

Review of the School Development Plan 2016- 2019

Inspiring the young women of the future and supporting them to fulfil their potential

Introduction

Our current Development Plan, which you can find in Appendix 1, has been in place for two academic years, and its key tenets are now part of the prevailing ethos and culture of the School, namely to encourage a love of learning as well as academic success, to equip our students with a range of skills for their future lives and to give them strategies to promote positive mental health.

Teaching and Learning

School life has been dominated this year by the simultaneous introduction of new, terminal A Level examinations and new GCSE examinations with a radically different grading structure. This has consumed significant amounts of staff time, not only in planning to deliver revised specifications, but in preparing students to be assessed in different ways.

The curriculum is reviewed regularly to ensure we are preparing students for life beyond School. We introduced an options process for creative subjects this academic year: Upper Fourth students were able to select two subjects from a range of Art, Drama, Music, Digital Learning and Food. Feedback from staff and students on this initiative has been positive with students able to devote more time to pursuing their individual interests.

Substantial changes have been made to the Sixth Form Enrichment course; with the demise of General Studies as an examination subject, we have designed a bespoke course for Lower Sixth students and continued to offer the EPQ (Extended Project Qualification) as an option open to all. Results this year were very impressive with students achieving 9 A*, 1 A and 1 B.

From September 2018, the weekly timetabled slot for Upper Sixth students will be replaced by a number of calendared PSHCE sessions and lectures from academic speakers, allowing more study time for independent learning. Upper Sixth students will continue to have timetabled EPQ lessons. There will also be three academic lectures for Lower Sixth students.

Formative assessment continues to be a focus for all staff; Heads of Department discuss with their teams, ways to ensure that students receive timely and informative feedback.

Heads of Department have focused on effective intervention, where students are struggling or under-performing, working in consultation and in tandem with the Pastoral team. Teachers give freely of their time at recess and during the lunch hour to students in need of additional support.

A wide range of competitions and academic activities continue to be offered to all students. This year, students participated in a range of Olympiads (Sciences, Maths and Linguistics), as well as entering new competitions including the Historical Association Fiction Writing Competition, the Mock Bar trials and the University of Cambridge Ancient World Video Competition. Their successes have been publicised in the weekly e-newsletter.

All departments have undertaken a review of the ways in which they facilitate engagement beyond the formal curriculum, highlighting the extensive range of activities which take place. The Religious Studies Department and the History Department have been very active, for example, in organising a programme of high-quality academic speakers, whilst the Chemistry, Physics and Classics Departments have encouraged students to attend lectures at the University of Birmingham.

Following the creation of a new role to promote Academic Scholarship, an exciting and intellectually challenging programme of academic lectures is now in place for students in Key Stage 4.

Wellbeing and Pastoral Care: promoting positive mental health

Promoting positive mental health has continued to be a key focus in 2017-18. Staff are acutely aware of the increasing pressures on young people, and as a School, we want to be pro-active in encouraging students to think about their own physical and mental health. Form Tutors, Heads of Year and senior pastoral leaders have ensured close liaison and collaborative working with students and parents and, where necessary, with external agencies, for students with specific needs. Our school-based counsellors, new Matron (Mrs Kent) and new School Doctor (Dr Darvill) have also provided excellent support for individual students.

Training was provided in the Summer Term 2018 for the incoming Lower Sixth prefects to equip them with additional skills to assist younger pupils in School from September 2018.

Additional staff capacity has been added from September 2018 with Mrs Sangha, Assistant Head, taking up the role of Head of Middle School (Lower and Upper Fifth). She will work closely with the Heads of these two year groups (Mrs Thompson and Mme Franco) and the Vice Principal (Pastoral), Mrs Varma.

The PDM (Personal Decision Making) course comprises many aspects of healthy living and wellbeing and provides a safe forum for students to discuss issues which impact on their mental health.

We have helped students to build their resilience and awareness of positive mental health through work in PDM, form times, assemblies and our first ever 'Salus' (wellbeing) Week, which took place in January 2018. Salus Week entailed a whole host of extra-curricular activities and workshops, from making healthy smoothies and art therapy, to discussion of mindsets and how to combat perfectionism. This initiative was received positively by students and parents, and will become an annual event in the future.

The homework allocation for Key Stage 3 was reduced in September 2017, to improve students' work life balance, in response to student and parental feedback, taking into account the amount of homework set in other similar schools. We also removed the internal examination week for Thirds (Year 7), but continue to focus on building study skills through shorter, regular tests throughout the academic year.

Offering quality enrichment

The Physical Education Department offers a wide range of sports both within the taught curriculum and as part of our extra-curricular offer. Our outstanding facilities are open to students during lunchtimes and after School with opportunities for team sports and coaching, or simply for pleasure.

The range and quality of our enrichment offer is unparalleled in most schools, with over 70 extra-curricular activities per week, enabling students to explore a variety of interests from Philosophy Society to Model United Nations, to Art Club. Drama and Music activities are organised in conjunction with KES, offering greater scope for collaborative working.

Numerous enrichment opportunities are co-curricular in nature, directly complementing existing curriculum areas and developing practical skills; field trips support the curriculum in Biology and Geography, for example, while museum visits have helped to contextualise work in History, Art and Physics.

Other enrichment activities offer new opportunities. Mandarin Chinese is offered at three levels (Beginners, Intermediate and GCSE) and LAMDA continues to be an extremely popular option.

Charitable work remains at the heart of KEHS, and ranges from the familiar lunch time cake sales to the full week of Sixth Form charity events. One Sixth Form community project encapsulated the KEHS spirit through assemblies and concerts to raise awareness for local homelessness and period poverty, while undertaking a charitable collection of such an impressive nature that it drew the attention of local media.

Extra-curricular provision remains under review on an ongoing basis. The vast array of enrichment opportunities available to students at KEHS is summarised in the 'Beyond the Curriculum' section of the website.

Offering support and guidance

Mrs Quigley joined us in September 2017 as our new Careers Advisor, and settled in to the KEHS team very quickly. She has been available to see individual students every recess and lunchtime and this service has been well utilised.

There has been excellent collaboration between the Careers Department and the Development Office in connecting with the rich and diverse community of Old Edwardians for careers talks in School, and for our 'Women and Careers' panel; the latter was just one event in our 'Girl Boss' Week, which celebrated International Women's Day and sought to raise awareness amongst pupils of all ages of some, perhaps less familiar, career possibilities.

A successful University and Careers Information Evening was held for Lower Sixth students in February 2018.

These events were complemented by practical sessions on gap year volunteering, CV writing and employability, and student finance.

Promoting positive behaviour through a clear approach to Rewards and Sanctions

Rewards for students continue to be an important part of our work and they are given in many guises, from verbal praise and written comments, to letters to parents, postcards and awards in assemblies, Speech Day and Awards Evening.

Our revised Behaviour for Learning Policy (BfL) was explained to all students and parents in September 2017. It has created a more consistent and clearly understood structure, whilst retaining flexibility when appropriate.

Developing Social, Spiritual, Moral and Cultural (SMSC) awareness

Whilst all staff and all departments nurture the students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development on an ongoing basis, the work of the RS and the PDM departments is particularly noteworthy in this respect.

This year, Mindfulness Days were held for Lower Fourth and Upper Fourth students, giving them undisturbed time to reflect calmly on their own inner wellbeing, and to practise strategies which might form part of their personal toolkit for navigating the inevitable challenges of life.

Students are always encouraged to be aware of national and global issues, and to think about service to others. This year, as usual, charity events and fund raising have continued to be key features of the School Calendar.

Diversity is valued throughout the School Community and friendships are routinely formed across diverse religious, socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds. Examples which illustrate our inclusive ethos include the variety of styles showcased in our Dance Production, our Spectrum (LGBTQ+) society, our multi faith prayer and reflection room, and presentations by pupils about different traditions, such as Ramadan.

Leadership and Management: Staff Development and Quality Assurance

We are committed to staff training and development; staff attend courses run by a wide range of agencies including examination boards. Courses are also offered in house, with over 40 opportunities for Continuing Professional Development offered by colleagues during lunchtimes and after School.

We engaged a range of professionals to offer further staff training in Pastoral Care and wellbeing during our January INSET days in 2018, with colleagues selecting two pastoral workshops: themes included supporting bereaved children, basic counselling skills, misuse of drugs and substances, transgender awareness, suicide prevention and awareness, common mental health issues and prevention and awareness of rape and sexual assault. The training was very positively evaluated by staff and a similar carousel will be provided in January 2019 at their request. The majority of our pastoral leaders obtained the 'Youth mental health first aider' qualification this summer; two further colleagues will be trained this year.

The School has been recognised as a centre of best practice by ISTIP for the mentoring and support of newly qualified teachers.

We organise a programme of lesson observations with feedback, drop-ins to monitor students' attitudes to learning and work scrutiny to review the quality of feedback given to students. These strategies offer Heads of Department and the Leadership team a useful insight into teaching and learning. Each year, in the Autumn Term, we review examination results with each Head of Department and compare them with predicted grades.

The School uses Google Apps to share electronic resources with students, and some staff take advantage of the technology routinely in school. This year, the School will audit the skills of all teaching staff to inform bespoke continued professional development for all staff, ensuring they are equipped with the tools they need to deliver courses in this fast changing, more technologically demanding world.

External relations

The new website was launched in the Autumn 2017, and has been well received. The weekly e-newsletter offers an insight into the busy life of the School and the huge range of activities available to pupils.

We are fortunate to have very good relationships with the University of Birmingham: students enjoy public lectures in Chemistry and Physics and we support the University's Education Department by welcoming students to observe lessons.

Through our work as a Teaching School, we have continued to develop partnerships with local state primary and secondary schools, extending our provision of Friday afternoon lessons; staff have delivered over 160 hours of Mathematics, English, Spanish, French and Science lessons.

Compliance, premises and resources

Our Facilities team, shared with KES, has oversight of compliance, Health and Safety issues and the maintenance of the School buildings. We were pleased to welcome Andrew Terry to the team in September 2018 as Facilities Manager; he will work alongside David Tinkler and the portering teams across the site to oversee these important aspects of School life.

This summer has seen significant work taking place in School, with the replacement of all windows to the front elevation, and the refurbishment of classrooms in English and History. Both of these form part of a rolling programme of refurbishments which will take place over the next five years. Work has also been started to create an attractive outdoor space for the girls, and the fire alarm system has been upgraded.

Securing the Future

The Bursar, Mrs Robinson, has a clear overview of the School's financial position and is able to model what is possible in terms of staffing, the curriculum offer and improvements to the site.

We spend very little in terms of marketing, relying on the School's reputation and word of mouth to advertise what we do. Mrs Oakes, our Admissions Registrar has established good relationships with our feeder schools, and organises our open events. Mrs Sangha conducted a review of marketing in the summer term, which reinforced our low key strategy in terms of marketing.

We continue to improve the School's IT provision with a rolling programme to upgrade and replace hardware. The School network has also been updated to 200mb/s. We are replacing Chromebooks with up-to-date models and we have invested in new laptops and new software to deliver the Digital Learning curriculum. In 2017/2018, we added a suite of 15" Windows 10 laptops, installed with Adobe Creative Cloud to offer students experience of using professional applications such as Adobe Photoshop.

Development Office Highlights: 2017/18

The last year has been a very successful one for the Development Office. Alumnae continue to contribute towards the life of the school through the Careers Network, with barristers, gynaecologists, and academics all leading talks about career pathways and degree choices. We continue to grow and evolve our events programme for Old Edwardians, offering an opportunity for former pupils to meet and network with others, with recent speakers including old girls Jess Butcher MBE and Dame Louise Makin.

Launched at the House of Lords in July 2017, the Delyvere Campaign for Assisted Places aims to ensure that 25% of girls at KEHS are on Assisted Places by 2020. The Campaign launch provided a wonderful chance for current pupils to participate in our activities: designing the campaign logo, featuring in the official campaign video, and by continuing to reach out to Old Edwardians through the telethons which take place during the summer holidays. The students' hard work was recognised nationally at the TES Independent School Awards in February 2018, when the girls won the award for 'Fundraising Initiative of the Year'.

A hat trick of matched funds, including the largest single gift from outside the alumnae community, has also encouraged Old Edwardians and friends to give generously by doubling the value of their gifts. The 2018 telethon has successfully met the £35,000 Hilary Pole Matched Fund, raising over £36,000 and ensuring that one Assisted Place is already secured for September 2019.

The Delyvere Campaign total now stands at £1.7 million. The Trust has already provided funding for 19 students to date; our next milestone is to provide five additional Assisted Places in 2019, and a further five in 2020. The Development Office continues to work with major sponsors to ensure that KEHS remains accessible to all students with the potential to flourish here.

Concluding Comments

The current three year plan is perhaps deceptively simple. It reflects our aims and ethos, focusing on our twin aims for our students: providing an outstanding climate for learning, in which they can develop and hone a wide range of skills in a supportive environment, and promoting their wellbeing, so that they are ready to embrace the next stage in their education as confident, resilient young women.

Ann Clark, October 2018



KING EDWARD VI HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

School Development Plan 2016-2019

Inspiring the young women of the future and supporting them to fulfil their potential

As we look to the next three years, we want to make our aims explicit, aspirational but realistic. We will organise them under THREE key headings:

1. Teaching and Learning:

Teachers have consistently high expectations in terms of attainment and attitudes to learning. At the same time, we seek to develop curious, interested and engaged learners who enjoy lessons, are willing to take risks and are resilient in the face of failure, viewing it as a springboard to learning.

We recognise that even in a highly selective school, there is a range of ability and we aim to ensure that the level of challenge and support correlates with individual girls' starting points. Careful questioning and differentiated tasks enable all girls to make good progress commensurate with their ability and develop their knowledge, understanding and skills.

We aim to inspire the young women of the future by:

- (i) Encouraging independent learning and a love of learning
- (ii) Providing a broad and balanced curriculum
- (iii) Offering challenge and support
- (iv) Using formative assessment to ensure all girls make good progress

2. Well-being and Pastoral Care:

We seek to focus on the 'whole girl', so that she makes the most of her time at school, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, learning key skills, building confidence and resilience, preparing for the next stage (whether in Further Education or employment) and preparing for adult life.

We also aim to intervene pro-actively for those with persistent problems, which often reflect the pressures on high performing girls in today's society.

We aim to support the young women of the future by:

- (i) Promoting positive mental health
- (ii) Offering quality enrichment¹
- (iii) Offering support and guidance²
- (iv) Promoting positive behaviour through a clear approach to Rewards and Sanctions
- (v) Developing social, spiritual, moral and cultural awareness

¹ Includes extra-curricular activities, educational visits, lectures, opportunities for leadership, charitable work and community projects

² Including Careers guidance and a comprehensive PDM programme

3. Leadership and Management:

The role of leaders in all contexts and at all levels is to create a positive culture with high expectations in terms of academic attainment, behaviour and attitudes. We expect all interactions in school to be underpinned by respect for others.

We expect staff to adopt a scholarly approach towards their work, to take pride in all that they undertake and to reflect on their practice, being open to new ideas and keen to innovate, to ensure that teaching remains highly effective. We expect them to take responsibility for their own professional development, to collaborate with others and to share good practice.

We are committed to promoting consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across different Key Stages and different groups of students by evaluating the impact of teaching, learning and assessment to ensure excellent outcomes for all students.

Through a rigorous analysis of provision in terms of curriculum and pedagogy, we seek to provide an engaging and varied learning experience for the students, and endeavour to extend and broaden it by offering a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities.

Managing Staff

- (i) Developing clear roles and responsibilities, ensuring accountability through line management
- (ii) Developing clear Quality Assurance processes (Performance Management / appraisal, lesson observation, work scrutiny)
- (iii) Offering excellent training across school (INSET, CPD, courses, mentoring)
- (iv) Promoting staff well-being; offering support, nurturing talent, providing opportunities

External relations

- (i) Maintaining and developing links with the local community: universities, schools, business
- (ii) Ensuring excellent communication with parents, other stakeholders and the outside world: for example, through reports, the website, newsletters, advertising, other forms of PR
- (iii) Ensuring we meet our charitable objectives through accessibility and Outreach initiatives

Securing the future

- (i) Ensuring excellent financial planning with a five year budget plan
- (ii) Reviewing our marketing strategy
- (iii) Reviewing our Admissions strategy
- (iv) Reviewing the role of the Development Office

Compliance, Premises and Resources

- (i) Ensuring robust systems are in place for safeguarding and Health and Safety
- (ii) Ensuring key policies are up to date
- (iii) Producing a three year site development plan
- (iv) Ensuring the School's IT provision is future-proofed and supports all members of the school community

Ann Clark, September 2016