



Upper School Curriculum Policy

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The King Alfred School Upper School Curriculum Policy

“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

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- The King Alfred School Accessibility Plan
- The King Alfred School Equal Opportunities Policy
- Equality Act 2010
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education Act 2011
- Thrive wheel

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.

2. **AIMS**

The aims of the KAS Curriculum are to prepare effectively the children for the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of their next stage of education and in the future; *to thrive at school and beyond.*

In order to maximise wellbeing, the following six elements provide the foundation for the KAS Curriculum:

- TRUST: *Building empathetic, nurturing trusting relationships with peers and adults.*
- HOLISTIC SUCCESS: *Developing knowledge, skills and qualifications and feeling proud of their accomplishments.*
- RESPONSIBILITY: *Contributing to their communities and having a sense of purpose beyond oneself*

- IMMERSION: *Cultivating interests and passions which captivate and engage.*
- VITALITY: *Nurturing well-being in body, mind or spirit.*
- ESTEEM: *Understanding oneself, growing confidence and developing positive thinking.*

3. CURRICULUM PRINCIPLES

The KAS Curriculum has been designed to provide an education which:

- **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.

The curriculum helps our children to:

- **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.*

It is our expectation that in Years 10-13 KAS teachers will use GCSE and A Level specifications as a starting point but will aim to teach above and beyond examination requirements.

We regard our curriculum as a dynamic rather than a static entity. The process of curriculum review and development is informed by current educational research and our own internal self reflection processes.

4. OBJECTIVES

In order to fulfil our aims we:

- give all pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education.
- provide a broad balanced curriculum together with a rich extra-curricular programme.
- develop the children's spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical growth.
- 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 full time supervised education for pupils.
- give all pupils the opportunity to learn and make good progress.
- 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.

5. BREADTH AND BALANCE

The timetable ensures that there is a balance between the curriculum areas to allow pupils to acquire skills and knowledge and develop personal attributes – See Appendix 1

6. PRACTICE

Teaching and learning is organised around a range of approaches, such as enquiry, practical, experiential, constructive and, most of all, active engagement by the student.

The following skills are embedded across the curriculum: Literacy, Communication, Numeracy, Learning and thinking, ICT, Social Skills and Teamwork.

Homework

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.

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.

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.

Class teachers work closely together so formative information on the particular strengths and talents of each child is acknowledged, identified and shared, to ensure differentiated planning meets every pupil's needs. The Lower School instructional coaches support the planning process.

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 the SEND 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)

Learning Support

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 will be provided with support 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.

We aim to be as inclusive as possible as a school and have a significant percentage of students with specific learning difficulties and a very small percentage of students classified as EAL.

The Assistant Head, Personalised Learning organises a variety of interventions and targeted levels of support so that each student can achieve their potential. Wherever possible, we aim to support students in class, and emphasise the teachers' responsibility in meeting the needs of all students. 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 Assistant Head – Personalised Learning 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 Assistant Head, Personalised Learning and their team will liaise closely with the representative from the appropriate Borough.

Other Support

Pupils who have particular needs affecting their academic progress but which 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 systems, and may include support from the Tutor, Head of Year, Assistant Head Personal development and Well-being, or the Counselling service.

Monitoring of Progress

The achievements of all students 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 most able. This monitoring takes place in many ways, including through Department discussion in their team meetings, through our data collection analysis and through our 'pre-report' meetings that are prior to the biannual parents report meetings.

If there is a concern that a student is not making good progress, then appropriate actions will be taken, such as an intervention programme, additional support, or close monitoring through a report card.

7. 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.

8. PSHE

The PSHE curriculum content and provision is intended to provide students with life skills which are transferable and that enable them to control their lives and make healthy, informed decisions. We want our students to develop confidence, self-awareness, resilience, resourcefulness, independence, a sense of social responsibility and positive self-esteem as we believe these attributes will enable them to:

- stay as healthy as possible
- keep themselves and others safe

- have worthwhile and fulfilling relationships and lives

We aim to encourage our students to respect the differences between people, to be well grounded morally and to become involved in the life of their community, to understand democracy and the democratic processes inherent in British society and to know how to be active and kind citizens. Recommendations from the PSHE Association and SMSC underpin our programme. We promote Fundamental British Values.

Furthermore, as a school, we have developed a KAS 'THRIVE' Compass which articulates the holistic attributes we aim to develop as a school which also informs our curriculum (see appendix).

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, the Form Hour programme, callovers, specialist workshops and speakers, as well as through other curriculum areas. Relevant policies and procedures also educate students about the values and morals we seek to nurture (e.g. Mutual Respect). Our programme takes the approach of a 'spiral curriculum' – with key topics being visited and revisited as students move up the school from Years 7 to 13, in an age appropriate manner; for example, Relationships and Sex Education runs through PSHE from Year 7-13.

More information about Schemes of Work and the Form Hour programme can be found in the Pastoral folder in the Staff Shared Area.

9. INITIATIVES IN PROGRESS

6-8

The 6-8 curriculum is currently in development. A Director of 6-8 started in September 2020 and is using this preparatory year to build the curriculum and his team. The launch will be in September 2021 for this innovative and creative initiative which aims to think in new ways about everyday learning – integrating knowledge from different subject areas, shifting more ownership of learning to students and unleashing creativity for students and staff.

Exploring alternatives to GCSEs

Anna Ni Chaoimh has been appointed to the role of Director of Research, Projects and CPD. This ambitious remit includes the research of alternative programmes to the GCSEs. This is a field which has been gathering pace in recent years and we aim to be at the forefront of developments.

Curriculum audit – diversity

This academic year sees a timely audit of the curriculum which runs alongside the working groups examining various aspects of diversity at KAS. The aim is to produce a review of diversity within the curriculum and put into action the findings for academic year 2021-22.

KASConnected

KASConnected is our online learning programme which is launched when we are forced into a physical closure for a cohort or the entire school. The curriculum in KASConnected is based on the normal school day. Each morning, students must attend a 9am callover with their Head of Year. This acts as a registration and begins each day with purpose. Then students will follow their normal timetable and timings of the school day.

For Years 7-9, KASConnected is a blend of interactive (or synchronous) learning with non-interactive (asynchronous) activities.

For the Years 10-13 this is a continuation of their studies with videoconferencing running along the normal timetable to enable them to maintain their place within the examination specifications.

KASConnected adapts the pastoral support programme to ensure that all students have regular contact with their tutor and/or HOY. Moreover, Learning Support, Counselling and KPL mentoring run as normal (albeit virtually).

APPENDIX 1 - CURRICULUM PLAN

Middle Years – KS3

	Allocation of lessons		
	YR7	YR8	YR9
English	7	7	7
Maths	7	8	8
Science	6	6	8
MFL	6	6	6
Art	4	4	4
DT	3	3	3
Geography	4	4	4
History	4	4	4
ICT	2	2	2
Music	2	2	2
Drama	2	2	2
Latin (optional for MFL)			3
PE/Games	7	6	4
Tutor	2	2	2
PSHE	2	2	2
Choice	4	4	4
Total	62	62	62

Allocation - per fortnight as we run a two-week timetable.

Choice – timetabled activities in which students opt for a programme on a half term rotation. The activities are divided into categories – Head, Heart and Soul – students must choose across each category over the course of a Year. KS3 Choice takes place on a Friday afternoon.

Tutor – this is ‘form hour’ – used for academic monitoring, additional PSHE, assemblies, 1:1 and small group pastoral work.

Languages – In Years 7 and 8, the 6 MFL lessons are split evenly between French and Spanish. In Year 9 students can opt for a combination of French and Spanish or French and Latin or Spanish and Latin – 3 lessons of each.

All other subjects are compulsory. Classes are not attainment based.

The GCSE Years [Years 10-11]

	Allocation of lessons	
	YR10	YR11
English Language & Literature	9	10
Maths	8	8
Science Double	12	12
MFL	6	6
Science Triple Option	6	6
Art	6	6
DT	6	6
Geography	6	6
History	6	6
Computer Science	6	6
Music	6	6
Drama	6	6
Latin	6	6
Photography	6	6
Classical Civilisation	6	6
PE GCSE Option	6	6
PE/Games	2	2
Tutor	2	2
Choice	4	4

Allocation - per fortnight as we run a two-week timetable.

Choice – timetabled activities in which students opt for a programme on a half term rotation. The activities are divided into categories – Head, Heart and Soul – students must choose across each category over the course of a Year. KS4 Choice takes place on a Wednesday afternoon.

Tutor – this is ‘form hour’ – used for academic monitoring, additional PSHE, assemblies, 1:1 and small group pastoral work.

Compulsory subjects - The following subjects are compulsory: English and English Literature, Mathematics, Double Award Science, French or Spanish, Games, Choice.

Options - Students then choose three optional subjects from the following: History, Geography, Classical Civilisation, PE, Drama, Music, Art, Photography, Latin [sometimes offered ‘off-timetabled’], French/Spanish, Design and Technology, Computing, Triple Award Science. There are three option blocks, students choose one subject from each, the exact composition of each block varies from year to year according to demand.

The Sixth Form [Years 12-13]

	Allocation of lessons	
	YR12	YR13
English Literature	11	12
Maths	11	12
Further Maths	11	12
Biology/Chemistry/Physics	11	12
French	11	12
Spanish	11	12
Art	11	12
DT	11	12
Geography	11	12
History	11	12
Computer Science	11	12
Music	11	12
Theatre Studies	11	12
Latin	11	12
Classical Civilisation	11	12
Photography	11	12
Economics	11	12
Film Studies	11	12
Politics	11	12
Psychology	11	12
Philosophy	11	12
UAL Diploma in Performing Arts	25	28
EPQ	2	2
PE/Games	2	2
Tutor	2	2
Enrichment	1	1

Allocation - per fortnight as we run a two-week timetable.

Enrichment – a programme of external speakers and other enrichment activities.

Tutor – this is 'form hour' – used for academic monitoring, additional PSHE, callovers, 1:1 and small group pastoral work.

Compulsory subjects – Enrichment, Form Hour, Games

Options – The standard model is three A Level subjects alongside an EPQ [optional]. These options are chosen from within 4 blocks. The exact composition of the blocks varies from year to year according to student demand.

Alternatively, we run the UAL Diploma in Performing Arts. This is the equivalent of three A levels. The teaching for UAL can be in mixed year group classes. The UAL programme also allows students to take an A level, if they wish.