



Introduction/Rationale - Intent

All children should be given the opportunity to experience the very best possible start to their education (Article 28 RRSA). We need to ensure solid foundations are in place for our children on which to build throughout their school years and beyond. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a vitally important, statutory Key Stage for children from birth, to the end of Reception year. At KTS Academy we extend this until end of Key Stage 1 for the majority of our pupils, as this best meets our population's developmental needs. We refer to this Phase as KTS 1.

Aims:

- To support children's personal development in every aspect, ensuring pupils feel safe, secure, stimulated and happy.
- To provide a broad, balanced and fully inclusive curriculum, which meets each child's individual needs, ensuring pupils make excellent progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points. (Article 29 RRSA)

At KTS Academy we follow the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). We meet the statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements that are in place to keep children safe and promote their welfare. We also follow the requirements for learning and development, although we are flexible in our approach to this, as we appreciate that the children in our school have very individual and specific needs. We are committed to the four guiding principles outlined in the EYFS framework:

A Unique Child : We are committed to recognising that each child in our care has needs that are unique to them. We ensure that their learning is personalised to suit their developmental needs. We make ongoing assessments of each child's development and learning, and accurate assessments of their progress, which in turn leads to personalised planning for the 'next steps', in their learning and development. We also ensure that no child or family is discriminated against and that every child has the opportunity to access all areas of the curriculum and school life (Article 29 RRSA). We encourage all children to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture. Our priority is to keep children safe and we have robust Safeguarding and risk assessment procedures in place. We have a designated school nurse on-site at all times and a number of EYFS practitioners have been trained in Paediatric First Aid.

Positive Relationships: We place a strong emphasis on children building secure, and trusting relationships with our staff. Staff are compassionate towards the children in their care and are sensitive and responsive to their needs, feeling and interests. The **Key Person** for each child in our setting is their class teacher. Due to our high staff



ratio, pupils have high levels of support, but are also encouraged to become independent learners within their capabilities. Clear and consistent boundaries are in place through systems such as school rules and support plans. The school adopts a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approach and also incorporates the Thrive model .

Enabling Environments: We ensure that our planning reflects the needs of each child and that both the indoor and outdoor learning environment supports every child's learning. Our specialist school environment offers enhanced provision such as a Hydrotherapy Pool, Sensory Room, Soft Play Area, and Rebound Therapy. In addition to this we work closely with Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists and Speech and Language Therapists, and endeavour to build and maintain positive working relationships with families. This enables us to meet our children's needs in a more effective holistic manner.

Learning and Development: We recognise that children develop and learn in very different ways and at different rates. No two children are the same and our staff are specially trained to ensure that each child's learning styles and needs are recognised and met, e.g. adopting ASC or sensory approaches. Practitioners ensure realistic, challenging and playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning (with a strong focus on the prime areas due to the earlier developmental needs of the majority of our pupils). When planning and guiding pupil's activities, the EYFS staff ensure that they reflect on the **characteristics of effective teaching and learning**, which are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Pupil's achievements in relation to the Characteristics are reflected on and tracked each half-term and this is included in the pupil's annual reports.

Curriculum

All of our EYFS pupils follow the KTS Developmental Curriculum, which is a bespoke curriculum designed ourselves alongside other professionals. This incorporates the EYFS with additional programmes and activities from other agencies e.g. Speech and Language and Occupational Therapists. The EYFS is made up of 7 areas of learning and development, three Prime areas and four Specific areas, which provide the framework for an Early Years curriculum. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. However the three Prime areas are crucial for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas are:

Communication and Language- Opportunities to experience a rich language environment and to develop their confidence and skills in speaking and listening in a range of situations. We have a highly effective Alternative and Augmentative

Communication (AAC) system in place to meet the needs of pupils with a range of communication and language difficulties including the use of PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) signs (Makaton) symbols (Boardmaker), Objects of Reference, and technological aids (voice output aids and iPad with communication apps). Our AAC systems enable our pupils the opportunity to 'voice' their wants, needs, feelings and interests, and support them to become competent communicators, within their capabilities.

Physical Development- Opportunities to be active and interactive and to develop fine and gross motor skills, including co-ordination, control and movement. We adopt, in part, a therapy based approach to this area of learning and development with pupils accessing Hydrotherapy and Rebound Therapy sessions, alongside use of specialist areas such as Soft Play. Some pupils also follow individual physiotherapy programmes. Children are helped to understand the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices, within their capabilities. Outdoor play has a strong focus on physical development and this is carefully planned for.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Critical for young children in all aspects of their life and for success in all other areas of learning. Children learn how to be and feel safe and secure. They learn how to respect themselves and others, developing a positive self-image and learn about relationships and friendships. They learn how to manage their feelings and understand appropriate behaviour.

These three Prime areas are strengthened and applied through the four Specific areas. These areas are:

Literacy – Children are given access to a wide range of developmentally appropriate reading materials. Where appropriate, pupils are encouraged to link sounds to letters and begin to learn early reading and writing skills. Prior to this pupils will have the opportunity to develop their pre- reading and writing skills. Read Write Inc. is followed throughout school and we have developed our own 'Sensory Read Write inc', which introduces pupils to the scheme from an early age.

Mathematics – Opportunities to develop early skills such as object permanence and awareness of familiar routines - moving onto developing key skills (when developmentally appropriate) such as counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns and working with numbers, shape, space and measures. Pupils are introduced to the Numicon scheme, which is used throughout school.

Understanding the World – Guiding children to make sense of their physical world and community through opportunities to explore, observe, and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. Pupils have access to specialist areas and equipment such as the sensory room and switch adapted technology and each classroom has an interactive Smartboard or Plasma screen. Each class has the opportunity to further enhance their cultural capital through regular Educational Visits into the local community.

Expressive Arts and Design – Opportunities for children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. Children are encouraged to use their imagination and to learn through use of all of their senses. They are also encouraged to share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play and design and technology. All groups follow the Charanga music scheme.



A strong emphasis is placed upon the importance of learning through well-planned and resourced play both indoors and outdoors.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development

Pupil's SMSC development is a high priority and is delivered within/alongside the seven Areas of Learning and Development. Pupils are taught about different beliefs/religions (in a simple, experiential, topic based approach), participate in spiritual experiences such as assemblies and 'quiet/relaxation' times, learn to be tolerant/understanding of others needs and are encouraged to develop their social skills – within their class, across the phase/school (internal inclusion opportunities, assemblies, whole school events) and the wider community.

British Values

At KTS our ethos is based on the whole school and our families being a community, rooted in mutual respect and acceptance. This is reflected in our Mission Statement:

*“Promoting lifelong learning through quality education **respect and equality for all**”*

In Lower School the Fundamental British Values are embedded across the curriculum and daily school life:

- Democracy – Classes teach about turn-taking and sharing, have daily helpers, choice boards, reward charts and throughout the day develop the ideas of valuing everybody's thoughts and feelings. All pupils are given a voice, whether this be making a simple choice using an eye-gaze computer, or choosing which story the class should listen to. As pupils get older, they are given the opportunity to join the school council.
- The rule of law - Children learn to have an understanding of right/wrong through class rules, consistent boundaries, modelling, support plans, social stories, and through our reward systems.
- Individual liberty – individuality is celebrated across school and pupils are encouraged to be themselves and accept each other.
- Mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs – Pupils learn about their own culture by the local area and learning about their immediate environment. Pupils learn to respect different cultures throughout the curriculum and during our annual 'Multicultural week' where different cultures are explored and celebrated in more depth.

Implementation

The principles of the EYFS are incorporated into our Developmental Curriculum, which is one of the paths of our own KTS Curriculum. All pupils in KTS 1 follow the Developmental Curriculum and four of our KTS 2 classes also follow this curriculum pathway, with some exceptions depending upon individual needs. All 7 areas of learning and development are delivered across the week in loosely timetabled slots, however none of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are



delivered through planned, purposeful play and structured activities, with a balance of adult-led and child initiated activities, where appropriate, both indoors and outdoors. Classroom environments reflect the needs of the pupils and support the implementation of the ambitious, coherently planned and sequenced curriculum.

Long term topic plans are produced collaboratively, across a 3-year rolling programme, however again this can be flexible and sometimes mini-topics are included to follow children's own interests or special events. Teachers compile their own medium term and short term plans and teach their own classes for the majority of the sessions, except allocated PPA time. This is usually covered by one of our three unqualified teachers. Planning reflects the pupil's needs, interests and identifies 'next steps' based on their Bsqared 'assessments to be mastered'.

There are opportunities for curricular/social internal and external inclusion throughout the week, with some pupils moving between classes to access different sessions, depending on their needs. We also have good links with another local special school Kirkleatham Hall, and we arrange inclusion sessions with one of their classes each term. This may involve meeting at a local park or café, or having them to come to KTS for a visit.

The curriculum plan, design and implementation gives pupils the knowledge, self-belief and cultural capital they need to succeed in life, whatever their needs and their ability, preparing them for what comes next in their lives. This might look different depending on pupil's individual needs. Pupils experience 'awe and wonder' throughout the curriculum, for example by participating in exciting sensory experiences, by watching a visiting pantomime or by handling animals during an encounter experience. Each year 'multi-cultural' week ensures pupils take part in a range of exciting experiences, for example watching and taking part in African dancing, or participating in a Chinese dragon parade. During 'Arts week', pupils might learn about a certain artist and have the opportunity to work alongside visiting artists, take part in music workshops and the develop their self-belief during the celebration event at the end of the week alongside their families. All pupils have the opportunity to visit local areas and places of interest, such as museums, local woods and forests and even local restaurants.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting – Impact

Pupils are base lined on-entry to the EYFS using an online assessment system called Bsqared. This is a very rigorous and thorough system, which allows us to measure very small steps of progress. Any of the steps the pupils have not achieved on Bsqared are printed out and displayed in an accessible place, for all staff to access when working with pupils. These 'next steps' are referred to as 'assessments to be mastered'.

Each term, pupils are set three 'Personal Goals' which are targets that have been identified as very important to each individual. These may be related to their EHCP, a therapy target e.g. from Speech and Language or a personal target which is key to their



personal development. These are shared with home and families are encouraged to contribute. Each term a summary of progress is sent home.

Ongoing assessments are made and recorded in both planned and 'catch them while you can' observations. The teacher then uses all of this information to inform their planning and assessments. We do not expect excessive paperwork from our teachers, but recognise the value of their expertise and knowledge of each child, accepting their judgements as evidence of pupil progress.

To record pupil's achievements further, we use Tapestry, which is an online learning journal. Families are able to access this and they receive email notifications when staff add anything to the journal. They can also contribute to the journal, which has proved to be a fantastic way of sharing information and enhances our home-school links. To maintain a balance between staff time commitments in uploading information, and keeping families informed and updated, we limit Tapestry entries to once, per half-term. In this entry, teachers summarise each child's main achievements in relation to their Goals that half-term and also share any other achievements or key information with families. The overarching purpose is to enhance our communication and links with parents.

Pupils are assessed in line with the statutory EYFS Profile at the end of their Reception year. Statutory end of Key Stage 1 results are also collated. Achievements are reported under the headings of the seven areas of learning and development in the pupils annual review report which is shared with home. This also refers to the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Partnerships with Families

Each term families are invited to attend an event within school. This may be for an open evening, performance, a celebration of work, to review their child's progress or a social occasion. It provides families with the opportunity to visit school, socialise, share concerns and, if necessary arrange a formal meeting. The department is flexible with the events they offer to parents taking into consideration the needs of the pupils and providing those which are most appropriate for them and their families.

Families are encouraged to communicate with school using the 'home-school' book, phone calls or a prearranged visit. School and pupils enjoy sharing their experiences in a personal scrap book and families also use these to share special events at home. This gives pupils, staff and families a visual tool to use when talking with pupils about their experiences. Tapestry is used to further enhance our relationships with families, with them able to contribute and share their child's experiences at home and us to share school experiences with home.



Monitoring and Evaluation

- Subject development and long term planning monitored annually by curriculum co-ordinators, Assistant Heads and Deputy Head.
- Medium term planning sampled regularly by Curriculum Coordinators, Assistant Heads and Deputy Head. Feedback shared and discussed and actioned with teachers.
- Short term planning sampled regularly by Curriculum Coordinators, Assistant Heads and Deputy Head. Feedback shared and discussed and actioned with teachers.
- Learning walks/observations carried out by Curriculum Coordinators, Assistant Heads, Deputy Head and Curriculum Coordinators, where appropriate. Feedback shared and discussed and actioned with teachers.
- Work scrutiny/review regularly by Curriculum Coordinators, Assistant Heads and Deputy Head. Feedback shared and discussed and actioned with teachers.
- Regular moderation within phases. Annual moderation with other local special schools. Annual moderation, in line with LA guidance also takes place.

Review

Policy to be reviewed each year.

Signed A Gardner.....

Date ..23.9.20.....