



THE
KEYSTONE
ACADEMY

Curriculum Policy



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1. INTRODUCTION

As a specialist school for children with SEMH and neurodivergent needs, our curriculum is ambitious and tailored to ensure every pupil receives a high-quality learning experience, with positive outcomes and worthwhile qualifications. By providing the social structures to support pupils with their specific needs, whilst building these life skills, our curriculum takes a holistic approach to child development and education.

Our vision is to ensure all pupils leave The Keystone Academy happy, well-balanced, lifelong learners who are well prepared for their future beyond school. Our bespoke curriculum for academic, vocational as well as social and emotional learning, will allow and encourage all pupils to progress towards high quality destinations.

We will take a nurturing approach which will allow our learners to acquire a repertoire of skills and knowledge anchored around their personal pathways. Pupils will be supported and challenged to achieve their highest possible outcomes, enabling them to realise their future hopes and dreams.

2. CURRICULUM AIMS

Our curriculum is designed to:

- Promote the learning and development of all pupils, ensuring they are prepared for the next stage of their education, be that Key Stage 1, 2, 3, 4 or post-16.
- Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils that builds upon prior knowledge and skills, preparing pupils for their future learning and employment
- Provide subject choices that support pupils' learning and progression, enabling them to work towards achieving their individual goals, including the attainment of GCSE or equivalent qualifications by the end of KS4
- Ensure equal access to learning with high expectations for all pupils, by providing a bespoke learning experience where individual needs are identified, supported and challenged, providing every learner with the opportunity to reach their full potential, regardless of their abilities, needs, disposition or background
- Support the holistic growth of all pupils, including their physical, personal, social and emotional development, with a focus on skills for life
- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, equipping them with the cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning, preparing pupils to become independent, well-rounded, happy and successful adults in the modern world
- Engender curiosity and motivation by providing opportunities for enquiry-based learning, carving the pathway for pupils to become lifelong learners

3. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the [Academies Act 2010](#).

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's [Governance Handbook](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#).

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Local Support Board (LSB)

The LSSB will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The LSB will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, science and religious education, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- All courses provided for pupils below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and Functional Skills, are approved by the secretary of state
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- Pupils are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced

Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum have aims and objectives which reflect those of the academy trust and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the LSB
- Any request to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, if appropriate, are managed accordingly
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The LSB is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The LSB is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place for pupils regardless of background, abilities and needs

Staff

All staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

5. ORGANISATION AND PLANNING

Our underlying themes and approaches

At the Keystone Academy, our overarching aim is to prepare pupils for their next stage of education and life. To achieve this, we embed the following approaches throughout our curriculum:

- Holistic – the development of the whole child must be considered when providing a well-rounded education that will prepare pupils for their future. To support this, our curriculum provides a variety of academic, practical and creative subjects, helping pupils discover their strengths and supporting them to achieve their very best outcomes in all areas. Personal and pastoral needs will be identified and where relevant the curriculum will be tailored to support and nurture growth in these areas. This could include targeted support for softer life skills such as developing social relationships or emotional awareness and regulation. A stage not age approach will be implemented to ensure the child developmental needs in relation to all aspects of learning are considered and supported.
- Thematic – from EYFS through to KS4, we recognise that thematic learning promotes the retention of information. It allows for connections to be made, helping to embed the acquisition of key knowledge, skills and understanding. This approach encourages pupils to develop positive learning habits – a basis for effective lifelong learning – where they are able to make links and identify patterns which are transferrable across all areas of the curriculum as well as everyday life. This is an important component for all pupils but especially relevant for neurodivergent learners. This approach to planning and learning will be naturally embedded within the EYFS and primary phases of the school but will also be incorporated into the KS3 curriculum, leading to the development of subject pathways that will prepare KS4 pupils for their chosen post-16 destinations.
- Enquiry-based – the continuous provision within the EYFS provides a breadth of learning opportunities and experiences that naturally encourage curiosity and exploration. The characteristics of effective teaching and learning stipulated in the EYFS framework (playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically), will be well embedded and begin the journey of developing lifelong learners, supporting the ethos throughout the academy. At KS1, KS2 and KS3, the curriculum will build upon this pedagogical approach via a thematic and cross and co-curricular model. Aiming to nurture a love of learning, the curriculum will encourage curiosity by providing opportunities for enquiry-based working. Projects that allow for deeper learning alongside a bespoke approach will be adopted, whereby pupils will be supported to identify what they enjoy and how they learn best. The teaching of key thinking skills and the principles of a Dweck's (2007) 'growth mindset' will be embedded to support confidence and motivation to learn. The KS4 curriculum will build

upon these principles within a more structured academic and vocational offer, with an increased focus on preparation for post-16.

- Preparation for life in the modern world – Life skills are at the centre of our curriculum, bringing together academic, practical, social, emotional and personal development alongside the skills and attitudes of responsibility, independence, health and wellbeing.
 - In addition to our PSHE and RSE curriculum, many aspects of personal, social, emotional development (PSED) are taught during less structured times, targeting the resilience, confidence and self-esteem of pupils. A focus on building authentic relationships is central to our academy, as research shows that having positive relationships and being connected to others are key factors in achieving happiness in adulthood.
 - To help prepare pupils for their post-16 destinations, a comprehensive careers curriculum is incorporated within PSHE lessons for all ages and includes careers events and work experience opportunities for older pupils.
 - Extra-curricular and enrichment activities are built into our school day and will be based upon pupil interests and aimed at expanding their horizons. These will include residential trips, outdoor and adventurous activities, 'super-learning days' targeting a variety of themes and topics.
 - Technology is increasingly relevant in many aspects of life in today's society – providing opportunities to build networks and connections with others as well as enabling innovation. It is vital that we equip our pupils with all the necessary skills to function in an ever-evolving technological society; therefore, computing will form an integral part of our curriculum as a discrete subject and across the wider curriculum.

For a summary of our long-term curriculum plans, encompassing these themes, see Appendix 1.

The school day

The school day is organised as below. Please note, when pupil numbers increase, we will move to staggered start and end times to the school day.

Time	Activity
8.30-8.40	Arrival
8.40-9.05	Daily wake up / Preparation for learning
9.05-9.55	Lesson 1

9.55-10.45	Lesson 2
10.45-11.00	Break
11.00-11.50	Lesson 3
11.50-12.40	Lesson 4
12.40-13.20	Lunch
13.20-14.10	Lesson 5
14.10-14.25	Reading
14.25-14.40	Daily reflection
14.40-15.30	3 days per week after school clubs

Curriculum overview

EYFS

The curriculum approach at the EYFS will follow the statutory model of continuous provision. Using thematic and project-based learning, alongside an embedded nurture model, the seven areas of learning and development (detailed below) taught daily, will shape the structure of the educational programme. An emphasis on outdoor learning, using a Forest Schools approach, will support and inspire a holistic approach to learning and development. Learning through play and exploration invites curiosity and a joy of learning. This, supported by close partnership working with parents / carers will shape the details of the education programme, enabling a bespoke approach to learner needs.

EYFS seven areas of learning:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

For more detail on how the EYFS curriculum is delivered, see the EYFS Policy.

KS1 and KS2

The approach at KS1 and KS2 will build upon the EYFS and will focus on a nurturing curriculum and thematic learning, underpinning foundation phonics, literacy and numeracy skills alongside emotion coaching and developing creativity at every point. Environmental and outdoor learning will be timetabled, promoting positive

experiences of 'hands on learning' that encourage cooperation, communication and language skills, amongst other things. This will be based upon the Forest Schools model.

Subject / activity	Lesson length	Lessons per week
Daily 'wake up' (PfL)	25 min	5
Literacy	50 min	4
Reading	15 min	5
Numeracy	50 min	4
Topic <i>includes: science, humanities, MfL, art, design technology, music</i>	50 min	11
PSHE	50 min	1
Forest Schools	100 min	1
Physical Exercise	50 min	1
Daily Reflection	15 min	5
EWB / PSED	55 mins spread across lunch / breaks	5
Extra-curricular	50 mins	3

Formal lessons per week	25
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KS3

At KS3, the focus turns towards the development of wider communication underpinned by disciplinary literacy and numeracy skills across all areas of the curriculum, whilst maintaining a thematic approach. The breadth and depth of learning increases and the curriculum enables pupils to experience and develop a greater interest in option subjects and useful life skills, such as cooking and horticulture. The curriculum will allow for a widening understanding of the British values (see PSHE policy). There is a continued focus on developing key social and emotional skills, related to individual developmental needs.

Subject / activity	Lesson length	Lessons per week
Preparation for Learning (PfL)	25 min	5
English	50 min	3

Drama	50 min	1
Reading	15 min	5
Maths	50 min	3
Science	50 min	3
PSHE (inc RSE, Careers, SMSC)	50 min	3
Art & Design	50 min	3
Humanities	50 min	3
ICT	50 min	1
Physical Exercise	50 min	2
Outdoor Studies / Horticulture	100 min	1
Daily Reflection	15 min	5
EWB / PSED	55 mins spread across lunch / breaks	5
Enrichment (after school clubs)	50 mins	3

Formal lessons per week	25
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KS4

At KS4, independent learning will be a strong feature of all courses, in preparation for post-16 study and positive destinations. Pupils will experience a broad and balanced curriculum, preparing them for attaining GCSEs and / or equivalent vocational qualifications. Pupils will become able to make informed choices about their next steps, and will be supported to transition into their chosen post-16 destination, which will include careers guidance. See careers policy for more information.

The KS4 curriculum includes a core element of compulsory subjects as well as a variety of options for students to choose, according to their post-16 choices. The final details of the offer, including the level taught will be determined by the needs and interests of the cohort. Students will be required to choose three options that will be taught over three lessons per week to complement their core curriculum offer. Possible options are listed below.

Compulsory subjects

Subject / activity	Lesson length	Lessons per week
Preparation for Learning (PfL)	25 min	5

English	50 min	3
Reading	15 mins	5
Maths	50 min	3
Science	50 min	3
PSHE (inc work skills, careers, RSE, SMSC)	50 min	3
Physical Exercise	50 min	3
Daily Reflection	15 min	5
EWB / PSED	55 mins spread across lunch / breaks	5
Enrichment (after school clubs)	50 mins	3

Possible option subjects

Subject / activity	Lesson length	Lessons per week
Food Technology	50 min	3
Geography	50 min	3
History	50 min	3
Religious Studies	50 min	3
Computer Science / ICT	50 min	3
Art (inc photography)	50 min	3
Music	50 min	3
Drama	50 min	3
Sport & Exercise	50 min	3
Design, Technology & Construction	50 min	3
Horticulture	50 min	3
Environmental and land-based science	50 min	3

Formal lessons per week	25
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The qualifications taught will be determined by the subject teacher and will be appropriate to the pupils' academic ability. These may include GCSE, Functional Skills Levels 1 and 2, and Entry Level Certificate pathways.

Sequencing our Curriculum

We have taken care to ensure our curriculum is well sequenced, allowing for the gradual development of skills, preparing the building blocks for secure learning and progression. This approach is taken across all subject areas. Below, captures how this is achieved through our core curriculum:

English

KS1 & KS2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific time will be set aside for reading in the week, through guided, peer led and independent reading, and all pupils will have reading records. • Systematic synthetic phonics will be taught throughout KS1, consolidated and built upon in KS2. Intervention programmes will be personalised. • Using a programme such as <i>Read Write Inc.</i> pupils will work on their literacy skills to further access the wider curriculum. • The thematic curriculum will allow for opportunities to write for a purpose and in a variety of styles and will focus on developing core SPaG skills. • Speaking and listening, including vocabulary and communication play a key role in pupils' cognitive development, and so will be incorporated into both the literacy and wider thematic curriculum.
KS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following an enriching curriculum model, KS3 English sets out to expand the knowledge of students while continuing to develop their functional ability. • Independent (or supported) reading and library time will be included across the week. • We urge and empower students to articulate their ideas, develop their understanding and work on their critical thinking skills by actively promoting discussion and participation across all subject areas.
KS4	<p>Building upon prior learning, the sequencing of the English curriculum will ensure pupils are prepared for their KS4 pathways, ensuring they attain the highest outcomes possible. Possible qualifications obtained include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GCSE in English Language • GCSE in English Literature • Functional Skills in English

Mathematics:

KS1 & KS2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All pupils will focus upon functional numeracy to access the wider curriculum.• An enquiry-based approach to the subject will generate curiosity and promote problem solving skills. Using programs such as <i>Numicon</i>, <i>Number Shark</i>, <i>My Maths</i> and <i>Times Tables Rockstars</i>, learning will be consolidated.• This will be further supported with programmes such as <i>White Rose</i>, which uses a mastery approach, embedding mathematical thinking and talk that allows for key concepts to be revisited and developed.
KS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Following an enriching curriculum model, KS3 Maths sets out to expand the knowledge of students while continuing to develop their functional ability.• Opportunities to engage in STEM projects will be incorporated into the curriculum, aimed to inspire and offer experiences to help students make informed choices for KS4 options and post-16.
KS4	<p>Building upon prior learning, the sequencing of the maths curriculum will ensure pupils are prepared for their KS4 pathways, ensuring they attain the highest outcomes possible. Possible qualifications obtained include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• GCSE in Mathematics• Functional Skills in Mathematics• Functional Skills in Number and Measure

Science:

KS1 & KS2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At KS1 and KS2, our topic based thematic learning allows all pupils to follow a theme per term/half term as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. This will allow for different science-based topics to be taught, in line with the National Curriculum and focusing on investigation and enquiry skills. Our enquiry-based approach is used to promote skills for learning, such as thinking skills and problem solving.• During KS1 and KS2, pupils will be encouraged to experience a variety of learning opportunities, paving the way for them to find out what they enjoy and to prepare them for the KS3 curriculum.
KS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Following the KS3 national curriculum all pupils will have access to Physics, Chemistry and Biology.• Opportunities to engage in STEM projects will be incorporated into the curriculum, aimed to inspire and offer experiences to help pupils make informed choices for KS4 options and post-16.

KS4	<p>Building upon prior learning, the sequencing of the science curriculum will ensure pupils are prepared for their KS4 pathways, ensuring they attain the highest outcomes possible. Possible qualifications obtained include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GCSE in Science (Trilogy) • GCSE in Science (Biology) • GCSE Science (Chemistry) • GCSE Science (Physics) <p>An alternative option may be available with enough interest from pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GCSE in Environmental and land-based science
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Literacy and numeracy

All staff will be proactive in their fundamental role in developing the literacy, numeracy and life skills of all pupils across the academy. We will embed a Literacy and Numeracy framework (LNF) throughout the school, and across the curriculum. As the development of literacy and numeracy skills, for younger students in particular, can be more varied, our cross-curricular planning of core literacy and numeracy skills, is crucial.

The LNF will provide coherent approaches to developing literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Teachers of all subject areas will provide support for these skills and encourage the correct use of standard English. Thus, planning for literacy and numeracy development is truly cross-curricular, rather than solely the responsibility of teachers of English and Maths.

The LNF will describe in detail the individual skills that pupils will be expected to acquire and master during their time at Keystone Academy:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within <i>Literacy</i>, we want students to be accomplished in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Articulacy across the curriculum ○ Reading across the curriculum ○ Writing across the curriculum. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within <i>Numeracy</i>, we want students to be accomplished in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developing numerical reasoning ○ Using number skills ○ Using measuring skills ○ Using data skills. |
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For more details about the LNF, see the separate policy.

Curriculum enrichment

As we are passionate about educating the whole child at The Keystone Academy, we also offer a number of curriculum enrichment opportunities. We offer many extra-curricular activities during the normal school week and after normal school hours. Our students have every opportunity to participate in the widest possible range of pursuits to develop their skill and personalities such as:

- Cooking
- Various sporting activities
- Gardening
- Board Games/Lego
- Card games
- Gaming
- Film Club
- Duke of Edinburgh
- John Muir
- Debating/Ethics club
- Gym
- Walking
- Art
- Drama

6. ASSESSING PUPILS

At The Keystone Academy we recognise that effective assessment is essential to supporting the quality of learning, teaching, achievement and progress of our pupils. As The Keystone Academy is a specialist school for pupils with SEMH needs, our regular assessments will focus on personal, social and emotional development as well as academic attainment. This means that a variety of universal and personalised approaches to assessment will take place to ensure that a well-rounded picture of individual learning journeys is obtained

All pupils at the Academy will have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and as such we appreciate that everyone is unique and may be at very different starting points within their academic journey. From day one the curriculum will underpin and support the learning journey for each pupil, based on initial and continuous assessment and tracking of their academic ability, social and emotional development and any other specific needs highlighted within their EHCP. While we will use a standardised approach to assessments across the school, it is important to recognise that some pupils may require a personalised approach to assessments, based upon their specific areas of SEND as they progress through the school. This will enable the setting of SMART targets for each pupil, implemented through their Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

At Keystone Academy we see assessment as an integral part of learning and teaching, and it is inextricably linked to our curriculum.

We use 3 broad overarching forms of assessment:

- day-to-day in-school formative assessment,
- in-school summative assessment
- nationally standardised summative assessment.

Examples of the formative assessment techniques used will include:

- Observation
- Marking, verbal and written feedback
- Questioning
- Self and peer assessment and feedback
- Videos / photos showing evidence of achievement

Summative assessments will take place at key points throughout the school year, and will be used to demonstrate improvement with learning, linked to schemes of learning taught as well as bespoke targeted interventions delivered. Progress will be able to be measured over a long period of time, following pupil progress throughout their education at Keystone Academy.

The timeline for assessment windows each academic year will align with reporting to the Local Support Board and will include:

- Baseline assessments on entry for all pupils into the academy
- Teacher assessments at the end of topic, units taught, interventions delivered
- Termly assessments using standardised testing tools

Nationally standardised summative assessments include:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile at the end of reception
- Phonics screening check in year 1
- National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 (year 2) and Key Stage 2 (year 6)
- GCSEs and vocational qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4

For full details on how we assess pupils, see our Assessment, Reporting and Recording policy.

6. INCLUSION

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils

- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with a variety of SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every subject taught, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil making progress.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

7. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

Governors monitor whether the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a “broad and balanced curriculum” which includes the required subjects, through:

- School visits
- Formal reporting through the LSB
- Meetings with the school council

Subject and curriculum leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by:

- Scrutinising planning, learning walks, book scrutinies

Subject leaders and curriculum leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy will be reviewed every year by Deputy Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board (LSB).

8. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- EYFS policy
- Assessment, recording and reporting policy
- Non-examination assessment policy
- SEN policy and information report
- Equality information and objectives

- PSHE / RSE
- Careers

APPENDIX 1 Long Term Plans (to follow)

APPENDIX 2 Planning framework (MTP / STP) (to follow)