

Curriculum Guide

Introduction

At The Free School Norwich, all teachers plan the children's learning as a professional team to ensure full curriculum coverage and consistency of approach across the school. Our curriculum plans are published and copies sent to all parents at the beginning of each term.

Standards in teaching and learning are regularly monitored through lesson observations, book looks, pupil feedback and assessment data.

Formal progress assessments of learning take place twice a year during the Winter and Summer terms. Children in Years 2 and 6 undertake the Key Stage 1 and 2 Standard Assessment Tests in the Whitsun term and children in Year 1 undertake the Phonics Screening Test in the Summer term.

Parents' Evenings take place each year in the Winter and Summer terms. A short written progress and attainment report is provided to parents in the Winter term and a longer, more detail report is provided in the Summer term.

English

The school follows the Pearson Phonics Bug programme. Reading skills are taught through the Oxford Project X Reading scheme and most children progress to become confident free readers early in Key Stage 2. The Big Write programme is followed throughout the school to develop the children's writing skills, with Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar incorporated into lessons. The children also undertake an extended piece of creative writing linked to the term's curriculum topic at the end of each term.

Maths

The school follows the Maths Mastery programme, with higher ability children's learning extended through the Maths Comprehension scheme. Maths skills are also linked to and reinforced through the school's curriculum topics and Science. The school holds an annual Maths challenge during the Winter term.

Science

The school follows the Pearson Science Bug programme. There is an emphasis upon investigative learning in the real world. The school works in partnership with the Mad Science Company to host an annual Science Day and a range of inter-active Science workshops throughout the year.

Personal, Health and Social Education

The school follows the PHSE Association programme. The learning which takes place in lessons is linked to and reinforced through all other areas of the curriculum. The school also organises a range of social events for the children to enjoy throughout the year, including discos, competitions, sleepovers, residential visits and days out to local places of interest. The school's Citizenship Award programme encourages children to become good model citizens and to help others in society.

Moral and Spiritual Education

Moral and spiritual issues are explored through daily whole school assemblies. The school is non-denominational and so the spiritual beliefs and practices of all faiths are considered. The children undertake a range of charity projects in the community each year.

Information Technology

The school follows the IT Switched On programme and has a fully equipped IT suite. IT skills are also integrated into and reinforced through the school's curriculum topics.

Foundation Subjects

Geography, History, Religious Education, Design Technology, Environmental Studies and Art are taught through termly curriculum topics. Six topics are studied during the year and learning is enhanced and enriched by visits to local places of interest, workshops and special educational events.

Music

Music is taught by professional musicians from the Wharf Music Academy. All children are given the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument including the violin, clarinet, cornet, flute, drums, guitar, piano, recorder, ocarina and ukulele. Lessons are also offered in singing.

The children are encouraged to play in ensembles and to take part in the annual school concert at Easter. They are also entered for the Norfolk Music Festival as they increase in skill and confidence. All children learning to play a musical instrument take their bronze, silver and gold Music Medals as part of their preparation for the Grade 1 Music exam.

Modern Foreign Languages

French is taught throughout the school by a specialist French teacher. The school also holds an annual French Café Morning and Key Stage 2 French Boules Tournament. A Key Stage 2 day visit to Boulogne in France takes place every two years to enable the children to experience and practice using a foreign language first hand. Spanish is offered as a second Modern Foreign Language to children in the school who have an interest or particular aptitude for languages.

Physical Education and Sport

Physical Education is taught by professional coaches at Norwich City Football Club Carrow Road Sports Park during the Harvest, Whitsun and Summer terms and Wensum Lodge Sports Centre during the Christmas, Winter and Spring terms.

The school also belongs to the Norwich Schools Sports Partnership and children are given regular opportunities to compete in sporting events against other schools in Norfolk in a range of sports. Swimming is taught by qualified instructors at Riverside Swimming Centre in Norwich.

The school has a football, basketball, cross country and swimming team and children in Year 6 take part in a water sports day at Whitlingham Broad each summer. The school holds inter house competitions in swimming, football, netball, basketball, badminton and soft tennis during the year.

Drama

All children take part in a musical production in the Christmas term and perform a class assembly in the Summer term. The school works closely with local theatres and drama groups in Norwich to develop theatrical skills with the children. Regular visits to local theatres also take place throughout the year to enrich the children's understanding of theatrical performance.

Personal Learning Activities

At The Free School Norwich, we strongly believe that all children should be treated as unique individuals and we fully encourage individual interests and strengths in our children. The school has established strong links with many other organisations within the local community to provide a wide range of weekly personal learning activities, which make up 10% of our curriculum timetable. Through these we encourage our children to identify and develop their individual interests and strengths, so that they can go on to achieve their full potential in life.

Our range of Personal Learning Activities includes learning to ski, sailing, cooking, investigating local history, chess challenge, drama, dancing, karate, football, orienteering, wall climbing, mini-engineering, puppet making, environmental studies, film studies, children's literature, pottery, problem solving, model making, gymnastics and gardening. We are always open to other suggestions for activities from the children themselves. All activities are fully funded by the school and are supervised by qualified teaching staff and instructors.

Residential Visits

Residential visits to How Hill Field Study Centre, Hill Top Outdoor Centre and the Isle of Wight take place for children in Years 4, 5 and 6 each year. Our residential visits offer an exciting range of outdoor learning and social development experiences in different geographical settings.

Tania Sidney-Roberts
Principal
The Free School Norwich