

Nishkam School Trust (NST) – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1 What is the background of Nishkam School Trust (NST)?

NST have been running state funded Free schools since September 2011. Three of the four schools that NST established have been judged as ‘Outstanding’ in all categories by Ofsted Inspectors. The DfE have asked Nishkam School Trust (NST) to take over because of their track record in pupil achievement.

- Outstanding Schools providing excellent education for all pupils.
- Strong leadership and management support for each school.
- Managing schools efficiently with effective financial management.

Q2 What is the Nishkam School Trust Vision for all of its schools?

The NST vision is: **“To empower children with values to enable them to excel ACADEMICALLY and SPIRITUALLY enabling them to serve humanity selflessly, with an abundance of love, compassion and forgiveness.”**



At Nishkam Schools, our pupils explore the divine context of humanity and wonder of all creation. They not only learn about, but also learn from, the wisdom of religions and in so doing explore the infinite human potential to do good unconditionally. We support pupils to develop aspects of their own religious, spiritual or human identities. They learn about serenity through prayer and humility in service and in so doing, they deepen their own respective faith, and respect the common purpose of all religious traditions, as well as respecting the beliefs of those with no faith tradition. They explore the unique divinity of the individual, and our common humanity.

At Nishkam Schools, we believe that the fostering of human virtues forms the foundation of all goodness. Our curricula are carefully enriched to allow experiences where our pupils, teachers and parents alike learn to grow through a conscious focus on virtues. Our virtues-led education approach helps to provide guidance to enable pupils to understand their choices in order to help lead better lives. Our pupils become self-reflective and flourish; they are able to build strong, meaningful relationships and understand their responsibilities to the global family and all creation, founded in faith.

At Nishkam Schools, our pupils and staff alike aim to become the best human beings they can possibly be, in all aspects of spiritual, social and academic life. We foster a school culture which inspires optimism and hope, as well as determination and confidence, for all to achieve their best possible. This is accomplished through a rich and challenging curriculum, along with excellent teaching to nurture awe and wonder. Pupils gain a breadth and depth of knowledge and a love of learning to achieve their full potential.

Q3 What does the NST Faith Curriculum cover?

The source of our inspiration comes from the Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the “Eternal Sikh Guru” to serve all humanity. Faith practice is delivered in the following way in our current schools depending on the skills of staff available:

- Morning prayers before school - for Sikh prayer in a dedicated Sikh prayer space and in different spaces for pupils from other faiths. To prepare pupils to contribute to global society with respect for all faiths, some assemblies also include opportunities for pupils of different faiths to share their prayers.
- Punjabi/Gurmukhi lessons within the timetable as well as a second European language
- Religious Education - on average 10% of the timetable (60% Sikh faith; 10% each for other faiths).
- Lesson on Values (‘Ghun’) lessons within the curriculum throughout the timetable– for example *Deya* (compassion), *Sat* (Truth), *Santokh* (Contentment), *Nimrata* (Humility), *Prem*

- (Love), *Khema* (forgiveness), *Seva* (Selfless Service).
- Enrichment options – include will include learning *Kirtan* and *Gurbani Santhiyal/Gian*

Q4 What subjects are available at current Nishkam schools?

English, Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Geography, RE, Faith and Values, Punjabi/Gurmukhi, French, Spanish, PE, IT, Food Studies, Design technology

Q5 What outcomes do we envisage for pupils?

We aim for pupils to be strong in understanding their faith, compassionate and forgiving towards all of humanity, as well as academically, to become the role models and leaders of tomorrow.

Q6 What makes NST's approach to achieving academic excellence successful?

In our schools we nurture a 'can do' culture of high aspirations of all staff and pupils. This is by creating very supportive learning environments through high quality professional development of all staff. This approach attracts high quality staff to work for the trust.

Q7 What is the religious designation of Nishkam Schools?

All Nishkam Schools are formally designated with the Department of Education as Sikh faith Schools and only serve vegetarian food.

Q8 Why is Seva School changing management to Nishkam School Trust?

Seva School's Funding Agreement is being terminated by the DfE. The DfE has decided to act to ensure that the quality of education for pupils is the best that it can be.

Q9 What would be next steps?

The continuity of the wellbeing and education of all pupils remains paramount. All our efforts will be focussed on understanding and supporting all current good practice and strengthening areas which may need further support. All staff will be given the opportunity to move on to Nishkam School Trust contracts.

The new school is planned to legally start on January 2019. The school will be called Nishkam School Coventry. There will be a new school uniform phased in over the next term which we will fund. Together with current staff, we will be assessing what changes we may need to make to strengthen the quality of education provision and will keep you regularly informed. Parent meetings will be offered to allow us to listen to your ideas and thoughts. Planning meetings with the DfE to develop the Eden house site to complete the school site will take place. The term dates for 2018/19 term will remain exactly the same and there will be no break in your child's education.

Q10 Is there going to be a dedicated Sikh Prayer space?

Yes.