



Curriculum Policy

Priestley Smith Specialist VI School

September 2026

Policy review date: September 2026

Policy status: Non-statutory

Responsible member of SLT: Richard Foord Assistant Headteacher

CURRICULUM

Priestley Smith School is committed to the rights of the child as outlined in the UN Convention and is working towards Rights Respecting Schools Gold award. This belief influences everything the school does and impacts upon all our policies.

Article 3

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

Article 23

A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and independence, and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to provide support to disabled children.

Article 29

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

This policy seeks to provide a vision for Priestley Smith Specialist School for students with Visual Impairments, whilst ensuring it meets the expectations of national policy objectives.

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

OUR VISION

Priestley Smith School is an outward-looking centre of excellence in the education of children with vision impairments.

OUR MISSION

Through high quality teaching, learning and pastoral care, to develop confident, caring, happy and independent young people who are able to succeed.

OUR COMMUNITY VALUES cultivate a sense of belonging by embracing diversity and working together harmoniously.

We are **CALM**: We support self-control and regulation to promote accessibility and collaboration

We are **CARING**: We prioritize empathy and kindness, supporting each individual's unique needs and promoting a compassionate atmosphere.

We are **CONFIDENT**: We empower our students to believe in their abilities, fostering self-assurance and resilience in all endeavours.

We **COMMUNICATE**: We encourage open, honest, and respectful dialogue, ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and understood.

We **CELEBRATE**: We recognize and rejoice in the achievements and milestones of our students, reinforcing their sense of pride and accomplishment.

At our school for children with vision impairments, we are committed to fostering a nurturing and inclusive environment where every member of our community feels valued and empowered. Our core values guide our daily interactions and shape the experiences of our students.

These values are the foundation of our school and everything that we do.

Calm

Purposeful
Engaged
Accessible
Kind
Environment

Caring

Well being
Respectful
Safe
Warmth
Accepting

Confident

Independent
Resilient
Resourceful
Ambitious
Self advocate

Communicate

Relationships
Respectful
Collaboration
Accessible
Team work

Celebrate

Pride
Values
Inclusion
Ambitious
Enjoyment

THE PRIESTLEY SMITH CURRICULUM

Priestley Smith students will have the opportunity to build a rich and broad cultural capital through learning experiences both in and outside the classroom, ensuring **students are able to become engaged 21st century citizens**.

The policy encompasses:

- **Intent** – the rationale, purpose and design of the curriculum as a whole.
- **Implementation** – how the curriculum is organised and delivered in our specific context.
- **Impact** – how improvements in student knowledge, skills and understanding are measured.



Curriculum intent

Our curriculum is ambitious and designed to give all pupils the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

P.R.I.E.S.T.L.E.Y!

- **P**repared for life
- **R**esilient
- **I**ndependent
- **E**nriched
- **S**elf-advocate
- **T**echnology
- **L**earning to access, access to learning
- **E**mootional well-being
- **Y**es, we can!!



The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child. Carl Jung

	NATIONAL	SCHOOL	CLASSROOM
INTENT	To what extent has the government made the objectives clear?	To what extent has the school made the objectives clear? To what extent do the objectives align with the national policy objectives?	What do teachers think their objective is in teaching this subject? To what extent do the objectives align with the school's objectives?
IMPLEMENTATION	How effectively are the objectives of the curriculum translated into policy levers?	How effectively are the objectives of the school translated into processes and policies?	How likely is it that the teaching methods used will deliver the teachers objectives for that subject?
IMPACT	What is the potential impact of the policy objectives on pupils nationally?	What is the potential impact of the school's objectives on its pupils?	What is the potential impact of the course of study on the pupils?

INTENT

Priestley Smith School caters for students aged 2-19 years from across the West Midlands region, all of whom have significant visual impairment. Many of our students have additional needs which impact on their learning.

At Priestley Smith, our curriculum is underpinned by our ethos and values. Our fully accessible curriculum not only reflects the needs of our vision impaired students, but also promotes a love of learning and personal growth.

We do this through an experiential, creative and relevant specialist curriculum which inspires and motivates all students to develop as individuals and achieve their potential. We support our students and equip them with the skills and attributes they need to become confident, independent and respectful young adults, who have ambitious

aspirations for their futures. We recognise the challenges faced by young people with vision impairments and help them to develop the strategies to overcome any barriers.

Our curriculum takes into account the fact that many of our students have additional needs which include learning, communication, physical and social and emotional difficulties. It is therefore essential that the curriculum we offer, while paying full regard to national guidelines, is fit for purpose in meeting this range of need. Our curriculum offers a broad, balanced, challenging and relevant curriculum across the Key Stages that compliments the Specialist Visual Impairment Curriculum and supports the Preparation For Adulthood Pathways

We recognise that many, though not all, of our students are working below their chronological levels and that it is essential that the curriculum we offer provides a clear progression in learning and skills, geared at the individual learning level of each child rather than at age-related expectations. Our teachers therefore plan the curriculum for each child, ensuring that the learning they undertake is appropriate to their level of understanding and provides the correct level of challenge. Our curriculum is designed to allow teachers to draw from concepts within current and previous key stages and to provide regular opportunities to revisit and consolidate areas of learning. We follow a **stage not age** approach across all key stages of the school.

Through our teaching we aim to:

- Encourage independence for each student in both learning and personal development.
- Offer learning through first-hand experience so that students with visual impairment have a greater understanding of concepts which may otherwise prove abstract and remote.
- Dovetail their specialist VI curriculum in their everyday learning e.g braille, ICT accessibility, independent living skills and mobility.
- Actively involve students in their learning so that it is meaningful and enables them to take responsibility for their own progress.
- Develop the student's ability to work together as part of a team and to regard positively what other students offer. We strive to develop an attitude of tolerance and respect for all.
- Ensure that students understand that learning is not simply about acquiring knowledge but also about developing essential skills that can be related to new and future learning.
- Encourage students to have fun in learning and to be proud of their achievements.
- Help develop a positive attitude towards lifelong learning and prepare our students for adulthood.
- Develop in our students the skills and values to live in a diverse and ever changing modern world.
- Promote strong mental health and well-being in our students by building their resilience and coping strategies.

Whole-school literacy, oracy, digital and media literacy and sustainability

Whole-school oracy is planned and taught across EYFS, primary, secondary and post-16. Each subject or phase leader identifies a small number of meaningful communication purposes (for example, listening and responding, questioning, explaining, reasoning, discussion, presenting and self-advocacy), identifies what progression looks like within Explore, Enrich and Endeavour, and shows where pupils encounter, practise, revisit and apply these skills. Communication may be spoken, signed, brailled, tactile, AAC-supported or otherwise individually appropriate. Teachers use existing lesson evidence, pupil voice, EHCP-related information and formative assessment to review participation, independence, increasing complexity and transfer; a separate numerical oracy score is not required.

Reading, writing and communication are developed across the curriculum using each pupil's appropriate reading medium and communication approach. Subject leaders identify opportunities to extend vocabulary, listening, discussion, questioning, explanation and self-advocacy. Oracy and communication progression includes accessible approaches for pupils using alternative or augmentative communication; it is not limited to spoken contributions.

Digital and media literacy are embedded across the curriculum and supported by the school's ICT curriculum, AI Policy, E-Safety Policy and specialist VI provision. IT develops accessible digital skills, appropriate use of assistive technology, source checking, understanding of AI and responsible digital practice. PSHE develops digital citizenship, online relationships, personal boundaries, privacy, wellbeing, informed decision-making and routes to seek help. Pupils are supported to evaluate online information, recognise persuasive or misleading material and understand that AI-generated content may be inaccurate or biased.

Other subjects reinforce these skills in authentic contexts. Science develops evidence-based enquiry and scrutiny of scientific and environmental claims; history examines provenance, interpretation and source reliability; English

Foundation Stage students enter school from 2 years of age. They spend 2 years in this group and the curriculum has been created in order to utilise the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile in planning and assessment. Children's learning is at a very early stage in this phase, which is further delayed by individual levels of vision and cognition. It is essential, therefore, that the curriculum offered takes account of children's early experiences of the world and provides every opportunity for learning by doing.

The topic matrix for Foundation Stage shows a 2 year cycle with themes which allow for children to use their individual knowledge of the world as a starting point (eg The Senses, Myself) and to gradually extend understanding through planned visits, activities and first hand experiences.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of seven areas of learning and development. 3 Prime Areas and 4 Specific areas. Each area is divided into aspects.			
Personal, Social and Emotional development		Communication and Language	
Making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness		Listening and attention Understanding, Speaking	
Physical Development		Physical Development	
Moving and Handling Health and self care		Moving and Handling Health and self care	
Literacy	Mathematics	Understanding the World	Expressive arts and design
Reading Writing	Numbers Shape, space and measure	People and Communities The World Technology	Exploring and using media and materials Being imaginative

EYFS assessment uses ongoing observation and professional judgement against the statutory EYFS framework, supported where useful by the non-statutory Development Matters guidance. The school records individual starting points and progress using its own appropriately adapted assessment systems. For children in the reception year, statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) arrangements, including applicable accessibility and disapplication provisions, are followed where required; the RBA is distinct from the school's diagnostic baseline. The statutory EYFS Profile is completed at the end of reception where applicable, with statutory requirements and exemptions checked against the current assessment and reporting arrangements. Assessments recognise pupils' vision impairment, communication approaches and additional needs.

THE KEY STAGE 1 AND 2 CURRICULUM

The Primary department in Priestley Smith School recognises the need to create a curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 which is fit for purpose and which meets the wide range of needs of its visually impaired students while paying attention to the 2014 New Primary curriculum guidelines.

As is the case in the Foundation Stage curriculum design, the prime consideration for the construction of appropriate topics for students at Key Stage 1 and 2 has been that the chosen curriculum is a bespoke curriculum which fits the specialist needs of the students. Factors in the decision-making process have been:

- A thorough understanding of the visual and learning needs of all students
- Discussions about how students learn , with a strong focus on learning by doing
- Discussion about what our students will need in order to become confident learners with an enthusiasm to achieve at their own level
- Discussions about long-term learning needs which will prepare students for a fulfilling and successful future beyond school
- Consideration of what has been successful in the past and ways in which it may be used again
- Knowledge of local resources which can be used effectively to give meaning to learning
- Opportunities for revisiting skills which can be applied to other areas of learning
- Processes which clearly track progress in basic skills and in subject specific understanding

The topic matrices are constructed by selecting learning objectives from the programmes of study in all subject areas and arranging them in a thematic way which presents learning opportunities considered to be important and appropriate to all Primary students. Some topic areas have a history emphasis while others may have a geography or science focus.

While literacy and numeracy skills are practised and included within topic areas, they are also taught as separate subjects, following a progression of skills and concepts in accordance with each child's individual learning level.

Literacy teaching includes speaking and listening, reading, writing and spelling. Numeracy includes number, shape and space, measures, data handling and using and applying. Literacy and numeracy are taught on a daily basis within the Primary Department.

Students are assessed in their existing knowledge at the start of each new topic and re-assessed at its completion. Staff use a Insight to document progress through clear and detailed learning outcomes, which tie in with National Curriculum expectations. These objectives increase in complexity as learning accelerates.

Students are fully involved in all their learning and are offered opportunities to re-visit and embed previously learned skills. In subjects such as geography and history, the concepts of which are sometimes difficult for visually impaired students to understand fully, increased attention is paid to making learning come to life, using visits, field trips, role play and artefacts.

Primary staff have completed a thorough audit of the curriculum offered to its students. Drawing on past teaching experience, they have paid attention to what has been successful with visually impaired students and have additionally included elements of the new curriculum programmes of study where they have been considered relevant and appropriate. This process has resulted in the current topic matrices which offer a broad, diverse and exciting curriculum across the Primary age range. It is, however, recognised as a working document which will undergo change as staff deliver its content and will be regularly reviewed in order to continue to ensure success in learning for all students

EYFS and primary foundations for digital and media literacy

In EYFS and primary, digital and media literacy are developed through appropriate practical, experiential and thematic learning rather than treated as a separate additional subject. Pupils encounter accessible technologies, stories and information in familiar contexts, learn to ask questions, distinguish real and imaginary content where developmentally appropriate, recognise that information may be inaccurate and practise safe digital habits and seeking help.

Primary teachers will identify existing opportunities within communication and literacy, understanding the world, science, computing, PSHE, geography, history and mathematics. Learning is adapted through tactile and auditory experiences, braille, enlarged print, assistive technology and individual communication methods as appropriate. Primary and secondary staff will agree key concepts and vocabulary to support continuity.

Curriculum for Key Stage 3

The Key Stage 3 Curriculum ensures students can continue their academic journey through experiential learning as part of the Specialist VI Curriculum as well as and appropriately tailored academic curriculum with appropriate levels of expectation and genuine challenge along with relevance, continuity and progression in learning to ensure every student can aim high and maximise their learning potential. Each subject within the secondary school has their own specific aims linked to our overall intention and are committed to enabling the greatest of success for all our students. The golden thread of Careers Education, Information and Guidance is carried through from the primary school into the secondary curriculum. The RSE programme is designed to develop their personal, social, moral and cultural awareness. The activities undertaken alongside the Specialist VI Curriculum and PFA support students by building their independence and developing a sense of responsibility. We provide courses of study and teaching methods that promote engagement and enquiry, are tailored to the wide range of needs, interests and aspirations of our students. The Accelerated Learning Group has a bespoke curriculum for students with cognition and learning difficulties and a specialist primary teacher has devised the curriculum to support these learners effectively.

Curriculum for Key Stages 4 and 5

The Key Stage 4 and 5 Curriculum Offer allows students to make some choices as to subjects they wish to follow whilst retaining certain key curriculum areas which have to be studied.

Compulsory and optional courses are all offered at a range of levels from Personal Progress to Level 2 and occasionally, to Level 3 in the Sixth Form, where this is appropriate. Course content and level are matched to the

individual needs of students, with groups structured on ability and sometimes, across age groups. Where courses with a vocational element are offered, these have been chosen to help students develop skills that would be accessible and appropriate to any possible employment opportunities. Other courses, such as Home Cooking Skills are offered as a means to helping students develop vital life skills.

PERSONAL PROGRESS BELOW ENTRY LEVEL

Entry Level 1, 2 and 3 Below GCSE level Entry 1 is the base level and Entry 3 is the top level

GCSE (England): grades 9–1 (9 highest; U ungraded). Entry Level qualifications: Entry 1, 2 and 3, where offered and approved for the relevant subject.

Regulated Level 1 vocational or technical qualifications: grading and size vary by awarding organisation and specification; check each current qualification.

Regulated Level 2 vocational or technical qualifications: grading and size vary by awarding organisation and specification; although they are not necessarily direct GCSE grade equivalence.

Level 3 qualifications, where offered: qualifications and grading depend on the approved specification and individual pathway.

Some vocational courses are also available as Awards, Certificates and Diplomas. This is related to the size of the qualification not the level. For example, a Level 1 Certificate and Level 1 Diploma, although the qualification is at Level 1, the Diploma covers more units so students studying for the Diploma have a broader, more detailed knowledge of the subject.

Courses are chosen with clear progression routes between key stages and beyond Sixth Form, to Post-18 institutions.

KEY STAGE 4

At key Stage 4, the compulsory subject areas are Maths, English, ICT, Science, Food Technology PSD, RE and PE. PSD is included in the compulsory list, for Priestley Smith School, to ensure our students have developed a full understanding of themselves, their family, community and issues affecting them as citizens of the UK and the wider world. As our learners often progress at a slower pace than their mainstream peers and do not have visual experience of the world around them, more time is needed to help them to acquire and develop relevant skills and knowledge.

PE is retained to encourage health and fitness, and to promote 'activity and fitness' as an ongoing, lifelong habit.* (*A series of studies have shown that children who are visually impaired consistently exhibit lower levels of fitness than their sighted peers (Blessing, McCrimmon, Stovall, & Williford, 1993; Lieberman & McHugh, 2001; Skaggs & Hopper, 1996; Winnick & Short, 1985, 1999). quoted from Fitness for individuals who are visually impaired or deafblind. Lieberman, Lauren J.. 34(1),13-8023. 2002.)

ICT is retained as a compulsory subject in order to ensure that students practice and develop effective ICT access skills (including the continuing use of specialist technology) and because of its key role as a vital work skill for visually impaired young people. Food technology is retained to support students independent living skills as well as understanding of nutrition.

The 'specialist curriculum areas' of braille, mobility and developing independent living skills also continue; they are timetabled according to the individual needs of students.

KEY STAGE 5

At Key Stage 5, in addition to compulsory RS and PSD the curriculum is tailored to different ways of learning, appropriate to older students. Students following the Foundation Learning strand of Year 12 have the opportunity to study a Workskills and Kings Trust Employability Skills.

In Year 13 students gain experience of the work place. Placements are chosen in consultation with students to develop an area of interest and are sometimes supported by Priestley Smith staff, though students are encouraged to be independent where possible. Sometimes placements allow students the chance to develop independent travel skills where the usual journey between home and school is too long or complex to make this possible, a well-chosen work placement location can make this a fantastic achievement.

For some students, we are also able to offer the chance to study A Levels in partnership with Fortis Academy, supported by Teaching Assistants from school who are familiar with the student and would help to organise the appropriate format for study materials.

2026–27 KS4 AND KS5 CURRICULUM OFFER

KS4: All pupils study English, mathematics, science, ICT, PE, Personal and Social Development, RE and VIPS, alongside individually required specialist VI skills. Options: Art or Music; History or Business.

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS KS4

There will be two Option choices

Option 1	Option 2
Art	History
Music - BTEC	Business – WJEC/Eduqas

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS KS5 PATHWAYS

3 pathways:

1. Level 3 - Taught in partnership with Fortis Academy.
2. Level 1/2 KS5: All pupils study PE, RE, independent living, personal development and employability. English and mathematics continue where Level 2 has not been achieved. Options: Art or Music; History, Business or Hospitality and Catering.

Option 1	<table><tr><th>OPTION 1</th><th>OPTION 2</th></tr><tr><td>Art</td><td>History</td></tr><tr><td>Music</td><td>Business</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Hospitality and Catering</td></tr></table>	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	Art	History	Music	Business		Hospitality and Catering
OPTION 1		OPTION 2							
Art		History							
Music		Business							
		Hospitality and Catering							
Option 2									
WJEX ILS									
PE									
PSD + SRE									
College/WE									
Beliefs and Values									
English									
Maths									
Study Time/ Careers Action Planning									

3. Entry level/skills base

Qualifications are matched to pupils' pathways and may include Entry Level, Functional Skills, GCSE (grades 9–1), vocational awards and certificates. The September 2026 options booklets set out the published courses and awarding bodies; subject leaders confirm individual entries and current specifications.

Across both key stages, accredited study is complemented by accessible technology, braille, mobility, independence, work-related learning and preparation for adulthood. Qualification routes and options are reviewed annually.

Demonstrating curriculum progression and transition

Curriculum progression means the planned development of increasingly secure subject knowledge, understanding and skills. Subject maps and schemes of work identify foundational learning, the order in which important concepts are taught, opportunities to revisit and consolidate them, and how pupils apply learning in increasingly demanding or unfamiliar contexts. Progression is planned within each of the Explore, Enrich and Endeavour pathways; the pathways are not fixed sequential stages through which every pupil must pass.

Individual progression is evaluated from each pupil's assessed starting point. Flightpaths and other assessment information support monitoring of attainment and personal progress but do not replace subject sequencing. Teachers use this evidence alongside EHCP outcomes and specialist VI assessments to plan next steps, provide challenge and recognise that progress may be uneven or non-linear.

Progression also includes the specialist skills described in the Curriculum Framework for Vision Impairment, including communication, braille and other literacy media, accessible technology, orientation and mobility, independence and self-advocacy. The school supports pupils to transfer learning across subjects and into community, further education, employment and everyday contexts.

At transition points, including EYFS to primary, primary to secondary, between key stages and into post-16 destinations, staff share relevant information about prior curriculum learning, preferred access methods, assistive technology, communication, specialist VI skills and individual next steps. Receiving teachers use this information to build on established knowledge and avoid unnecessary repetition.

IMPACT

Our Curriculum is monitored through drawing on information such as achievement data, student behaviour in lessons, learning walk snapshots, review of schemes of work and teacher planning. The quality of the curriculum impacts on all of these areas. In addition, we will take student and staff voice into account to ensure triangulation and accuracy and may include both internal and external personnel for Quality Assurance purposes. The curriculum should make a significantly positive contribution to the Personal Development of all students. The acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding in each subject will be assessed using a variety of assessment methods:

- Activities associated with **summative assessment** result in an evaluation of overall student achievement in a subject- for example, allocation to a level or standard or allocation of a letter or numerical grade e.g. Stage 2b, Level 2 Merit, GCSE grade 4 etc. These summative assessments might appear in reports, the school's achievement trackers or the school's assessment record system-Classroom Monitor.
- In the classroom the focus is mainly on **formative assessment (Assessment for Learning)**.
- Activities associated with **formative assessment** do not result in an overall evaluation or grade. Instead, they focus on establishing what a student knows, understands and is able to do. Formative assessment (Assessment for Learning) is used by both the teacher and the learner to determine where learners are in their learning, where they need to go next and how best to get there.
- We will also utilise comparative data, measuring the performance of a student against previous performances from that student. With this method the focus is on improvement on previous best by comparing previous results. It is not comparing one student against other students, as our students have very unique needs

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING STRATEGIES INVOLVE:

Research has identified a number of classroom strategies that are particularly effective in promoting formative assessment practice.

- **The Strategic Use of Questioning**

Questioning is used not only as a pedagogical tool to extend student learning but also as a deliberate way for the teacher to find out what students know, understand and are able to do.

- **Effective Teacher Feedback**

Effective teacher feedback focuses on established success criteria and tells the students what they have achieved and where they need to improve. Importantly, the feedback provides specific constructive suggestions about how those improvements might be achieved. Effective teacher feedback does not simply state that a piece of work is good, excellent or poor but explains why this is the case and how a student can further improve their work- the exact steps they need to take to reach set criteria. At Priestley Smith School all staff follow an agreed marking policy which promotes effective feedback.

- **Peer Feedback**

Peer feedback occurs when a student uses agreed success criteria to tell another student what they have achieved and where improvement is necessary. Again, the feedback provides specific suggestions to help achieve improvement.

- **Student Self-assessment**

Student self-assessment encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning. Students assess their own work against explicitly communicated learning objectives and decide their own next steps. They discuss this self-assessment with their peers, teaching and support staff. As part of this process students may also decide whether they think they have understood the work fully or whether they need further intervention and support. This decision is discussed with their teacher.

- **The Formative use of Summative Assessment**

Summative assessment is a necessary aspect of education. Formative use can be made of summative assessment, both before and after the assessment event. Students may for example discuss with their teacher the standards required to reach a particular stage, grade or level.

Attainment and progress across the Key stages will be measured outcomes against targets calculated on flight paths

The overall effectiveness of the implementation of the school curriculum will be measured using the school performance measures outlined in the DfE Statement of Intent

The success of Preparation for Adulthood will be indicated using post-16 and post 18 destination data.

Curriculum documentation, leadership and review

The curriculum policy is supported by the Priestley Curriculum Framework, subject intent, implementation and impact maps, detailed schemes of work and the assessment policy. Together, these documents explain curriculum entitlement, subject-specific knowledge and skills, the planned sequence of learning, personalised pathways and how progress is evaluated. The policy sets the whole-school expectations; subject documentation provides the detail and is reviewed as teaching and qualifications evolve.

Curriculum leaders, including EYFS and primary leaders, will review subject and thematic planning to identify where literacy, oracy, digital and media literacy, financial literacy, climate and sustainability education, citizenship and enrichment are introduced, developed and revisited. This review should recognise provision already in place and address genuine gaps rather than require unnecessary new units or duplicate assessment.

Leaders will use existing planning reviews, pupil voice, assessment information and transition discussions to evaluate coverage, accessibility, progression and participation across Explore, Enrich and Endeavour. Where appropriate, the school will monitor equitable access to enrichment and use findings to inform curriculum improvement.

Other linked policies

- Specialist VI provision
- Assessment Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Mental Health Policy

Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (CFVI)
[Framework for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment \(rnib.org.uk\)](https://www.rnib.org.uk)

[Curriculum](#)

Specialist Vi Curriculum research : [Specialist VI Curriculum - Thomas Pocklington Trust \(pocklington-trust.org.uk\)](https://pocklington-trust.org.uk)

Preparation For Adulthood Pathways [Preparing for Adulthood | PfA | Home Page](#)

Priestley's curriculum is underpinned by our whole school ethos, which values and supports the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Safeguarding is the golden thread that runs through all areas of our curriculum.

Curriculum Intent

Our curriculum intent is underpinned by the Curriculum Framework for Vision Impairment (CFVI) and our mission to support our students through high quality teaching, learning and pastoral care, to develop confident, caring, happy and independent young people who are able to succeed.

Prepared for life	Resilient	Independent	Enriched	Self-advocate	Technology (use and adaptations)	Learning to access, access to learning	Emotional well- being	Yes, we can!! (A can-do attitude!)
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Our fully accessible curriculum not only reflects the needs of our VI students, but also promotes a love of learning and personal growth. We do this through:

- A safe, caring and supportive learning environment which enables all students to achieve to their maximum potential and encourages them to be as confident, resourceful and independent as possible
- An ambitious, high quality, first hand, experiential, creative and relevant specialist curriculum, delivered by specialist teaching and support staff
- Full access to a broad, balanced and highly differentiated mainstream curriculum, that follows a **stage not age** approach across all key stages, which is modified to meet the visual, learning and social needs of each child
- Consistently high quality resources and materials for all students, including specially adapted Information and Communication Technology
- A range of additional extra-curricular activities to supplement class-based learning
- An environment in which diversity is celebrated and in which all barriers to inclusion are challenged
- A curriculum designed to allow teachers to draw from concepts within current and previous key stages and to provide regular opportunities to revisit and consolidate areas of learning.

A curriculum that takes into account the fact that many of our students have additional needs, which include learning, communication, physical and social and emotional difficulties. The curriculum we offer provides a clear progression in learning and skills, geared to the individual needs of each child.

Implementation

Every child has the right to education that enables them to develop to their full potential (Article 28). Every child at Priestley benefits from small class sizes with a high teacher student ratio. This supports learning through first-hand experience, that compensates for a lack of incidental learning, so that children with a visual impairment have a greater understanding of concepts which may otherwise prove abstract and remote. The curriculum is dovetailed with a specialist VI curriculum throughout everyday learning e.g braille, ICT accessibility, independent living skills and mobility.

Children receive a **high quality of education** from the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum through to the National Curriculum, and a close working partnership with parents and carers, which enables them to be fully involved in their child's learning. We encourage independence for each child in both learning and personal development, and where their **cultural capital** is optimised. This is supported through individualised programmes of training in mobility and Independent Living Skills, facilitated by the on site specialist Habilitation team.

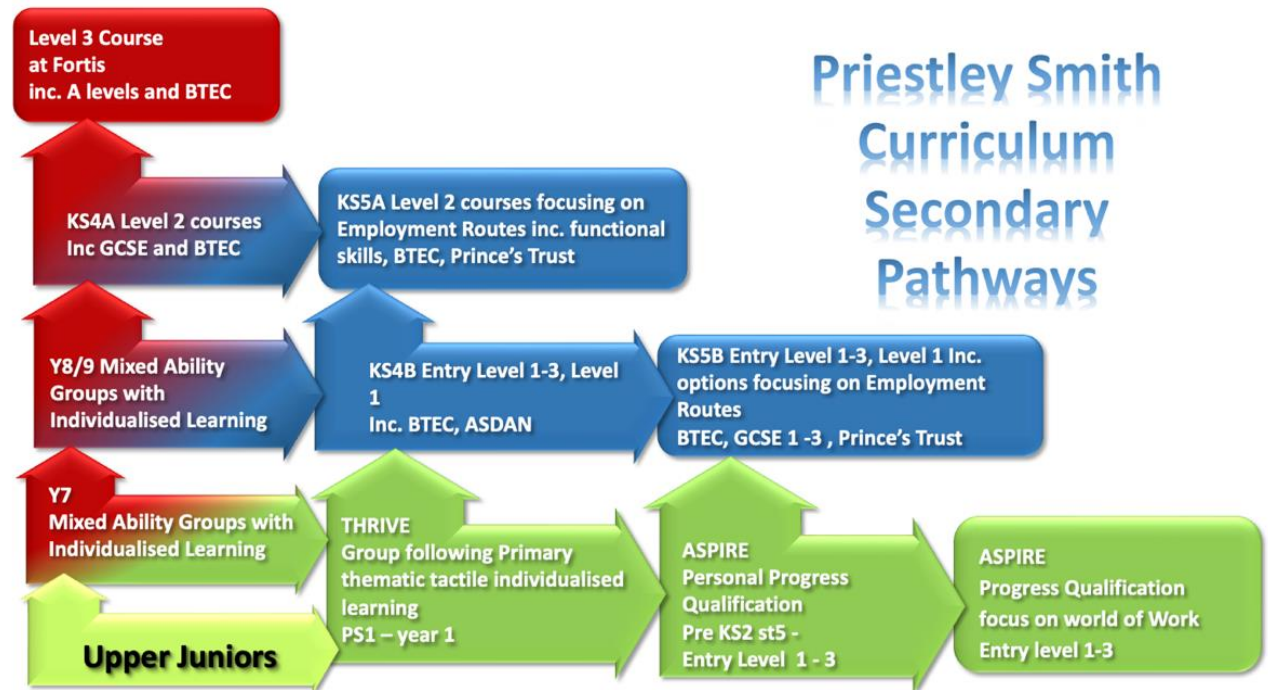
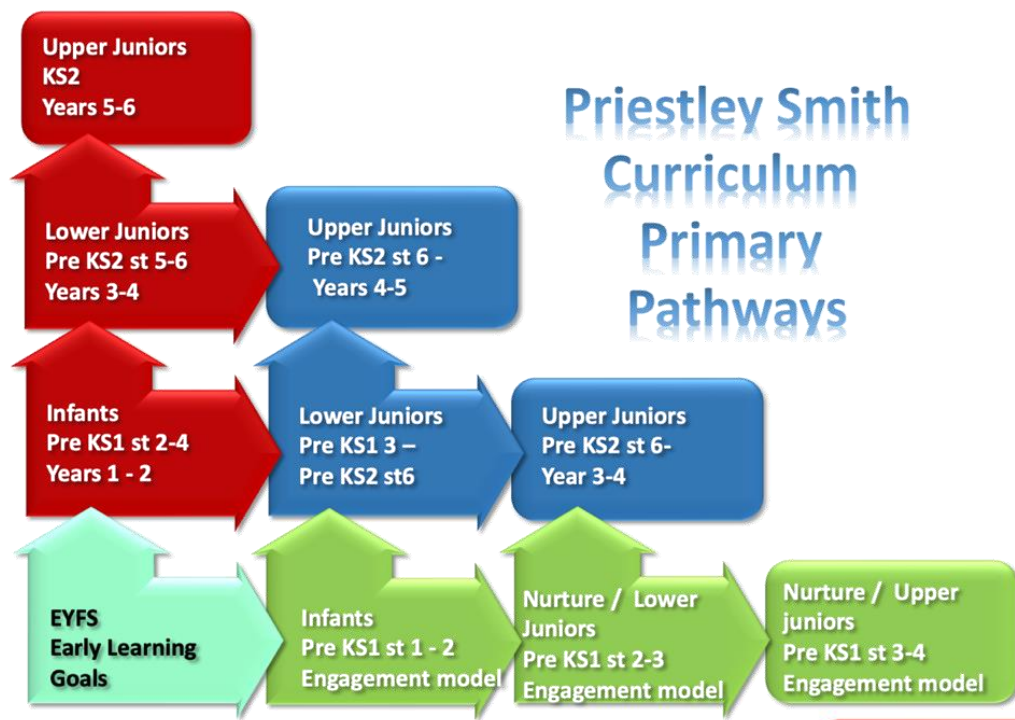
Children are actively involved in their learning so that it is meaningful and enables them to take responsibility for their own progress. We develop their ability to work together as part of a team, to regard positively what other pupils offer and to celebrate their cultural differences and being part of the VI community. They learn to self-advocate through the Junior Leadership Team and opportunities for debate and discussion in lessons, whilst developing an understanding and respect for the views of others. Opportunities for both academic and social inclusion throughout all phases with campus and local schools are encouraged. We strive to develop an attitude of tolerance and respect for all. Learning is not simply about acquiring knowledge but also about developing essential skills that can be related to new and future learning, and we want to encourage children to have fun in learning and to be proud of their achievements. Accompanied with this is supporting pupils to build strong mental health and well-being by building their resilience and coping strategies.

Our implementation focuses on developing, in our pupils, the skills and values to live in a diverse and ever-changing modern world and developing a positive attitude towards lifelong learning and prepare our pupils for adulthood.

Experiential Smell it! Taste it! Touch it! Hear it! See it!			Tactile Experiment! Feel it! Move it!			Language Rich Every lesson is a language lesson!	
Early Years Curriculum	Physical Development	Personal Social and Emotional Development	Communication and Language	Literacy	Maths	Understanding the World	Expressive Arts & Design
National Curriculum	English	Maths	Science	Art and Design	ICT	Physical Education	Geography
	PSHE	Music	History	Food Technology	Languages and Business	RSE	Religious Education
Post 16 curriculum	Preparation for Adulthood		English		Maths		Further Level 1 & 2 courses
	Level 3 pathways		WJEC Independent Living		Princes Trust Employability Skills		Experience of Workplace
Curriculum Framework for Vision Impairment	Facilitating an Inclusive World	Sensory Development	Communication	Literacy		Orientation and Mobility	Independent Living Skills
	Accessing Information		Technology	Health: Social, Emotional, Mental & Physical Wellbeing		Social, Sports and Leisure	Preparing for Adulthood
Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP)	=/<yr9	Communication and Interaction	Cognition and Learning		Sensory and Physical		Social Emotional and Mental Health
	>yr9	Preparing for Employment	Community Inclusion		Independent Living		Health

Priestley Pathways	
Explore	Our semi-formal curriculum for children with complex needs and moderate to severe learning difficulties. Focus is on communication and early literacy, numeracy and understanding the world through experiential learning and tactile exploration At KS4 and KS5 Pre-Entry qualification pathways are in place.
Enrich	A formal academic curriculum for children working below age related expectations. It is typically for our children with additional learning difficulties. A broad and balanced curriculum that is taught thematically in the primary department and in subject specialisms in secondary. Leads to good Level 1 and some Level 2 outcomes.
Endeavour	A formal academic curriculum for pupils closer to age related expectations. It is typically for our children with no, or mild additional learning difficulties. A broad and balanced curriculum that is taught thematically in the primary department and in subject specialisms in secondary. Leads to GCSE, Level 1 and Level 2 outcomes, and where appropriate, progression to Level 3 courses either at Priestley Smith or with supported placements at a local sixth form.

Impact
At whatever point they leave Priestley Smith Specialist VI School our students will know more and are able to do more than when they started. All students will have acquired the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.
Significant numbers of students in all Key Stages will have made above expected progress from their starting points. Our students will be prepared for their next stage of education, training or employment and be able to read to an age-appropriate level and fluency given their special needs and disabilities.
In addition, our ambition for our students is that they will leave Priestley Smith School as confident, independent, and resilient children and young people who are proud of their achievements. As a result of our curriculum, they will be able to advocate for themselves, their disability and listen to others, be happy and able to take their place as positive members of society.



The PRIESTLEY Curriculum will be connected to the areas of need within the Education Health and Care Plans

Students benefit from a highly experiential, tactile, highly personalised, broad, balanced and connected curriculum. Students are engaged in a range of tasks, both within and beyond the classroom. Below are some of the learning that is mapped on the EHCP.

COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION	COGNITION AND LEARNING
• Braille and tactile discrimination teaching • Speech and Language support • Inclusion programme • Parental communication • Parental support group • Brailled and tactile displays • Interactive technology • Access to learning, learning to access • Reading buddies • CFVI • TacPac • VICTA awards	• Educational Visits • Wider experiences (shopping, local community activities) • Experiential learning • Structured timetables and routines • Personalised curriculum, National and EYFS curriculum • Nurture curriculum (Nurture, Thrive and Aspire) • Bespoke Phonics programme • Fluency of reading using appropriate medium • Braille and tactile discrimination teaching • Access to learning, learning to access • CFVI • VICTA awards
SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING	PHYSICAL AND SENSORY
• Circle time and collaborative working • Learning Mentor sessions • Behaviour Support • Celebration Assemblies • Golden Time • Play times • PSHE • Religious Celebrations/studies • Class and whole school reward systems (Dojo) • Junior Leadership Team • Rights Respecting Schools • Home-Learning • CFVI • VICTA awards • Health and Activities week • Lego Therapy • Therapy animals	• Physiotherapy support • Occupational Therapy support • Use of sensory breaks • Swimming • VI support including CFVI • Physical Education • Habilitation • Fine and Gross motor support • Tactile discrimination support • Trim Trail and Gym equipment • Music – Amber Trust, Orchestra of the Swan, Peripatetic instrument lessons • VICTA • Soft play • Breakfast Club • TacPac • Residentials • animals

The PRIESTLEY Curriculum will be connected to the areas of need within the Education Health and Care Plans for pupils as they prepare for adulthood.

Students benefit from a highly experiential, tactile, highly personalised, broad, balanced and connected curriculum. Students are engaged in a range of tasks, both within and beyond the classroom. Below are some of the learning, opportunities and support that is provided.

PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT	COMMUNITY INCLUSION
• Interactive technology • Access to learning, learning to access • CFVI • Experience of the Workplace • Assistive technology and opportunities to access ne technologies • Careers Interviews • CEIAG Team across the school • Mock job interviews • Mock exams • King’s Trust Employability Programme • Visits to places of work • Careers fairs • Range of Speakers • Thomas Pocklington Trust Recruitment Exercise – workshop on interview and application skills • Disability jobs fair SENSE • Trips and visits to accessible places of employment. • Transitional visits	• Educational Visits • Wider experiences (shopping, local community activities) • Experiential learning • CFVI • Residential opportunities • Fundraising for the local community • Participating in local community events • Links with other schools and colleges • Parent workshops to promote community groups • Trips and visits to accessible places of employment. • Activities week • Experience of the Workplace
INDEPENDENT LIVING	HEALTH
• Learning Mentor sessions • Behaviour Support • Junior Leadership Team • Rights Respecting Schools • Home-Learning • Habilitation • CFVI • WJEC Independent Living Course • WJEC Personal Development Course • Guide Dogs presentation • Birmingham Focus talk on PIP, DLA, money management and benefits of working	• Physiotherapy support • Occupational Therapy support • Use of sensory breaks • VI support including CFVI • Physical Education • Habilitation • Fine and Gross motor support • Tactile discrimination support • Gym equipment • Self-Advocacy • CFVI • School Paediatrician • Health Week • Therapy animals