

# Frequently asked questions about Frederick Bremer

## School hours

School Hours are 8.25 to 3 pm each day – a free breakfast club runs each day from 7.45 for all pupils, clubs run before school and after school as well as at lunch time - all clubs are free of charge. Pupils have five one-hour periods a day, some may do double lessons, equalling two hours. Pupils also have two breaks; one mid-morning and one at lunchtime. Students get 20 mins for break and 40 mins for lunch.

## Class sizes / Setting / Mixed Ability Groupings / Gender ratio

Classes have no more than 30 pupils, initially pupils will mostly be taught with their form group. All form classes are mixed ability. Students will be in different groups for a variety of subjects including Creative Arts subjects, Design Technology and Maths. In Maths students are taught in sets by ability that is calculated from their Year 6 SATs scores, but these are not fixed and are reviewed regularly. The intake of girls has increased to nearly 40% and girls are very well represented in our classrooms in terms of their participation and across the wider school in all areas, they also do very well academically.

## Clubs / Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club is free and runs every day from 7.45am for all pupils. Hot snacks are also available after school every day. Enrichment Clubs are published each September and run before school, during lunch time and after school – usually no later than 4pm. These include but are not limited to PE teams and enrichment, STEM club and debate club. We also offer our Year 10 pupils the opportunity to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and a raising aspirations programme with a city law firm, Simmons and Simmons.

## School Lunches

There is a wide selection of food available at break and lunch times, both hot and cold. You will be sent details of how to order via parent pay / Fusion App and you can also monitor what your child is eating as everything is recorded there. Pupils can also bring a packed lunch as well if they prefer. All our food is Halal and we are a nut free school.

## Behaviour Policy – What reward/sanction system do you have in place?

Pupils receive 'sims' points for excellent work or conduct and the school is committed to celebrating the success of all our pupils. Parents can see sims points (both positive and negative) on our school app so that they know how their child is doing on a daily basis. The school has a clear rewards and sanctions policy which is shared with all pupils and parents. The use of detentions is set out in the policy which is shared with parents. If a sanction is given to a pupil, parents are informed on the day. You can view our Behaviour policy on our [website](#). This also includes information regarding bullying.

## What is your mobile phone policy?

Mobile phones are not seen and not heard anywhere on the school site and will be confiscated if they are seen. Parents are required to attend school to collect the phone after 24 hours has passed.

## **Diversity**

**It's great to hear about the emphasis on inclusion and diversity. Do you have any initiatives to celebrate inclusion? For example, Black History month, diverse reading/book lists?**

Yes, we celebrate everyone in our community. Each year we celebrate Black History Month, to highlight the work our pupils have been doing we produce a newsletter focussing on what our pupils have learned throughout, this includes a number of books, films and music that pupils can continue to learn from. We are also inclusive and celebrate LGBTQ+ Month and encourage our pupils to learn about others. Within our LRC we are continuously highlighting different authors and encouraging pupils to read a variety of books. This is only a snippet of our inclusion, there are many different areas we also celebrate inclusion and diversity.

## **Careers and life beyond Bremer**

**Do you have any links to the world of work e.g. work experience, or industry speakers coming into school etc?**

We have a dedicated member of staff who works on careers and information and guidance and we work with several businesses to give our pupils a variety of opportunities to speak to someone from different careers. We also work exclusively with international law firm Simmons & Simmons on the Young Talent Programme giving Year 10 pupils the opportunity to experience working in a law firm.

**Do you have close links with any particular sixth form colleges and if so, what support is given to students as they transition up?**

Yes, we work with lots of the local colleges in the area. We host a progression evening where pupils can talk to colleges and sixth forms all in one place. Pupils are then encouraged to visit on open days to get an overall feel of their post 16 option. Pupils given any support they need, be it help with picking A Levels or applying for their chosen course. Pupils spend a significant amount of their form time in Y11 working with their form tutor and the careers lead on preparing for post-16, they are guided through the process at each stage. Our pupils with additional needs have a keyworker who coordinates the process for them and coordinates visits to local providers.

## **Curriculum, Progress and Achievement**

### **Creative Arts**

**Does the curriculum include teaching in creative arts?**

Yes, we teach Art, Drama and Music from Year 7. Pupils are also able to take these for GCSE as well as Music Technology. Please bear in mind that this may change when your child joins the school. We are a MISST school, which means every pupil in Year 7 and 8 learns either the violin, viola or flute. Pupils can also take one to one music lessons with music specialists at an additional cost.

### **ICT**

**Do you teach ICT lessons in year 7?**

Our Year 7 pupils have one hour a week of Computer Science. This is also available at GCSE level.

### **PE**

**How would you describe the sports facilities at FB?**

We have our main Sports Hall, which has an area for basketball, badminton and much more. We have recently had two wall ball courts installed for pupils to use. Outside we have two areas, our Astroturf where pupils can play football and our MUGA (multi use games area) where pupils can play basketball and their regular PE lessons.

**Are children actively encouraged to join teams/clubs?**

Our PE department has lots of sports to enjoy, they include but are not limited to football, cricket, basketball and wall ball. Our pupils also take part in athletics and regularly take part in competitions.

## Languages

### Could you tell us about your MFL program please?

We currently offer French, German and Spanish within our MFL programme. Pupils start a language in Year 7 until Year 9, where they are then able to continue and study it at GCSE level. Pupils are allocated a language as we cannot accommodate choice due to time-tabling constraints. Our languages provision is very popular and feedback from pupils is that all of our languages are equally popular.

### Can I ask what provision is there for bilingual children?

We offer all our pupils who speak another language the opportunity to take a GCSE in their chosen language, as long as this is on the community language list. Pupils usually take this in Year 9 so that it doesn't interfere with any of their other GCSEs.

## Science

### Does the school provide any STEM opportunities?

Our pupils have a great deal of STEM opportunities. We offer a number of science clubs including the Mayor of London CREST Award, pupils take part in Science days where they can learn various new skills as well as Design and Technology subjects which include various construction courses.

### What subjects do pupils learn in Science?

From Year 7 pupils will do the three sciences, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. They are able to take Triple Science at GCSE as one of their choices if they wish.

## Progress and Achievement

### What are your GCSE results?

In 2023 pupils achieved very strong results that have been improving over the last 5 years of comparable GCSE exams. You can see more detailed information about our exam results [here](#)

In addition to the information shared on our website we are particularly proud that:

- The percentage of pupils achieving a grade 4 or above at GCSE was above the national average (68.75% at Frederick Bremer compared to 67.8% across comprehensive secondary schools)
- The percentage of pupils achieving grades at 7 or above is 21.2% which is higher than the national average for comprehensive secondary schools.
- The percentage of children achieving 4+ in English Language was 70.1% compared to 64.7% national average.
- The percentage of children achieving 4+ in Maths is 71.8% compared to 61.1% national average.
- Our results in triple science are particularly impressive. Biology 54.2% 7+ (42.4% national average), Chemistry 62.5% 7+ (44% national average) and Physics 50% 7+ 50% (43.4% national average)
- In 2023 boys at Frederick Bremer achieved 68.1% of all grades at 4+ compared to a national average of 64.4%. With a particularly high percentage of boys at the school this is a notable achievement.

### What is your progress 8 score?

Progress 8 is a calculation of the progress that pupils make in their best 8 GCSEs and BTECs (from a government set list of qualifications) from their starting point (SATs results in Year 6). The score compares the progress of children at the school with the progress of children across all schools nationally.

The progress 8 score for Frederick Bremer in 2023 is estimated to have risen from 2022 by 0.23 and is estimated to be within the 'national average' range. It is estimated because the Department for Education do not publish final progress 8 scores until late October as they are cohort specific.

Whilst the school has a 'national average' progress score for 2023 we have a unique cohort of children. The percentage of children with additional needs is significantly higher than cohorts nationally (in 2023 we have 10% of our pupil population with an EHCP compared to a national average of approximately 2.4% in secondary schools). Every child leaves us with GCSE qualifications in some subjects, but for some children they take less than 8 and because of the way progress 8 is calculated this can skew the figure.

## **SEN**

### **Question on children with SEND; what entry level qualifications do you offer and is there the option for a personalised curriculum for those children in the autism resource centre?**

All our pupils with additional needs attend all their lessons with a mainstream curriculum as we believe that access to high quality teaching and learning delivered by a qualified teacher is the best way to support their progress. We do however offer a range of alternatives to GCSE (most BTECs) at KS4, currently we are offering Travel and Tourism and Hospitality although this is subject to change based on the needs of the pupils each year.

### **Is there a quiet space for students to go at lunchtime who have ASC?**

We have a supported break and lunch club for our pupils with additional needs should they wish to access it (although we cannot always guarantee it will be quiet!).

### **How is allocation of support for students with EHCPs in mainstream lessons organised? Are all students with EHCPs allocated 1:1 TA support in every lesson? If not please describe allocation of TA support. If children are identified as needing extra support, what mechanisms are in place to support this.**

All our pupils with additional needs attend all their lessons with a mainstream curriculum as we believe that access to high quality teaching and learning delivered by a qualified teacher is the best way to support their progress. However, we provide TA support based on their needs in each lesson, so in one lesson they may have 1:1 support but in another they may have 1:3. We encourage independence and therefore avoid 1:1 support, all our TAs are trained to work with all our pupils.

## **Other**

### **What provision is there for higher achievers?**

Teachers know their pupils exceptionally well and set work that is challenging for all pupils in all lessons. Within each lesson there will be various levels of challenge and the expectations for all pupils is that they will push themselves to make as much progress as possible.

### **How do you support the mental health of students (both with SEND and without)?**

The health and well-being of our pupils is extremely important to us and as such we have developed a well-being curriculum that sits within our pastoral form time (30 minutes across each day). This is a responsive curriculum which we tailor to the specific needs of year groups based on pupil feedback. We also have an initiative called Youth Health Champions who are trained students who support their peers on key aspects of mental health. Finally, we have a range of support for individual students with more complex needs; we employ an on-site counsellor as well as working with various organisations and CAMHs. Pupil mental health is monitored by all staff and we have a rigorous safe guarding system to support pupil wellbeing and safety. Each year group has a Pastoral officer who is a member of non-teaching staff - readily available to support the emotional, behavioural and welfare needs of all the students in that year.

### **The catchment seems a lot smaller this year, do you think this trend will continue?**

It is hard for us to predict this but the trend, year on year, does seem to indicate this, last year we had a significant increase in the number of families who chose Frederick Bremer as their first-choice school.

### **Does the school offer trips?**

At Frederick Bremer we believe that building cultural capital is part of our vision so we offer a wide range of out of class activities from clubs, to trips to enrichment in all areas of the curriculum. We take students on regular trips as part of the creative arts offer and these range from a residential trip to Radley College or a performance of Hamilton.

### **What is the school working on now in terms of areas it needs to improve on?**

Our focus is always on high quality teaching and learning for our pupils to ensure that every child reaches their full potential but of course we need to balance that with their mental-health and wellbeing, so these are joint priorities that go hand in hand.

### **If one of your parents has a concern about something - how do they raise it with the school (how easy is it to have a conversation with you?)**

Parental communication is key to successful transition so we have a range of ways in which you can communicate with us, first and foremost you should have a strong relationship with your child's form tutor. You will be given their email address and you can contact them should you have any queries in the first instance. You will also be given the contact details for the Head of Year and the Pastoral Officer attached to that year. You should get a reply within 24 hours.

## **Transition from Year 6**

### **When do year 6 get their class schedule?**

Year 6 pupils will be given their time-table on the first day in September but as they are going to be taught in their bubbles (where they will stay in one classroom for the day with teachers moving around) this should greatly lessen their fears in terms of moving around and getting lost.

### **Can you discuss the transition support for students in Year 6 ahead of the start of Year 7?**

In terms of transition support – we would normally do a transition day in early July – this worked really well last year) where pupils could visit the school in person. We also send out resources to parents to complete with their child to help them prepare. We also host an open evening in March after our intake is confirmed for our feeder schools to ensure that they get a chance to meet key members of staff and ask questions they may have. For the last 4 years we have also offered a Free summer school which acts as an additional transition opportunity for Y7 students to meet peers, learn their way around the school and take part in enrichment activities including teambuilding, icebreakers, sports, crafts, cooking and much more!

### **Are there taster days? Were there pre-covid?**

We hold tours all year round for parents and their children to visit the school whilst lessons are going on, we also offer a transition day in July for pupils who are joining us in September, in addition for the past few years we have offered a summer school for the first week of the holiday, all these events help pupils' transition successfully.