

Curriculum Policy

Issue number	2.8
Name and appointment of owner / author	Paul Bridges, Deputy Head (Academic)
Review Body	SLT and Full Board of Governors
Last updated	24 th January, 2025
Reason for update	Update to Appendix A (Alternative curriculum provision)
Last reviewed by SLT	January 2025
Last reviewed by Governors	June 2022
Next SLT review due	June 2027
Next Governor review due	pending new legislation or major changes to procedures
Where available	Freemen's Staff SharePoint site, School website (unrestricted area), Parent Portal, Governor Portal

Contents

Curriculum Policy	1
Freemen's Curriculum Policy	3
The Junior School Curriculum (Years 3-6)	3
Senior School Curriculum (Years 7-11).....	4
Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE).....	4
Keystage 3 (Years 7-9)	4
Year 7.....	4
Year 8.....	4
Year 9.....	5
Keystage 4 (Years 10-11)	5
The Sixth Form Curriculum (Years 12-13)	6
Schemes of Work.....	8
Appendix 1	9
Requests to undertake an alternative programme of study.	9

Freemen's Curriculum Policy

The City of London Freeman's School provides a rigorous and stimulating curriculum which will challenge and engage pupils. All pupils can learn and make progress.

All pupils of compulsory school age receive a full-time education which encompasses mathematical, linguistic, technological, human and social, physical and creative aspects.

At all levels, the core curriculum provides the opportunity for pupils to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy; these are further developed in other subjects.

We reserve the right to organise the curriculum and its delivery in a way which, in the professional judgement of the Head, is most appropriate to the School community as a whole. The allocation of teachers to classes is at the School's discretion and is determined by a various factors including staff availability, pupil numbers and timetable logistics.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), part of the timetable in all years, promotes the development of healthy lifestyles and citizenship and encourages individual responsibility and informed decision-making.

Freemen's is an inclusive school which believes that our community is stronger because we welcome a diverse range of students; those students who have additional learning needs will be supported to ensure they receive an education that enables them to realise their potential [see Special Educational Needs and EAL Policy].

The Junior School Curriculum (Years 3-6)

In the Junior School years most lessons are taught by the Form Teacher. Some subjects, such as Religious Studies, Music and P.E./Games are taught by specialist staff. As the pupils progress through the Junior School more of the subjects are taught by specialists.

In the early years English and Mathematics account for around 40% of class time with about one hour a week devoted to subjects such as Science, History, Geography, Religious Studies, Design & Technology, Information Technology and Computing, Art and Music.

Languages – In KS2 (Years 3-6), Languages are taught using the WOLLOW (World of Languages, Languages of the World) model with students developing skills in linguistics and experiencing a range of languages.

P.E. and Games are a very important part of every child's education and at least three hours per week is devoted to this area. In addition to this, of course, many children will become part of at least one of the School's representative sports teams and/or will take

part in House competitions.

Junior School Enrichment is timetabled for one afternoon each week; the pupils follow an exciting programme developing leadership, teamwork, community service and organisation led by their teachers.

Senior School Curriculum (Years 7–11)

Senior School Enrichment is timetabled for one period each week; opportunities for student leadership are introduced as the Sixth Formers work with teaching staff to deliver a range of activities for students in Years 7-11.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

PSHE is taught throughout the Senior School. Topics covered include self-discipline & decision making; study skills; self-awareness & awareness of others including the elderly and disability; awareness of drugs, smoking & alcohol and law & order. In addition, pupils are familiarised with the Careers Room and the advice available. They are then able to use this facility throughout the rest of their time at the School.

Keystage 3 (Years 7-9)

Keystage three is a time for students to find and follow their passions and interests, develop excellent learning habits and lay a strong foundation for further learning.

Linked to National Curriculum guidelines the subjects studied are Mathematics, English, Languages, the Sciences (Physics, Biology and Chemistry), Computing, Art, Drama, Geography, History, Music, RE, Design Technology and Food Technology.

The students are set by ability in Mathematics, Science and Languages.

Year 7

Science is taught as a combined subject up to and through Year 7 after which it is taught separately as Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Languages: From Year 7 students choose three languages from five options: Spanish, French, German, Mandarin and Latin.

Year 8

Languages: In Year 8 students reduce their three language specialisms from three to two. (They will be required to take at least one modern foreign language from Spanish, French, German or Mandarin at GCSE level.)

Students in Year 8 also study the **FPQ** (a qualification overseen by AQA). This is a research course in which students are taught to dive deeply into a subject about

which they are personally interested in finding out more. Their teachers will help them to learn research skills in way which encourages them to become independent learners.

Year 9

Students continue with their subjects and are given guidance and support to help inform their decision making when it comes to which GCSEs they will choose to study.

Keystage 4 (Years 10-11)

Core subjects - Students are expected to follow a two-year programme culminating in them sitting examinations for ten GCSEs (although some students may take eleven if they are invited to take Additional Mathematics). The core examinable subjects are: English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, the Sciences, and a Modern Foreign Language. These will continue to be studied with the three sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics) being taught and examined separately. The students are set by ability in Mathematics and Science.

If an alternative programme of study is desired, please see Appendix 1.

Optional subjects - Students choose three options from the following subjects: A second Modern Foreign Language, (French, German or Spanish); Art & Design; Business Studies; Design Technology; Drama; Food Preparation and Nutrition; Geography; History; Computing; Latin; Music; Physical Education, Philosophy Ethics & Religion.

These optional subjects will be offered each year and will run providing there are a minimum of three students enrolled, or at the Headmaster's discretion. Students are given a free choice and we will endeavour to satisfy all requests. Where it isn't possible to run all the requested classes we will inform the student and their parents and support them in making an alternative choice.

P.E. and Games as a whole year group continue to be delivered but are not examined.

The Sixth Form Curriculum (Years 12-13)

Freemen's offers a wide a range of subjects in the Sixth Form that allows all students to follow a programme that meets their interests, abilities and career aspirations.

For each Sixth Former we offer three pathways:

Pathway 1 - four A levels, two of which must include Mathematics and Further Mathematics (and an optional EPQ)

Pathway 2 - three A levels, the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) and Free Minds

Pathway 3 - three A levels, Free Minds and a Focused Study period

The three academic pathways are complemented by the following for ALL students

A course of Careers Education, and Personal, Social and Health Education

The Enrichment curriculum for students in the Lower 6

A programme of appropriate Games options on Wednesday afternoon

The **EPQ** is a taught course on project management culminating in an extended project (EPQ) and leads to an AS qualification awarded at the end of Upper Sixth. Those studying Further Mathematics may opt to do an EPQ, but it is not compulsory for those students.

The **Free Minds** programme is followed by all Sixth Formers on Pathways 2 and 3. Students will choose five courses from a broad selection of Science, Arts, Humanities and World topics. These courses consist of six weeks of one-hour seminars.

The **Focused Study Period** is a bespoke weekly session where students receive coaching to enable them to develop positive study habits and/or work on subject specific concerns.

From September 2025:

Students will have four paths to choose from:

Pathway 1 - 4 A levels plus EPQ

Pathway 2 - 4 A levels and Private Study

Pathway 3 - 3 A levels plus an EPQ and Free Minds

Pathway 4 - 3 A levels, Free Minds and Private Study

For most, three A Levels, plus EPQ, Free Minds, Enrichment and the co-curriculum remains the best option.

Taking AS exams in the L6 will not be an option, although a student who wishes to may elect to take them in the U6

Students and parents should be aware that 4 A Levels is a challenge and will require a strong GCSE profile

The decision to drop an A level subject (where appropriate) will be informed by the Provisional UCAS Grade and Working Towards Grade

The decision to drop to three A Levels will be required by HT3 of the L6.

Students who drop are likely to do so immediately and fall back into the Free Minds programme.

All L6 students will continue to play their part in 'Making a Difference' via the Enrichment programme.

Subject options - Students will choose their three A levels from the following options: Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Classical Civilisations, Computer Science, Drama & Theatre, Design & Technology, Economics, English Literature, Fine Art, Further Mathematics, Geography, History, Latin, Mathematics, French, German, Spanish, Music, Physical Education, Physics, Politics, Psychology, Religion, Ethics & Philosophy (PER).

These subjects will be offered each year and will run providing there are a minimum of three students enrolled or at the Headmaster's discretion.

Students are given a free choice of our options and we will endeavour to satisfy all requests. Where it isn't possible to run all the requested classes we will inform the student and their parents and support them in making an alternative choice.

Students with certain Higher Education goals, for example Medicine, Engineering, Dentistry, Oxbridge, Ivy League and other international universities will have dedicated sessions arranged to help support their applications. All students receive the support of the Freeman's UCAS and Future Pathways department.

Schemes of Work

There will be a scheme of work for every academic subject taught at Freeman's, from KS2 to KS5. There is no prescribed template for a SOW and each Curriculum Leader will decide how best to present theirs, which they may be asked to do by inspectors and by their line managers.

Schemes of work should clearly identify the intention of the programme of study, how the scheme work will be implemented and how the impact of the scheme of work will be measured.

It is assumed that teachers and Curriculum Leaders will be mindful of complementary policies, such as Diversity and Inclusion, Homework, Learning and Teaching and Behaviour for Learning and ensure that those policies inform the implementation of their curricula.

Intention: The intent of the curriculum is the content that we expect children to learn. The scheme of work must outline, as a minimum:

- The topics being studied
- The skills being learned - include those relevant to specific Keystages, such as literacy, numeracy and speaking in KS2.
- Opportunities for diversity and inclusion

Implementation: the implementation of the curriculum is concerned with the department go about the business of teaching the curriculum.

Some of the elements below can be covered with an overarching statement which encompasses the whole scheme of work. For example an explanation of how SharePoint and OneNote are used to support learning might be covered in general, rather than noting each specific use. Note should be made of the following, but Curriculum Leaders should use their discretion in deciding how to explain how they expect teaching and learning to occur:

How the department organises the delivery of lessons e.g. how multiple teachers divide up the SOW

- How different systems are used e.g. SharePoint and OneNote
- Departmental approaches to using feedback and assessment for learning to improve outcomes (including use of half term grades, reports and parents' evenings)
- Identify how the scheme of work employs the Six Classroom Principles of Freeman's.
- How the department will cater to those students with SEND and who have EAL needs – references here to the guidance from the SENCO are important, plus any subject specific planning that needs to be in place.
- How the department ensures each student is supported to achieve their potential and work is differentiated to meet their needs.

- Schemes of work may also contain links to resources and anything else the department deem useful.

These points may be covered by a statement at the beginning or end of the scheme of work.

Impact: the impact section explains how the department will know whether students know what we wish them to learn. This details how the department will check to ensure that the planned programme of study has been delivered so that the students have learned what was intended.

This section should outline how the assessment of learning and teaching is integral to the programme of study and note should be made of different types of assessments, when they occur and how they are recorded.

Each department should have a central markbook recording key assessment points sufficient for a cohort's progress to be tracked over time.

Reference should also be made as to how teachers receive feedback (Blinks and classroom visits) and how good practice is shared within the department.

Some of the elements below can be covered with an overarching statement which encompasses the whole scheme of work. For example an explanation of how teachers and students are expected to review 'landmark' assessments can be described once and does not need to be repeated for each subsequent assessment point.

Appendix 1

Requests to undertake an alternative programme of study.

Students are expected to study the School's Curriculum, as outlined in the Curriculum policy, unless there are exceptional circumstances. This appendix outlines the process for making a request to study an alternative programme and the guidelines which are to be followed in making that decision. It is normally expected that an alternative programme is one in which a student takes one or more fewer subjects than required by the School's Curriculum policy.

How can applications be made to consider an alternative programme of study?

Requests to undertake an alternative programme of study should be made in writing or via email to the student's Head of Section.

Who can make changes to a student's programme of study?

- Parents may request that an alternative programme of study be allowed. Such requests should be made in writing jointly to the student's Head of Section and Deputy Head Academic.
- The School may advise when they consider it is in the best interests of the student to make changes to their programme of study. Any decision to change the students programme of study will be discussed with the student, their parents, the Head of Section and the Deputy Head Academic.
- In cases where there is a SEND issue the Director of Inclusive Learning may initiate proceedings and will be consulted.
- The School reserves the right to make the final decision to grant any requests.

What guides the School's decision to grant a student an alternative programme of study?

- History of need – students who have a history of needing support from the School over and above normal levels of academic, SEND and pastoral support will have that history considered;
- Co-curricular commitment – where the students undertakes co-curricular commitments in excess of what is deemed within achievable norms that can be considered;

When students have elected to study additional subjects?

On occasion the School allows some students to study more subjects than the normal programme of study, for example when undertaking Further Maths at A Level. When a student commits to such a programme of study the decision, at a later date, to request to drop the additional subject may be made directly to the Head of Section and will not undergo the same assessment as would be levelled against a request to drop a subject from their core programme of study. If the additional subject has replaced a core subject, then the additional subject becomes a core component and any request to drop the subject needs to follow the process above.

What happens next for those who have changed to an alternative programme of study?

Once the decision to change a student's programme of study is confirmed the student will normally be expected to use their gained time to concentrate on their other subjects, working and registering in the School's library. It is possible that some of the student's gained time may also be used to facilitate sessions delivered by the Learning Support Department.

Process

- Request directed to Head of Section and Deputy Head Academic, requests to drop a subject can come from staff, students or the family of the student.
- HOS and DHA arrange consultation with appropriate staff e.g. Director of Inclusive Learning (DIL), Head of Year, Head of Department
- Confirmation required from:
 - Parents

- DHA
 - HoS,
 - CL of subject being dropped
- Staff approval possibly required from:
 - AHCC, DIL
- Approval granted by HoS/DHA.
- Once approved, the HoS, HOY and possibly DIL plan what will be done instead.
- HOY to action the changes:
 - Inform and brief colleagues as required: Head of Year, AHoS, Data Manager, Tutor, subject teacher, Headmaster, Head Librarian, Senior School Receptionist, DIL.
 - Pass an adjusted timetable to the student.
- Librarians register attendance each period
- HOS ensures decision is added to a tracking spreadsheet

Entry to the Sixth Form

When the School has advised that a change to the curriculum is in the best interests of the pupil the points required to re-enter the School at Sixth Form will be adjusted. When the decision to drop a subject is not supported by the School the points will not be adjusted.