



**FIRST STEPS TOGETHER**  
**SKILLS FOR LIFE**

# **KS1 and KS2**

# **CURRICULUM POLICY**

Revision History			
Date	Version	Change	Author
December 2024	1	Policy written	N Ogden
September 2026			

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### In response to:

DfE (2013) National Curriculum for Key Stages 2

DfE (2019) The Independent School Standards

## **Introduction**

First Steps Together offers an integrated therapeutic, and education provision which supports pupils to realise their full potential, whilst developing their social and emotional resilience.

Due to the complex nature of the students that attend First Steps Together, it is our responsibility to provide them with the most appropriate curriculum, to promote their academic learning, life skills, Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship and their Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education.

Our personalised, cohesive ‘Learning Meets the World’ curriculum is innovative, forward-thinking and highly relevant – dealing with tomorrow’s issues today. It is devoted to providing pupils with a broad and deep level of learning, developing fully rounded individuals, fuelling creativity and resulting in positive change.

Written outside the constraints of the National Curriculum, and yet with over 85% coverage, it is meticulously planned and fully resourced to develop pupils’ resilience, communication and life skills within real-life contexts.

Our curriculum is knowledge-rich and skills-based, providing the perfect blend of learning for pupils in a fast-changing and inter-dependent world.

‘Learning Meets the World’ reflects the real world. It is a brave, forward thinking, buzzing, relevant curriculum that promotes independence, creativity and curiosity to help pupils become collaborators, innovators and leaders.

‘Learning Meets the World’ takes an inter-disciplinary approach to learning and puts great emphasis on curriculum depth. It is ‘hands-on’, ‘minds-on’ and ‘hearts-on’ and makes student agency a key feature of the curriculum. The thematic approach to teaching and learning is designed to support children’s natural curiosity, stimulate their creativity and promote an appetite for, and love of, learning. It offers students the chance to engage in deep learning giving them the time they need to reflect, consolidate and transfer their learning.

Our ‘Skills Ladder’ is the bedrock of our curriculum model, giving a clear upward trajectory of subject-specific, skills-based learning. Coupled with a system of knowledge progression, called ‘Knowledge Building’, this ensures rigour and coverage and provides subject leaders with a clear, birds-eye view of progression. Knowledge is sequenced and mapped deliberately with six distinct fundamental learning pillars for each subject using progressive cognitive blocks. These are then applied to each thematic unit in the form of knowledge statements, that increase in complexity through the key stages and provide a big picture of knowledge progression throughout the school.

Elements such as our ‘Catalyst Questions, Students-Led Activities and Essential Learning Experiences also ensure a greater depth of learning. Concept Flows give a logical sequence to learning and the Learning Pathways ensure students experience clear progression in the defined characteristics of effective learning.

## **Curriculum Responsibilities**

The Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher of Teaching and Learning has overall responsibility for the implementation, development and monitoring of all areas of the curriculum throughout Key Stages; supported by the senior leadership team (SLT), and subject specialist practitioners.

Class teachers in conjunction with the Head Teacher and SLT have a responsibility for the implementation, development and monitoring of their particular subject area across the key stages, thus ensuring continuity and progression throughout the whole school.

Class teachers design the school curriculum to ensure it clearly sets out the knowledge and skills that students will gain at each stage (**intent**). They also consider the way that the curriculum is developed, taught and assessed to support pupils to build their knowledge and to apply that knowledge as skills (**implementation**). The Head teacher, SLT, and subject leaders also consider the outcomes that pupils will achieve as a result of their education at First Steps Together (**impact**).

We expect that most students will have a working plan that reflects their current abilities and the modifications required to ensure the pupil's needs are met. Referring institutions, therapeutic partners, and external agencies in conjunction with the Head Teacher, SLT, and subject teachers ensure that all the individual needs of the students are met through the development and implementation support plans.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Staff**

*The teaching staff at First Steps Together will ensure that:*

- The curriculum is planned and devised to best suit the needs of each individual pupil, including those with additional needs.
- The curriculum is reviewed regularly to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils
- Topics and lessons are planned in logical sequences to ensure knowledge, understanding and skills are developed over time.
- The curriculum is delivered using a range of strategies to support pupils to know more and retain the information.
- Subject teachers provide a strategic lead, support and advise colleagues, and monitor progress in their area through our robust evaluation process
- The procedures for assessment are used to proactively to support the learning and development of the pupils and influence next steps, including identifying gaps in knowledge and how these gaps will be addressed as they move through their learning journey.

*Leaders at First Steps Together will ensure that:*

- Staff in the school are involved in decision-making processes that relate to the vision, intent and development of the curriculum.
- Regular monitoring activities are carried out to ensure that the curriculum offered is progressive and ensures that pupils all achieve positive outcomes.
- All teaching staff fulfil their roles and responsibilities, including the planning of lessons, teaching methods, use of assessment and implementation of the agreed Feedback and Marking Policy.
- Staff are provided with opportunities to develop strong subject knowledge as well as pedagogy, including access to further training.

### **Curriculum Aims**

- To excite and enthuse learners and teachers.
- To inspire stimulating learning environments.
- To create purposeful, immersive and memorable learning.

- To develop and deepen student's skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum through a diverse range of themes.
- To ensure a cohesive curriculum, where learning is built on systematically, improving and emphasising consistency and progression throughout the school.
- To equip learners to become agents of change, exploring and championing global causes.
- To support pupils in exploring challenging and controversial global and social justice issues.
- To help students to make sense of our inter-connected world.
- To help students to understand their place in the worldwide community, so that they understand their own worth and the worth of others.
- To create strong learning links through a joined-up approach.
- To empower pupils and boost their confidence
- To allow pupils to display their understanding in multiple ways
- To ensure inclusivity through an accessible and relevant curriculum

To value, support and celebrate cultural diversity

### **Curriculum Intent and Rationale**

#### **Intent**

At Kershaw Wood Centre, our values and ethos are deeply rooted in our First Steps Together active approach to education. We believe in empowering our students to become well-rounded individuals who are ready to make a positive impact in the world.

At Kershaw Wood Centre, we aim to build on the First Steps Together values encapsulated in the acronym of **A**spire, **C**reate, **T**ogether, **I**nitiative, **V**ocational, **E**mpowerment in a nurturing environment where our students can flourish and make a positive impact in our community and the wider world.

We are committed to providing a curriculum which is nurturing, inspirational, inclusive, diverse, broad and balanced. We believe that our students deserve the best educational experiences which will enable them to become equipped to encounter opportunities and challenges with confidence, resilience, and determination. We believe this includes opportunities to explore and develop key life skills, including social skills and understanding.

With this in mind, we have implemented an ambitious, creative and aspirational curriculum that is challenging, promotes active learning and enables pupils to be more 'outward facing'. This in turn, should lead to them becoming well-rounded individuals.

We aim to empower our students in developing their identity, not only as part of the local community but as respectful, responsible global citizens.

#### **Rationale for Implementation**

We use Dimensions 'Learning Meets the World' Curriculum as the main vehicle for achieving our outlined intent, with a view to providing an ambitious, highly visible curriculum offer.

This curriculum is underpinned by four highly relevant world issues, known as the four “C”s:-

### **Communication, Culture, Conflict, Conservation**

#### **Communication**

We believe that communication is the key to unlocking all learning and that positive and effective communication will, without doubt, enrich our children’s future lives, including opening doors to what may be, as yet, unknown careers.

We recognise many of our students find social situations challenging and experience difficulties communicating.

We recognise the need to focus on oracy; developing student’s vocabulary is a priority, in order to help them to express their thoughts and ideas with independence and confidence.

Being given the opportunity to communicate has been highlighted as a priority in school. Our pupils need to understand their feelings and become emotionally literate and able to communicate effectively, confidently and appropriately, using words rather than actions to regulate feelings and name emotions. This focus on communication will be a touchpoint throughout the year.

#### **Culture**

We aim to place an understanding of culture at the heart of our school life. Through our curriculum, we want our pupils to fully appreciate and embrace diversity by learning about and developing an understanding of a range of cultures which takes them beyond their experiences. We want them to recognise similarities, celebrate differences, value the importance of cultural identity and behave in a respectful and tolerant way towards others, regardless of faith, gender, ethnicity or background.

We also want them to grow within our own culture in school, based on our inclusive ACTIVE values and experience a wider range of cultural experiences throughout the academic year.

#### **Conflict**

We believe conflict is very closely linked with communication and, as most conflicts result from poor communication, we want our pupils to reflect on history and see what we can learn. Handling conflict in a positive way and learning to value and understand others’ viewpoints will help embed our values of cooperation and perseverance. Once they begin to understand what conflict is in today’s world at all levels, globally and personally and can recognise catalysts for conflict, school should be a safe place to explore how to resolve disagreements and face challenges constructively. We also want our pupils to understand that not all conflict is negative and that a conflict of ideas can help when debating or problem solving.

#### **Conservation**

We want our pupils to care passionately about our world as global citizens and understand why this is such an important world issue. We feel they will do this best through a curriculum that puts sustainability at the heart of the curriculum, employing a more structured approach

to developing environmental awareness and appreciation, not just at local, but also national and global levels. We need our children to play their part in future thinking and problem-solving, as both advocates and activists for positive change, and not just as passive onlookers.

### **Thematic approach**

The curriculum is carried out through themes which cover the national curriculum subjects to create a more engaging approach to the curriculum. We also encourage our pupils to have high aspirations by teaching them about human creativity and achievement through additional Competency Units about famous figures that focus on Creativity, Commitment, Courage and Community.

### ***Trauma Informed Approach.***

To support the needs of our cohort, we endeavour to:

- Provide our students with daily access to emotionally available adults, who believe in them, and can relate to them with compassion, empathy and unconditional positive regard.
- Support students experiencing painful life events, by helping them process, work through and make sense of what has happened.
- Ensure that staff interact with children at all times with kindness and compassion.
- Develop our settings in ways that help students feel calm and safe.
- Foster a culture in which staff and other adults interact with all children in a way that makes them feel valued as individuals throughout their day
- Have staff and adults who adjust their expectations of vulnerable children to correspond with their developmental capabilities and experience of traumatic stress.

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:***

With adaptions, our teaching and learning strategy adopts the 3 stage framework pioneered by Barbara Rogoff: teacher led (I do), scaffolded application (we do), and independent pupil application (you do).

We underpin this strategy with rigorous assessment, and continuous support. These are both implemented via explicit and nuanced approaches. Pupils move through these stages incrementally, when they have garnered sufficient knowledge/skills to move forward. Assessment of understanding, and support will be offered at all stages, with the intention of moving a pupil towards independent application (the 'You Do' stage).

Through utilising this model we can ensure that substantive knowledge is carefully considered, and reinforced. Stage 1 considers a pupils current substantive knowledge, whilst 2 and 3 are providing the means for a child to practice and recall this knowledge.

Assessment and Impact (see section below), is a crucial element of our teaching and learning strategy. To bolster formative and summative assessment practices, we dedicate time to recall giving pupils the opportunity to revisit, and reinforce concepts delivered throughout the week. The implementation of this strategy helps pupils reflect work completed during the 'You Do'

phase, respond to marking, correct misconceptions, and ultimately reinforce the retention of desired skills and knowledge.

The application of this strategy may be used multiple times in a lesson, once during a lesson, or even once over a series of lessons. The strategy provides a sequential means to embed learning, whether this be for a single concept, multiple concepts, or a longer-term topic.

Our assessment policy considers the application of both substantive and disciplinary knowledge. Core knowledge is the cornerstone of substantive knowledge. All topics consider pupils' current substantive knowledge through outlines on long-term schemes of work and are assessed through the introduction phase of a new topic. Our teaching and learning strategy ensure that substantive knowledge is carefully implanted, and that pupils can recall and utilise core knowledge to further their learning.

Disciplinary knowledge refers to the understanding of how knowledge is established, verified and revised. Our strategy exposes students to disciplinary concepts which will further their learning. For example, within science students have multiple opportunities to participate in experiments; thus, developing the disciplinary knowledge in relation to how to conduct practical scientific enquiry. Our strategy accommodates this through reinforcing the application of knowledge across the 3 phases, with greater independence and expectation for the child.

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

## Teaching and Learning Strategy: Diagram

<b>Assessment and Recall</b>		
<p>Planning and subsequent teaching is adapted depending on the differing starting points of each pupil. Where appropriate, all new topics will begin with a low stake, short assessment to establish prior knowledge. This complements 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 misconceptions and engage in retrieval practice.</p>		
'I do'	'We Do'	'You Do'
<p><i>During this stage, the teacher will tell pupils what they need to know and show them how to do the things they need to.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear explanation of the knowledge and/or skills being developed; this may form verbal, visual, and practical example.</li> <li>Intended outcomes shared.</li> <li>Material is delivered in small chunks and incrementally builds; this is via a step-by-step approach.</li> <li>Where appropriate, what a good one looks like (WAGOLL) will be used to help model concepts.</li> <li>Modelling is used to structure new knowledge and concepts.</li> </ul>	<p><i>During this stage, tasks are scaffolding to build competence and confidence in concepts.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This phase is intended to provide a means to prompt comparative and organised thinking.</li> <li>Often this phase will include partially completed information, which enables pupils to fill in the gaps.</li> <li>This may take the form of whole class examples via the class board/screen, or individually through partially completed handouts.</li> <li>Pupils will be encouraged to encode and retrieve; considering how new information changes their previous understanding (encode).</li> <li>Retrieval is embedded through supporting recognition and recall (recognition via multiple choice or recalling concepts with prompts).</li> </ul>	<p><i>During this stage pupils will be expected to complete tasks independently.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils will be expected to complete tasks/apply concepts which have been covered within earlier stages.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>This stage is about pupils recalling information without prompts.</li> </ul>
<b>Support and Intervention</b>		
<p>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' stage, or needed/need continuous intervention to better secure skills and knowledge.</p>		

## **Core Subjects**

The core subjects are below:

- English
- Maths
- Science
- PSHE (inc. Citizenship/RSE)

### ***English***

Each thematic unit has literacy elements, including suggested core texts, which cover the broadest range of genres. These are linked to other areas of the curriculum, to provide rich learning experiences. Speaking and Listening is a key focus of our curriculum, highlighted by the 4Cs Communication thread. The Skills Ladder shows the progression of learning from Explorers, Pathfinders, Adventurers and Navigators.

#### ***Reading:***

At First Steps Together, teaching pupils to read and promoting reading for pleasure are both integral to our curriculum. For pupils who have not yet developed initial reading skills, Read Write, Inc: Fresh Start is used; a systematic synthetic phonics programme for struggling readers. Pupils are taught at their challenge point, so they learn to read accurately and fluently in just 15-25 minutes a day.

Our timetable has a daily Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) session scheduled daily, which encourages pupils to develop their reading ability through 'reading for pleasure' (RFP). Each pupil is encouraged to choose a new RFP book each term; we will then either provide that book or specifically purchase it to promote our reading strategy.

Reading skills such as skimming, scanning, continuous reading and close reading, are also taught explicitly in English lessons to develop fluency and efficiency, as well as other areas of the curriculum.

For students struggling below level expectation, they will have specialised Read write Inc phonics intervention.

### ***Mathematics***

Thematic units have a maths links section, covering specific mathematical skills. This is an opportunity for pupils to apply learning through discrete maths lessons into different theme-related contexts. These are linked to other areas of the curriculum, to provide rich learning experiences.

### ***Science***

Science is taught directly through thematic units. Science is taught through working scientifically (involving practical investigation, observation and application skills, enquiry and research) alongside specific taught subject knowledge. Learning takes place both inside and outside the classroom.

## PSHE

**PSHE, and RSHE** (See KS1 and KS2 PSHE curriculum policy)

PSHE is taught throughout the themes and is also delivered through the accompanying 3D PSHE Programme.

## Foundation Subjects

The foundation subjects of Art and Design, Design Technology, Geography, History, ICT / Computing, Music and RE are taught through thematic units based in 'Learning Meets The World'. Each subject is taught using a combination of specific subject knowledge, subject skills, enquiry and, where relevant, fieldwork. Learning takes place both inside and outside the classroom.

## Curriculum Mapping

Our comprehensive, thematic, creative curriculum is mapped out to ensure progression in learning across the school.





**EXPLORERS THEME CYCLES 2023-25**

	<b>CYCLE A 2023-2024</b>	<b>CYCLE B 2024-2025</b>
<b>Autumn 1</b> Communication	 'Happy to Be Me' All About Me	 'Tell Us a Story' Well-Known Stories
<b>Autumn 2</b> Culture	 'Under the Sea' Stories of Friendship and Trust	 'Come Fly With Me!' Asia
<b>Spring 1</b> Additional Units	 'Food, Glorious Food'	 'Ticket to Ride'
<b>Spring 2</b> Conflict	 'Let's Play' Toys and Games	 'Help Is at Hand' Who Helps Us / Who We Help
<b>Summer 1</b> Additional Units	 'Jurassic Park'	 'Animal Crackers'
<b>Summer 2</b> Conservation	 'What On Earth...?' Showing Respect for Our World	 'No Place Like Home' All Kinds of Houses and Homes



## PATHFINDERS THEME CYCLES 2023-25

	CYCLE A 2023-2024	CYCLE B 2024-2025	THE FOUR SEASONS PROJECT
Autumn 1 Communication		'Happily Ever After' Fairy Tales	Autumn
Autumn 2 Culture		'One Day, Many Ways' A Day in the Life of Children, Everywhere!	
Spring 1 Competency Units		'Children's Champions' The Story of Thomas Barnardo	Winter
Spring 2 Conflict		'Unity in the Community' Where I Belong	
Summer 1 NC Essentials		'Paddington's Passport' Geography	Summer
Summer 2 Conservation		'Going Wild' All About Animals	



## ADVENTURERS THEME CYCLES 2023-24

	CYCLE A 2023-24	CYCLE B 2024-25	SEASONS AROUND THE WORLD
Theme 1 Autumn 1		'Hot Off The Press' The Story of Print	Autumn in Canada
Theme 2 Autumn 2		'A World of Difference' Faith and Beliefs	
Competency Units / NC Essential Spring 1		'Viking Warrior' / 'Saxon King' The Story of Ragnar Lothbrok / The Story of Harold Godwinson	Winter in Switzerland
Theme 3 Spring 2		'Law and Order' Rules and Rights	
NC Essentials / Competency Unit Summer 1		'Rocky the Findosaur' Science 'Lindow Man' The Story of Prehistoric Man	Spring in Russia
Theme 4 Summer 2		'Out and About' Geography 'Picture Our Planet' Photo Stories	



## NAVIGATORS THEME CYCLES 2023-24

	CYCLE A 2023 - 2024	CYCLE B 2024 - 2025
Theme 1 Autumn 1		'A World of Bright Ideas' Inventions and Developments 
Theme 2 Autumn 2	 	'Cosmopolitan' Diverse Societies 'Pharaoh Queen' The Story of Hatshepsut  
NC Essential / Competency Unit Spring 1		'In Your Element' Geography 
Theme 3 Spring 2		'You're Not Invited' Invaders and Settlers 
NC Essentials Summer 1	 	'Time Team' History / Geography 
Theme 4 Summer 2		'Full of Beans' Energy 
		'Mission Control' Earth and Beyond  'I Have a Dream...' Discrimination and Prejudice 'True Crime' The Pendle Witches  'Fighting Footballer' The Story of Walter Tull  'Clash of the Titans' Rivalries and Challenges, Past and Present  'Go With the Flow' Science  'Global Warning' Waste and Pollution

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### Super Learning Days

Super Learning Days are once every half term and is a day where students will be taken off timetable and deeper learning activities. This is to provide enrichment and support students to be well rounded individuals. These will be flexible and build on our PSHE/RSE curriculum and the Rights Respecting Schools Calendar, such as:

- World Book Day (March)
- Earth Day (April)

### 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 are likely to change in line with pupil interests and subject topics being taught throughout the year, but may include:

- Climbing/Swimming
- Horticulture
- Lego Creativity
- Circuits and General Fitness
- Topic related visits e.g. Science and Industry Museum/theatre visits
- Visits to local landmarks/places of interest
- Model Making
- Forest Schools
- Student Council

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

At First Steps Together, we provide an education that provides 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.

Each class has a timetabled lesson which is focused on students-led school initiatives: the school council. Through engaging in these 3 forums, pupils are able to support both their school and wider communities. We believe this an essential tool in developing pupils' SMSC awareness; and developing their respect and understanding of other people, whilst contributing to wider society.

### ***Promoting Protected Characteristics***

At First steps Together we work to ensure that our students understand that there: no outsiders in school, everyone is different, we celebrate these differences and we are all equal in our differences.

*See equality, diversity and inclusion policy.*

### ***Impact and Assessment (See Assessment Policy)***

#### ***Assessment***

The impact of our curriculum is evidenced by the work that the pupils produce, their progression over time and how well prepared our pupils are for the next stage. Assessment is an integral part of our approach to teaching and learning and teachers undertake this regularly (see separate Assessment Policy and Feedback and Marking Policy).

Pupils undergo baseline assessments in the form of mini quizzes and weekly assessment monitoring. These sessions, alongside end of topic assessments are valuable in monitoring pupils' apprehension of new skills and knowledge. Substantive knowledge is assessed at the beginning of each new topic, alongside disciplinary knowledge; the latter is also carefully

examined via key stage summative assessments, which compare age related expectations on a national curve.

## **Impact**

At First Steps Together our curriculum is designed to have the maximum impact possible for our students. 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 that students 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.