



# KING ALFRED SCHOOL

# CURRICULUM POLICY

## **Policy area**

Students, Staff

## **Statutory regulation**

N/A

## **SLT Lead**

Head of Lower School (Karen Thomas)

Upper School Deputy Head (Al McConville)

## **Last Updated**

March 2024

## **Last Approved**

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## **Next review**

July 2025

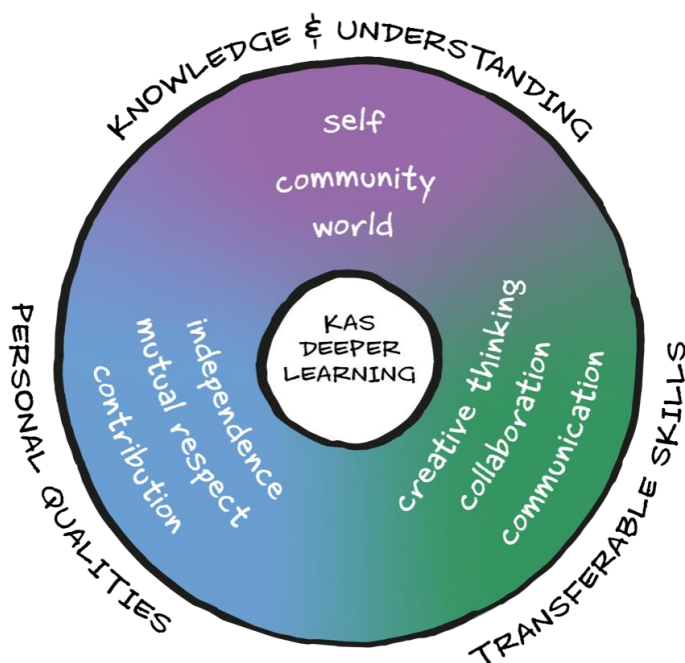
*"Do we wish, in the shortest possible time, to fill our children's heads with a passable amount of the second hand knowledge that happens to be fashionable, to fit them all up with the everyday minimum of manual and mental dexterities, and drill them all into the everyday minimum of moral habits, or do we wish with Montaigne 'to forge rather than furnish their souls', to help them grow, that is, chiefly through their own efforts, and more or less at their own temperamental pace, into their own image - not the image of their parents, or of their teachers, or any other transient heroes, but into the full and perfect fruition of the seeds of capacity and goodness they bring with them into the world?"*

John Russell, KAS Head 1902-1920

*"We are genuinely committed to understanding the individual, and providing the environment and support so that every child can flourish and succeed. This underpins our approach to learning inside and outside the classroom, to pastoral care and personal development, and the way we structure the school and the curriculum."*

Robert Lobatto, Head

## THE KING ALFRED SCHOOL DEEPER LEARNING WHEEL



All King Alfred policies relating to students are informed by our vision of a holistic education, which is represented by the graphic above. The Curriculum Policy connects to each of the three sections:

In **Knowledge and Understanding**, we provide a broad and balanced curriculum which is ambitious, creative and relevant. Our curriculum is designed to support students' knowledge and understanding of themselves, their community and the wider world.

In **Personal Qualities**, our ethos, pedagogy and expectations promote student agency, contribution and mutual respect across the school.

In **Transferable Skills**, we provide opportunities for students to develop, transfer and apply high level, creative thinking, collaboration and communication skills across the different curriculum areas.

# THE KING ALFRED SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY

## 1. SCOPE

This policy describes the philosophy, principles and practices of the educational programme at King Alfred School. It is supported by individual subject schemes of work and curriculum guidelines and should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- The King Alfred School Accessibility Plan
- The King Alfred School Equal Opportunities Policy
- The King Alfred School Learning Support Policy
- The King Alfred School Deeper Learning Wheel
- Equality Act 2010
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education Act 2011

## 2. AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

The aims of the KAS Curriculum are to effectively prepare the children for the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of their next stage of education and in the future; to thrive at school and beyond. The KAS Curriculum has been designed to provide an education which is creative, relevant and ambitious. It is informed rather than constrained by the National Curriculum, taking full advantage of our independence and our rational, progressive traditions.

The KAS Curriculum:

**Embraces a broad definition of success** – *academic success is a proven consequence of our approach but our truest measure of success is the fact that our students leave KAS as adults who are well-rounded, socially adept, emotionally resilient, inquisitive life-long learners, who are self-motivated, independent thinkers.*

**Brings out the best in each child and enables them to work at their own pace** – *intelligence, understanding and capabilities will show themselves in many different ways and therefore we aim to educate in a way which will both challenge and support each individual. We seek to minimise unnecessary pressure and nurture intrinsic motivation, helping our students to enjoy achievement and keep competition in perspective, valuing the intrinsic worth of actions and learning rather than the pursuit of prizes.*

**Become knowledgeable about the world and its diversity:** *our curriculum aims to help students to make meaning of the world around them and to free the imagination to face the challenges of the future; An awareness of spirituality and morality; an understanding of the importance and the limitations of inherited knowledge, culture and values are important components of that meaning.*

**Be committed to social responsibility and have a strong moral compass:** *through the KAS Curriculum we help children develop a sense of social responsibility, to have the courage to speak out when their beliefs or values are challenged and to recognise that they have the power to make a difference to the world around them.*

In order to fulfil our aims we:

- provide full time supervised education for pupils
- give all pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education.

- promote fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs so that they are effectively prepared for life in British society
- provide subject matter and learning experiences appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of all pupils including:
  - pupils on our SEN Register including those with Statements or Education, Health and Care Plans
  - pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)
  - our highest attainers

### 3. PROVISION

#### EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

The curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage forms the first stage of our whole school curriculum. The curriculum is planned in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2021. The school provides a balance of adult-led and child initiated learning, which is appropriate to each child's educational needs, and relates to the seven areas of learning:

- personal, social and emotional development
- communication and language
- physical development
- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding of the world
- expressive art and design

The Characteristics of Effective Learning (Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically) are addressed across the curriculum.

#### LOWER SCHOOL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

From Y1 – Y5 the Lower School Curriculum Framework provides five themes which are addressed through transdisciplinary enquiry units every year:

**Continuity and Change:** Students will explore change over time within communities, society and personal histories. They will investigate drivers of change and their impact throughout history: the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind.

**Living Planet:** We will investigate the diversity, needs and relationships between living things and their environment, learning about the world's finite resources and how we share them. We will explore the natural world and its laws as well as the ways in which humans use their understanding of scientific principles and interact with their environment.

**Culture and Community:** Students will explore ways in which people are connected to and have a responsibility for each other, living in a culturally diverse society. They will explore the relationships, organisation and interactions between people in their social groups and systems, both locally and globally including social justice and equity.

**Being Human:** Students will enquire into how best to nurture themselves – physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually, developing and strengthening their sense of self. They will explore how to live a healthy and balanced life and understand the elements that contribute to wellbeing. They will develop their understanding of actions, consequences, rights and responsibilities and healthy relationships.

**Communication:** Students will investigate ways people discover and express ideas, feelings and beliefs and values and how we connect effectively with our audience. They will study the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity and develop their appreciation of the aesthetic.

Discrete single subject lessons are also taught as necessary in all curriculum areas with specialist teachers for, PE, French, Music, DT and Art.

Skill development in Communication, Collaboration and Creative Thinking is addressed throughout the curriculum.

### **Y6, Y7, Y8 EXPLORATIONS**

Interdisciplinary projects with a STEM or Liberal Arts focus are taught alongside subject specific sessions in English, Maths, PE, Drama, Science, French, Spanish and PSHE.

Skill development in Communication, Collaboration and Creative Thinking is addressed throughout the curriculum.

### **Y9 – 11 GCSEs and SCHOOL DIRECTED COURSES**

Our GCSE/ IGCSE programme is augmented by the options of School Directed Courses, University Arts London (UAL) drama course, Global Challenges and HPQ.

### **SIXTH FORM**

A levels, UAL drama, EPQ.

### **CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMME**

A variety of academic, creative and sports clubs are offered alongside a variety of opportunities within Lower School Enrichment and Upper School Choice. Year groups and Departments use visiting speakers, trips and camps to enrich the educational provision across the school.

## **4. PEDAGOGY**

Teaching and learning involves a range of approaches, such as enquiry, practical, experiential, constructive and, most of all, active engagement by the student (agency). We aim to foster a life-long love of learning and to give all pupils the opportunity to learn and make good progress.

There is a degree of flexibility for teachers to exercise their own discretion and creative flair, responding to either current events or children's interests.

### **BREADTH AND BALANCE**

The timetable ensures that there is balance between the curriculum areas to allow pupils to acquire skills and knowledge and to develop person qualities – see Appendix 1.

### **Homework**

In the Lower School we have a 'no homework' policy at King Alfred until Year 5. We do, however, strongly encourage children to read at home from Reception onwards and to explore and practise basic literacy and numeracy skills. Children who receive support from the Learning Support team maybe given focussed activities to complete at home to help consolidate learning.

The main aim of home learning in Year 5 and 6 is to develop self-management skills and to prepare children for the demands of Upper School. Home Learning is set by class teachers and includes a range of options and choices in order to cater for different interests. The expected time allocation for Home Learning is 2 hours

per week. Work is shared, enjoyed and discussed in class, giving each child an opportunity to shine. Feedback is given either in verbal or written form.

Parents' support at home at this early stage in the process is encouraged and appreciated. Parents prompt, suggest and help organise, to facilitate success. If children cannot manage the Home Learning tasks, even with parental guidance, parents are encouraged to notify the class teacher, so the difficulty can be overcome or greater clarification and differentiation provided.

In the Upper School we do not maintain a fixed schedule of set homework across the subjects at each year group. There is a clear expectation that teachers will set homework which is either a meaningful extension and reinforcement of the learning that has taken place in the classroom or preparation for work that will take place. This work will be set at an appropriate level of frequency, quantity and difficulty for each age group. Guidance is given to departments about minimum expectations

Students are encouraged to demonstrate their independence and their desire to take responsibility for their own learning by approaching individual teachers directly to discuss areas of concern. Form Tutors also play an important role in ensuring that this system works effectively. All of our homework is set and monitored through the Canvas virtual learning environment.

## **5. MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL LEARNERS**

### **Differentiation**

We are a mixed attainment school and endeavour to meet the needs of all students so that they have the opportunity to learn and make good progress. Differentiation is key to achieving this.

Children with specific learning difficulties are carefully monitored through our robust SEND procedures, which provides a graduated approach to ensure children's needs are met and appropriate support is provided (see Learning Support Policy for more details).

We are aware that it is best to define differentiation in a number of ways and to allow teachers flexibility of interpretation and implementation:

- by task (different pupils or groups working on different tasks according to their current attainment level or aptitude)
- by outcome (all pupils having equal access to a task but with planned extension activities and support mechanisms)
- by text or resources (providing different materials or written texts for different pupils, or allowing more time to complete a task)
- by support (all pupils may be doing the same task but some will receive extra support from the teacher or another adult either inside the classroom or outside at a different time)
- by attainment level (learners are grouped accordingly)

### **Access**

All pupils have the opportunity to learn, make progress and access the experiences, people and resources necessary to realise their potential in education. Pupils on our SEND and EAL Registers are provided with support as necessary in order to meet their needs. Pupils with a Statement or Education Health and Care Plan will be provided with an education which fulfils their stated requirements. Pupils who have other particular needs, such as being a young carer, will also receive appropriate additional support.

## **Assessment**

Formative and summative assessment supports our practice. Student attainment and achievement is tracked across the school.

## **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging**

Personal, social, health and economic education is an important part of the curriculum at KAS. The school's Scheme of Work sets out a pathway from Reception to Year 6, but the themes are simultaneously threaded through the broader learning experience. The PSHE programme encourages respect for other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. KAS does not promote a particular lifestyle, but encourages respect for other people, even if they choose to follow a lifestyle that one would not choose to follow oneself. We address these aims in PSHE lessons and Callovers as well as through other curriculum areas. Relevant policies and procedures also educate students about the values and morals we seek to nurture. Our programme takes the approach of a 'spiral curriculum' – with key topics being visited and revisited as students move up through the School in an age appropriate manner.

Curriculum content and associated resources are carefully selected to promote representation and avoid bias.

## **Learning Support**

The SENCo for Upper or Lower School organise a variety of interventions and targeted levels of support so that each student can achieve their potential. Where appropriate, additional interventions outside of the classroom are available, and tailored to individual need.

Where a pupil has a statement of SEN or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the SENCo will arrange provision in accordance with the stated needs of these pupils and in line with the number of hours of support provided for by the Statement/EHC plan. This provision may involve a mixture of in class support and one to one support, depending on the needs of the child. This may be provided by an existing member of the Learning Support Team or by one or more Learning Support Assistants. On admission, an Individual Education Plan [IEP] will be prepared for each child with a Statement or EHC Plan and this will be updated on a termly basis. The status of each Statement or EHC Plan is reviewed on an annual basis during which process the SENCo and their team will liaise closely with the representative from the appropriate Borough.

## **Pastoral Support**

Pupils who have particular needs affecting their academic progress but who are outside the SEN register also receive appropriate additional support. This may include students who are going through a difficult time emotionally, for example following a family breakdown or bereavement. It may also include students who have challenges in their home circumstances, such as being a young carer. This support is overseen through the pastoral system and may include support from the SLT or the school counselling /play therapy service.

## **6. CAREERS**

The Careers Programme is designed to take pupils through a spiral curriculum from Year 7 to Year 13. It is designed to encourage students to fulfil their potential and to this end focuses on:

- building pupils' awareness of their own strengths, interests and ambitions and how these relate to the world of work
- learning about different careers and opportunities



- gaining information about training, education and occupations beyond school.

Alongside this education programme, students also receive impartial careers guidance, which shows no bias or favouritism to a particular education or work option. This is provided mainly by our HE / UCAS advisor, and is supplemented by other optional resources such as the Morrisby test.

The education programme, together with the guidance, enable pupils to approach key decisions in an informed and intelligent manner. These decisions include choice of GCSE subjects, choice of post 16 courses such as A Level subjects, and choice of post school options e.g. work, training, tertiary courses.

The Careers Education programme is planned by the Heads of Year (years 7-11) and the Director of Sixth Form who work with the UCAS and HE Adviser as well as key academic and pastoral staff. It takes place in Form Hour in accordance with a pre-planned schedule; in addition it may involve taking students out of curriculum lessons to hear speakers, attend events or take part in careers based activities.

Programmes such as Go to Work with a Parent day in Year 10 and a community work experience day in Year 9 allow children to shadow adults in their work environment. In Year 12, students also have a specific programme entitled 'Life After KAS' which focuses on the transition from Sixth Form to university, the work-place and other post-18 options.

Full details of the Careers programme are available in the Shared Area, as part of the PSHE programme for the relevant year groups.

## **7. MONITORING CURRICULUM DELIVERY AND STUDENT PROGRESS**

The achievements of all children are carefully monitored so that we can ensure all are making good progress. This includes, by definition, students of all aptitudes and abilities, including those with a Statement of SEN or an EHCP, other students on the SEN register, EAL students and the highest attainers.

The responsibility for each subject area lies with the relevant Subject Coordinators/Heads of Department. The Senior Leadership Team and subject coordinators are also responsible for the monitoring of the teaching of their subject in a variety of ways including lesson observations, 'book looks' and interviews with teachers and pupils.

The SLT oversee the delivery of the curriculum. They are responsible for monitoring and supporting the subject coordinators.