



Lower School Curriculum Policy

Policy area

Students, staff

SLT Lead

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Version

2017.1

Approved

March 2017

Next review

March 2020



Curriculum Policy – Lower School

Introduction

Since the inception of the King Alfred School in 1898, we have always embraced education in its broadest form through rich and varied child-centred, mixed ability and cross-curricular active learning. Children learn through play and outdoor learning and many diverse and stimulating activities, incorporated in formal curricular lessons.

We believe children thrive and learn successfully when they are secure, happy and motivated. To this end, the ethos of this policy reflects the core values of the school as documented in the King Alfred **Framework** (available on the school website):

- **Mutual respect**
- **Individuality and self-reliance**
- **Social responsibility**
- **Freedom, play and the enjoyment of education**
- **A broad definition of success**

“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, KAS Head 2015 -

Scope

This policy describes the key principles and practices of the educational programme at King Alfred School (Lower School). It is supported by the individual subject policies and schemes of work.

Aims

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, their adult lives. This can be seen in the visual below:



Objectives

- to provide full time supervised education for pupils
- to give the opportunity for all pupils to learn and make good progress
- to give all pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education
- to provide a broad balanced curriculum together with a rich extra curricular programme, which promotes the development of key KAS attributes (see visual above)
- to promote the children's spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development
- to 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
- to provide subject matter and learning experiences appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of all pupils including:
 - pupils on our SEND Register including those with Statements or Education Health and Care Plans
 - EAL pupils
 - the most able

Breadth and Balance

The timetable ensures that there is a balance between the curriculum areas to allow pupils to acquire skills in:

- Speaking and Listening
- Literacy,
- Mathematics and numeracy
- Science
- Humanities
- Design Technology
- Computing
- Music
- Art
- French
- Drama
- Physical Education and Games
- Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) including Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Entitlement

Subject policies and Schemes of Work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those on the school's SEND Register including those with Statements or Education Health and Care Plans, EAL children, and the most able.

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 Register and EAL children 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.

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, 2012. 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

Curriculum

We aim to foster a life-long love of learning, through adopting a cross-curricular, topic led approach. Discrete, tailor made Schemes of Work have been developed in English, Maths, Science, French, Design Technology, Music, PE and Games. These are managed by subject coordinators and are used by teachers to plan and teach a creative curriculum that provides support and challenge in a purposeful and meaningful context.

There is a high degree of flexibility for teachers to exercise their own discretion and creative flair, responding to either current events or children's interests. Class teachers produce topic webs, which act as medium term plans to outline the proposed work in each curriculum area. However, we recognise the importance of following children's interests in order to maximise engagement and therefore the topic webs are a guide and are subject to change as the learning needs or interests of the class change through the term. The humanities coordinator oversees the topics covered to maintain a balanced and varied spread over a child's time in the Lower School and to ensure care is given to the progression and continuity of skills and knowledge in the humanities areas of the curriculum.

In addition, a variety of academic, creative and sports clubs are offered at King Alfred School. This broadens the curriculum further and provides opportunities for children to extend and enrich their learning in a variety of engaging activities.

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

Special Events and Trips

From time-to-time, we suspend the timetable for a particular day or week of special enrichment activities, such as *SMARt Week*. This is where a timetable is devised to incorporate a wide range of maths, science and art activities. Other recent special weeks have included a *Eureka Week* and an *Eco Week*.

In addition, we take full advantage of our location in London by arranging visits to a wide variety of educational venues and locations. Some examples include visits to, Hampstead Heath, The Science Museum, Kew Gardens, The Barbican Centre and The Ragged School Museum.

Parents are also keen to be involved and often offer their services alongside other invited experts to enhance curriculum content.

Independent Learning (Homework)

We have a 'no homework' policy at King Alfred until Year 5. We have based this decision on current research that suggests that homework has very little benefit to younger children and can create a negative approach towards learning, as well as compromise positive relationships at home. However, we 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 activities to complete at home to help consolidate learning.

Year 5 & 6

The main aim of Independent Learning in Year 5 and 6 is to develop independence and selfreliance. It also helps prepare children for the demands of Upper School. Independent Learning is set fortnightly by class teachers and includes a range of options and choices in order to cater for different interests. The expected time allocation for Independent Learning is 2 hours per week. Often Independent Learning goes into topic books or is displayed in classrooms. Work is shared, enjoyed and discussed in class, giving each child an opportunity to shine. Feedback is crucial and constructive, 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 Independent 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.

Monitoring of the Curriculum

The responsibility for subject area lies with the relevant subject coordinators. This includes the production of a subject policy which contains a scheme of work. 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.

Topic webs summarise content to be covered each term for each year group and are maintained by class teachers and subject coordinators.

The Deputy Head oversees the delivery of the curriculum. S/he is responsible for monitoring and supporting the subject coordinators.

Monitoring of 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 most able. This monitoring takes place on a day-to-day basis by the class teacher and any concerns are quickly identified and appropriate strategies to support progress are then put in place.

The biannual 'learning conversations' about each child further reinforce this process, and enable the class teacher, Literacy Coordinator, Numeracy Coordinator, SENCO and Deputy Head to stand back and ensure each child is fulfilling their potential. This is an evidence-based process and supported by a range of resources including the writing samples books.

Differentiation

Class teachers work closely together and liaise, 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.

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).

All teachers seek to build self-esteem and confidence whenever possible through regular feedback and acknowledgement of each child's success.

Linked Policies

It may be useful to read this policy in conjunction with other documents as listed below –

- Access Plan
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Equality Act 2010
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education Act 2011