



FIRST STEPS TOGETHER
SKILLS FOR LIFE

KS1 and KS2

CURRICULUM POLICY

Revision History			
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In response to:

DfE (2013) National Curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2

DfE (2019) The Independent School Standards

Introduction

At First Steps Together, we believe that every child deserves access to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum regardless of their starting point, background or additional needs. As a specialist setting, we recognise that many of our pupils have experienced barriers to learning and adverse childhood experiences that can impact educational engagement and progress.

Our curriculum is designed to provide pupils with the knowledge, skills and experiences necessary to achieve academically whilst developing confidence, resilience, emotional literacy and independence. We aim to create successful learners, responsible citizens and confident individuals through a curriculum that is therapeutic, nurturing and aspirational.

The curriculum reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum whilst being adapted to meet the individual needs of learners. Through carefully planned learning experiences, therapeutic approaches and high-quality teaching, pupils are supported to re-engage with education and prepare for future success

Curriculum Responsibilities

The curriculum is planned, delivered, monitored and evaluated through a collaborative approach involving senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers, support staff and external professionals.

Key curriculum responsibilities include:

- Ensuring a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum for all pupils.
- Meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- Promoting equality of opportunity and inclusion.
- Supporting pupils' SEMH needs alongside academic achievement.
- Monitoring curriculum quality and impact.
- Ensuring progression within and across subjects.
- Providing meaningful assessment opportunities.
- Developing pupils' personal, social and emotional wellbeing.

- Preparing pupils for the next stage of education and life beyond school.

Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Strategic oversight of curriculum provision.
- Ensuring statutory requirements are met.
- Monitoring quality of education.
- Evaluating curriculum impact.
- Supporting professional development.

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Lead curriculum development.
- Monitor implementation and standards.
- Analyse assessment data.
- Ensure consistency across the school.
- Support staff with curriculum delivery.

Subject and Curriculum leaders are responsible for:

- Developing curriculum intent.
- Monitoring curriculum implementation.
- Supporting colleagues.
- Reviewing assessment outcomes.
- Maintaining subject resources.
- Reporting on subject effectiveness.

Teachers will:

- Deliver high-quality lessons.
- Adapt learning to meet individual needs.
- Use assessment effectively.
- Promote positive relationships.

- Implement trauma-informed practices.
- Track and monitor pupil progress.

Support staff will:

- Facilitate access to learning.
- Support emotional regulation.
- Promote engagement and independence.
- Work collaboratively with teachers.
- Contribute to assessment and observations

Curriculum Aims and Intent

Our curriculum aims to:

- Deliver ambitious learning opportunities for all pupils.
- Develop strong literacy and numeracy skills.
- Improve pupils' emotional wellbeing and resilience.
- Enable pupils to build positive relationships.
- Foster independence and confidence.
- Broaden pupils' experiences beyond the classroom.
- Promote personal responsibility and self-regulation.
- Prepare pupils for successful transitions.
- Increase aspirations and future opportunities.

The curriculum is designed with the intent that pupils: Acquire essential knowledge and understanding across all curriculum areas; Develop secure long-term understanding through regular retrieval, repetition and application; Apply learning creatively, practically and independently across a range of contexts.

Rationale for Implementation

The curriculum is implemented through a structured, evidence-informed approach that balances academic ambition with the social, emotional and mental health needs of our pupils. We recognise that many children join us having experienced disrupted education, adverse childhood experiences or barriers to learning. Therefore, our curriculum is designed

to provide consistency, predictability and opportunities for success whilst maintaining high expectations for all learners.

We use carefully selected curriculum programmes to ensure progression, coherence and coverage of the National Curriculum. United Learning provides the foundation for most curriculum subjects, whilst specialist schemes are used where they offer expertise and strong pedagogical approaches, including White Rose Education for Mathematics and Science, Jigsaw for PSHE and RSE, Raspberry Pi for Computing, and Read Write Inc/Fresh Start for Reading. These programmes are adapted to meet the individual needs of our pupils and are delivered through a trauma-informed, relational approach.

Teaching is underpinned by explicit instruction, adaptive practice, retrieval opportunities and regular assessment. Pupils are assessed on entry to establish their starting points, and learning is continually reviewed through termly assessments alongside start and end of unit assessments. This enables staff to identify gaps in knowledge, personalise learning pathways and ensure pupils make progress from their individual starting points.

In addition to academic learning, our curriculum is enriched through Forest School, Physical Education, enrichment opportunities, pupil-led experiences and learning beyond the classroom. These experiences support the development of resilience, communication, self-regulation, confidence and independence, ensuring pupils are equipped with the knowledge, skills and personal qualities needed for future success.

Through this approach, First Steps Together delivers a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that enables pupils to know more, remember more and achieve more while supporting their emotional wellbeing and readiness for the next stage of education.

Curriculum Personalisation

This may include:

- Individual learning targets.
- Graduated support.
- Differentiated learning pathways.
- Flexible timetables where appropriate.
- Speech and language support.
- Therapeutic interventions.
- Additional reading and literacy support.
- Emotionally responsive teaching approaches.

Personalisation ensures pupils access learning at an appropriate level whilst maintaining high expectations.

Trauma Informed Approach.

At First Steps together, a trauma-informed approach underpins all aspects of school life.

We recognise that trauma can significantly affect:

- Emotional regulation.
- Behaviour.
- Relationships.
- Learning and memory.
- Executive functioning.

Staff are trained to understand the impact of trauma and respond through:

- Relational practice.
- Co-regulation strategies.
- Consistent boundaries.
- Emotional coaching.
- Restorative approaches.
- Predictable classroom environments.

We seek to understand behaviour as communication and support pupils to develop healthy coping strategies and emotional resilience

Where appropriate we will work in collaboration with clinical specialists to offer therapeutic intervention, which may include sensory intervention, play therapy, counselling, music/art intervention, SALT, OT, animal assisted intervention etc.

Teaching and Learning Strategy:

Our teaching and learning approach is based on the three-stage framework developed by Barbara Rogoff: Teacher-Led Instruction (I Do), Guided Practice (We Do), and Independent Application (You Do). This model provides a clear and structured pathway that supports pupils to develop confidence, resilience and independence in their learning.

This approach is underpinned by continuous assessment, personalised support and high-quality teaching. Pupils progress through each stage at an appropriate pace, moving forward

only when they have developed the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding. Assessment and intervention are embedded throughout the learning process to identify misconceptions, provide timely support and ensure pupils are increasingly able to apply their learning independently.

The model supports the acquisition and retention of substantive knowledge by carefully building on what pupils already know. During the teacher-led phase, prior knowledge is identified and new learning is explicitly taught. The guided and independent phases then provide opportunities for pupils to practise, consolidate and apply this knowledge in increasingly meaningful and independent ways.

Assessment is a crucial component of our curriculum implementation. Both formative and summative assessment practices are used to monitor progress and inform next steps. Regular retrieval and recall activities give pupils opportunities to revisit previously taught concepts, strengthen long-term memory and reinforce key knowledge and skills. These activities also allow pupils to reflect on their learning, respond to feedback, address misconceptions and deepen their understanding.

The three-stage model is flexible and may be applied multiple times within a lesson, across a sequence of lessons or throughout an entire unit of work. This ensures learning is sequenced effectively and that pupils have sufficient opportunities to embed and transfer their knowledge and skills over time.

Our curriculum recognises the importance of both substantive and disciplinary knowledge. Substantive knowledge forms the foundation of each subject, with pupils' existing understanding considered through baseline and ongoing assessment. Disciplinary knowledge focuses on how knowledge is created, tested and applied within different subjects. For example, in Science, pupils develop disciplinary knowledge through practical investigations and enquiry-based learning, enabling them to understand how scientific knowledge is established. Through the gradual release of responsibility within the "I Do, We Do, You Do" framework, pupils are supported to apply both substantive and disciplinary knowledge with increasing confidence, independence and success.

The diagram (found on the next page), demonstrates the application of this approach.

Teaching and Learning Strategy: Diagram

Assessment and Recall		
Planning and subsequent teaching is adapted depending on the differing starting points of each pupil. Where appropriate, all new topics will begin with a <u>low stakes</u>, short assessment to establish prior knowledge. This compliments standardised assessments and historic data to provide a sufficient benchmark for pupils. Each week teachers document (via student books and curriculum tracker), whether learning has been secured. Friday's 'recall day' provides a means to further address <u>misconceptions, and</u> engage in retrieval practice.		
'I do'	'We Do'	'You Do'
<i>During this stage, the teacher will tell pupils what they need to <u>know, and</u> show them how to do the things they need to.</i>	<i>During this stage, tasks are scaffolding to build competence and confidence in concepts.</i>	<i>During this stage pupils will be expected to complete tasks independently.</i>
• Clear explanation of the knowledge and/or skills being developed; this may form verbal, visual, and practical example. • Intended outcomes shared. • Material is delivered in small <u>chunks, and</u> incrementally builds; this is via a step-by-step approach. • Where appropriate, what a good one looks like (WAGOLL) will be used to help model concepts. • Modelling is used to structure new knowledge and concepts.	• This phase is intended to provide a means to prompt comparative and organised thinking. • Often this phase will include partially completed information, which enables pupils to fill in the gaps. • This may take the form of whole class examples via the class board/screen, or individually through partially completed handouts. • Pupils will be encouraged to encode and retrieve; considering how new information changes their previous understanding (encode). • Retrieval is embedded through supporting recognition and recall (recognition via multiple <u>choice, or</u> recalling concepts with prompts).	• Pupils will be expected to complete tasks/apply concepts which have been covered within earlier stages. • Assessment will be rigorous here; it is crucial to avoid implementing this phase too early. Otherwise, this can lead pupils to guess and lower their self-efficacy. • This stage is about pupils recalling information without prompts.
Support and Intervention		
In addition to initial assessment, at any stage of this cycle, support needs may be identified. Where necessary, teachers are expected to implement interventions to better secure understanding. Weekly monitoring will demonstrate whether pupils were able to successfully apply concepts via the 'You Do' <u>stage, or</u> needed/need continuous intervention to better secure skills and knowledge.		

Core Subjects

English is delivered through the United Learning curriculum, supporting reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

Reading is prioritised throughout the school through:

- Read Write Inc
- Fresh Start
- Daily guided reading
- D.E.A.R (Drop Everything and Read)
- Reading for pleasure initiatives

Mathematics is delivered through White Rose Education, developing fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills.

Science is delivered through White Rose Education, encouraging enquiry, investigation and scientific understanding.

PSHE (including RSE) is delivered in accordance with statutory guidance and is sensitive to the needs and maturity of pupils. Parents and carers are informed about the content of the programme and their rights regarding withdrawal from specific elements where applicable.

Foundation and Extended Curriculum Subjects

Religious Education promotes understanding of faiths, beliefs and worldviews.

History develops chronological understanding and historical enquiry skills.

Geography develops understanding of people, places and environments.

Art and Design Technology encourages creativity, problem solving and practical skill development.

Computing is delivered through Raspberry Pi resources and supports digital literacy and computational thinking.

Physical Education is delivered through focusing on physical competence, teamwork and wellbeing.

Forest School provides opportunities for outdoor learning, risk-taking, resilience and personal development.

Enrichment enhances learning through experiences, visits, projects and community engagement.

Curriculum Mapping

The curriculum is carefully mapped to ensure that learning is broad, balanced, sequential and progressive across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Our schemes of work identify the key knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils need to acquire within each subject, ensuring that new learning builds systematically on prior knowledge. Curriculum content is sequenced to enable pupils to revisit and consolidate previous learning, supporting long-term retention and deeper understanding. Progression maps ensure clear pathways from foundational concepts to more complex knowledge and skills, while assessment opportunities are embedded throughout to monitor understanding and inform future planning.

Enrichment activities, Pupil Led Learning and Learning Outside of the Classroom:

Students have access to a range of planned enrichment activities and cultural visits to enhance learning and cultural capital. These will be in line with pupil interests and subject topics being taught throughout the year, but may include:

- Educational visits.
- Forest School activities.
- Community projects.
- Outdoor learning.
- Cultural experiences.
- Creative arts activities.
- Sporting opportunities.
- Pupil voice projects.

Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural (SMSC) Education, British Values and Protected Characteristics:

At First Steps Together, we provide an education that enriches students with opportunities to explore and develop their own moral values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures. Throughout the curriculum, we encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of the law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. As part of the wider SMSC curriculum, pupils are encouraged to act responsibly and work to support their own and the wider community. Work is carried out on the development of pupils' understanding of services and cultural pillars.

British values are promoted in so much of what we do, not least during our school assemblies, Religious Education and in PSHE. Modern British values are integral to our curriculum aims and underpin our daily school lives. As well as actively promoting British values in school, the opposite also applies: we would actively challenge pupils, staff or professionals expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British values, including 'extremist' views.

We remain conscious that across our curriculum we should remain within the guidelines of protected characteristics as defined in The Equality Act 2010. Our curriculum promotes respect and a culture of tolerance and diversity, and this is firmly embedded. The impact of teaching related to the protected characteristics, British Values and SMSC activities are all tracked.

Promoting Protected Characteristics

The school actively promotes equality and inclusion in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Protected characteristics are explored through age-appropriate learning opportunities and curriculum content.

We promote:

- Respect for diversity.
- Positive relationships.
- Equality of opportunity.
- Inclusive language.
- Representation and belonging.

Pupils are taught that discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping are unacceptable.

Also see equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Impact and Assessment (See Assessment Policy)

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of our approach to teaching and learning (see separate Assessment Policy and Feedback and Marking Policy).

Pupils undergo baseline assessments, formative and summative assessments, as well as ongoing assessments for example: mini quizzes, retrieval activities, and teacher observation.

Impact

We use a variety of methods to measure and assess the impact of the curriculum on the academic and personal development of our learners.

Our ultimate measure of impact is our student's enjoyment of learning and engagement in preparing for their future.

Students will leave First Steps Together with secure understanding of academic knowledge at the appropriate level for them, as well as being active citizens in our community.

We aim for our students to leave our settings with their self-esteem and confidence reshaped and secured, a better thirst for life and lifelong learning, and an appreciation of overcoming adversity.

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