



KING EDWARD VI HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

King Edward VI High School for Girls Curriculum Policy

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The curriculum at KEHS

- aims to be distinctive in its strong academic emphasis, within a framework of the moral, social, aesthetic and spiritual development of the individual;
- emphasises the importance of independent study and thinking;
- aims to inspire a love of learning for its own sake and a pursuit of excellence in school and beyond;
- includes areas not studied for examination assessment which are valued as much as those which are studied for external accreditation;
- provides opportunities for service to others;
- aims to complement a full range of co-curricular activities;
- recognises that almost all pupils will go on to degree courses.

Our curriculum philosophy is to offer a very broad, but balanced, first-class education. In this academically selective school, we aim to enable all pupils to reach their potential by teaching at a level appropriate to their abilities and age. We encourage pupils to maintain a balance between their academic studies and wider interests.

The curriculum at KEHS provides pupils with a linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. The curriculum:

- enables pupils to develop skills in literacy, increasing their linguistic and communication skills through listening, speaking, reading and writing;
- develops pupils' numeracy and mathematical abilities: they learn to appreciate patterns in number and space whilst developing their capacity to think logically;
- develops their scientific knowledge and understanding and the practical skills necessary for scientific enquiry;
- enables pupils to develop their understanding of the environment and of the effect of human actions on it;
- equips pupils with skills appropriate for the 21st century.

Our school curriculum comprises all learning and experiences (including trips and visits) that we plan for pupils.

British Values and PSHE

There are opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to learn about and discuss fundamental British values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and tolerance towards those of different faiths and beliefs.

Our PSHE curriculum reflects the school's aims and ethos and encourages respect for others, paying particular attention to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act. The aims and objectives of the PSHE programme are to equip the pupils with positive life skills, emphasising the importance of health, economic education, democracy, self-motivation and as well as an interest in local and international affairs; it ensures that they are able to make informed decisions.

Setting

Our curriculum should enable all pupils to make good progress from one stage of their education to the next, allowing them to develop their individual strengths, talents and passions. We regularly review and update it to meet both the evolving needs of our pupils and to incorporate appropriate national educational developments and recommendations.

There is no streaming or setting at any stage. On entry at age 11, pupils are divided into classes, most of which will constitute their form group. Pupils are divided into groups based on options, but these groups are not streamed.

All pupils are encouraged equally. It is considered important that pupils learn to assess and accept their capabilities compared with those of others but there is no 'positioning' of pupils in examinations.

The development of independent learning is one of the major curriculum aims of the school as a whole. We have been working on a number of whole school initiatives to foster independent learning, including the Athena Programme and the Level 3 Extended Project Qualification with Sixth Form students.

We endeavour to provide opportunities to stretch the most able both within the classroom environment as well as through the extensive range of enrichment opportunities, including extended projects and national competitions, and to support those pupils who need more focused attention in particular subject skills and concepts. KEHS is committed to delivering a curriculum where the subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of all pupils.

We are an academically selective school and we welcome all pupils who can make the most of the opportunities that we offer and who can flourish in the caring environment of KEHS. Treating every pupil as an individual is important to us, and we welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that we can provide them with the support that they require. We are not a specialist provision; however, all appropriate reasonable adjustments will be made for applicants meeting the admissions criteria. Should a pupil's needs change, these will be assessed and any necessary changes will be made in line with the school's SEND Policy.

Within this context, KEHS is committed to a high quality, wide-ranging education and to high quality teaching and learning. In addition, we allow individual pupils to develop their own strengths, talents and passions and are therefore committed to offering a curriculum that provides enough flexibility for them to be able to do so.

Curriculum Content

During Year 7, all pupils study a broad academic curriculum – see separate Curriculum Plan. Pupils also follow non-examined courses in Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE). In Year 8, pupils continue with the Year 7 curriculum but are free to choose two Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) from French, German, Mandarin and Spanish. In Year 9 pupils are able to make a choice and then study two of the following subjects: Art, Design Technology, Drama, Music.

At GCSE, all pupils study 10 GCSE subjects comprising a core of English Language and Literature and Mathematics. In addition, they must choose at least one MFL and two sciences. Our expectation is that the majority of pupils will continue to study all three separate sciences, particularly if they are considering a career in engineering, medicine, pharmacy or veterinary science, or if they are unsure about their future career plans, as we would not want them to limit their choices in the future. There may be valid reasons for some pupils to choose to study two of the three sciences to enable them to pursue a different academic pathway and select another subject in place of the third science; this is an option we consider in discussion with the individual and their parents. Pupils achieving well in Mathematics are invited to take the Additional Maths qualification.

Pupils are then able to choose a further three or four options - see separate Curriculum Plan. All pupils follow an enrichment programme in Year 10, a rotation of the following; Philosophy, Politics

and Economics (1), Philosophy, Politics and Economics (2), Food Studies, Enterprise Education, Wellbeing.

Sixth Form

The Sixth Form has a long-standing tradition of combining excellence in specialist academic studies with broad cultural awareness and the development of confidence in personal skills. Since September 2016, we have continued to encourage pupils to choose four A Level subjects. A minority of pupils will opt for Further Maths and may study five subjects initially. A number of pupils continue with four subjects in the Upper Sixth. From September 2026, seven KEHS A Level subjects will be taught in co-ed groups by colleagues from both KEHS and KES (King Edward's School): French, German, Latin, Greek, Music, DT and PE.

Lower Sixth students also benefit from our bespoke Sixth Form Enrichment course (with the exception of those studying five A Levels) for two periods per week. The Enrichment course is a dynamic and holistic initiative designed to broaden pupil's horizons beyond the traditional curriculum. Rooted in the values of personal growth, intellectual curiosity and cultural awareness, the programme offers a rich blend of experiences across Theory of Knowledge, Cultural Capital and PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education). Pupils will engage in thought-provoking discussions, explore diverse cultural perspectives, and develop essential life skills to prepare them for university and beyond. With a strong emphasis on powerful knowledge, independent extended writing and critical thinking, the programme empowers pupils to become articulate, self-aware, and globally minded individuals ready to thrive in an ever-changing world. Pupils rotate around five courses from the start of Year 12 until the Christmas of the Year 13.

In addition to the five taught courses, the lessons will be used to deliver some sessions on research and study skills (using the Extended Project Qualification, EPQ, as an overarching framework) as well as UCAS preparation. Enrichment teachers will be asked to deliver these sessions, with materials provided by the respective Director of Sixth Form and Head of EPQ. All pupils are encouraged to complete an independent research task, and some will use this as the initial draft for submission for the EPQ.

In addition to the academic curriculum, pupils have Friday Afternoon Blocks (two periods of non-academic enrichment) and timetabled Physical Education.

Our response to national changes at 16+ is to continue to provide academic courses which challenge the pupils in our Sixth Form. We expect pupils to achieve highly at A level but also see the two years as a time for personal development in many other ways. Opportunities through the non-examination curriculum and through extra-curricular activities enrich the Sixth Form at King Edward VI High School for Girls. Although it is not compulsory, we do hope that many pupils will opt to participate.

Additional subjects

We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, with most pupils taking 10 GCSEs and 3 or 4 A Levels (sometimes alongside an EPQ). We are confident in our curriculum offering and therefore do not encourage pupils to study for additional qualifications outside school: it distracts from the core curriculum and our co-curricular programme and is not conducive to wellbeing. We therefore do not facilitate the taking of additional GCSE or A Levels qualifications (i.e. those studied outside school), with the following exceptions:

GCSE Classical Greek

GCSE Classical Greek forms part of our core curriculum but is not offered on the timetable. It is therefore taken as an eleventh subject, and taught before, after school and at lunchtimes.

Heritage Languages

We will facilitate pupils taking additional GCSE qualifications in their heritage languages if we offer that language to GCSE and the pupil is happy to take the exam board we offer. They will only be able to do this from Year 9 onwards, and if appropriate arrangements can be made. They will be charged as private candidates.

We will not facilitate additional A Levels in heritage languages.

Careers

All pupils receive appropriate careers guidance reflecting the needs of a pupil body of above average ability. This includes advice about option choices both at GCSE and A level and career choice opportunities; all pupils undertake work experience. All KEHS pupils are able to obtain information about training, education and occupations beyond school.

All guidance is presented in an impartial manner, enabling pupils to make informed choices about a broad range of career options, allowing them to pursue their interests.

The KEHS curriculum prepares all of its pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.