presented with new and exciting challenges as they explore and develop creativity in their learning, not only in art, dance, drama and music, but throughout the whole of the school curriculum. They also develop greater self-esteem and a greater confidence in their ability to express themselves.

Relationship to other policies and documents

Further information can be found on a range of curriculum issues in the following policies and documents:

Teaching and Learning Policy

SEND Information Report 2021-22

Sex and Relationships Education Policy

Guidance on Remote Learning