

# Teaching & Learning Policy

KTS Academy



<b>Approved by:</b>	Governing Body	<b>Date:</b>
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Introduction/Rationale - Intent

At KTS Academy we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and that it should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Through our teaching we aim to equip pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help pupils to lead happy and rewarding lives. At KTS Academy we strive to develop the qualities of enthusiasm, resilience, honesty, teamwork and trust.

The teaching and learning policy is intended to promote consistency of approach and expectations, continuity and progression in order to maintain high standards of teaching for learning.

**Aims:**

- To provide an environment which enables pupils to develop their self-esteem and decision-making skills so that they can make a positive contribution to school life and beyond.
- To provide a curriculum, which meets each pupil's individual needs, ensuring pupils make excellent progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points. (Article 29 RRSA)
- To instil a love of learning and promote high expectations, celebrating both success and effort. To support a pupil's personal development in every aspect, ensuring they feel safe, secure, stimulated and happy.
- To promote a consistent approach and high expectations so that the quality of teaching in the school is constantly being improved.
- To provide staff with clear indications of the school's expectations and establish a range of good practices in respect of teaching and learning.
- To work together with families, professionals and members of the KTS community to maintain and develop a school of which we can all be proud.

**Implementation**

**Effective learning**

We acknowledge that children and young people at KTS learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. At KTS Academy we believe that children and young people learn best when:

- All of their needs are being effectively met, such as their emotional and sensory needs, then they will be ready to learn
- Communication is clear and language simple with additional strategies such as visuals prompts and sign language
- Time is given to process and understand
- Knowledge and skills are learnt can be generalised across a range of contexts
- Learning styles are specific to an individual's needs and activities are differentiated
- Routines are familiar and are embedded within the school day, changes to routines are planned and prepared for
- There are opportunities to re-visit and repeat learning

- Support staff know pupils well and understand their needs and can adapt learning approaches as needed
- Learning can take place in a variety of environments and this can be flexible to motivate and engage learners

### **Effective Teaching**

When teaching we focus on motivating pupils and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding. We have developed an engagement, pre-formal, semi-formal and formal pathways to support us to achieve this. At KTS we use a range of resources, environments and teaching styles to provide a personalised curriculum.

We base teaching on our knowledge of the pupil's level of attainment. Our prime focus is to develop further their knowledge and skills. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each pupil's level of ability. When planning activities, we look to information and targets contained in the children's Educational Health Care Plans, Personal Goals and those provided by other professionals such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech and language.

At KTS Academy we believe teachers teach most effectively when:

- Lesson objectives and outcomes are specific to the pupils and the activities that have been planned
- Good subject knowledge and appropriate pedagogies are understood and included in delivery of the curriculum pathways
- Information from other professionals is embedded in the delivery of the curriculum pathway
- High expectations of behaviour for learning alongside appropriate positive behaviour support strategies are used so that learning can take place
- High quality resources and specialist resources are used to enable a pupil to access an activity are planned for and used effectively
- Staff know the pupils well and have a good understanding of the barriers to learning and activities are differentiated accordingly
- Staff deployment is planned for and they are used effectively to deliver high quality teaching and learning
- Assessment and opportunities for reflection are used to inform future planning

### **It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure:**

- Medium and short term planning is completed for each half term
- Bsquared progress is recorded each term
- assessment information informs further curriculum planning
- Pupil's personal goals are reviewed and written each term; alongside information from their EHCP, Bsquared assessments to be mastered and targets set by other professionals. These are shared with families termly.

- all classwork is marked regularly according to the schools marking policy and written or verbal feedback given OR high-quality observations are recorded across all areas of learning.

### **Safeguarding in Teaching and Learning**

At KTS Academy, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All teaching and support staff have a duty to keep children safe and promote their welfare at all times.

#### **All staff must:**

- Follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy in all aspects of their work
- Know how to recognise signs that a child may be at risk of harm, abuse or neglect
- Understand what to do if they have any concerns about a child's welfare or safety
- Report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL
- Never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a disclosure, as this may not be in the child's best interests

### **Teaching Sensitive Topics**

We recognise that discussions about sensitive topics during lessons can lead to increased safeguarding reports.

When teaching sensitive topics, staff should:

- Create a safe environment where pupils feel able to share concerns
- Explain to pupils at the start of lessons how confidentiality will be handled and what might happen if they choose to make a report
- Ensure pupils understand where they can report concerns, both within school and to external services
- Be alert to signs that a pupil may be experiencing harm or distress
- Handle any disclosures sensitively and follow safeguarding procedures immediately
- Only involve those who need to be involved (such as the DSL or deputy) and maintain appropriate confidentiality

### **Working with External Agencies**

Where external agencies are invited to support the delivery of any aspect of our curriculum, we will agree in advance how any safeguarding concerns raised during the session will be handled by the external visitor.

### **Staff Training and Knowledge**

All staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates to ensure they:

- Know who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are
- Understand the school's safeguarding procedures
- Are familiar with Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Know how to respond if a child makes a disclosure

- Understand their responsibilities regarding mandatory reporting duties (including FGM)
- Are aware of local safeguarding issues that may be relevant to our pupils

### **Pupils' Understanding**

We ensure that pupils, at a level appropriate to their understanding and communication needs:

- Know who they can talk to if they have a worry or concern
- Understand that adults in school are there to help keep them safe
- Are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of our broad and balanced curriculum

For full details of our safeguarding procedures, please refer to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

### **Planning**

- All pathways at KTS Academy have a long-term planning document. Teachers use these and the curriculum documents to complete medium term plans specific to the needs of their class groups. This planning specifies which objectives are being taught and the activities that will be used to deliver them. They include plans for differentiation and teaching approaches which target a range of learning styles. Short term planning is the week on week timetable of activities and organisation such as a groups and staffing. Medium term planning is audited termly by the SLT team and short-term planning looked at during lesson 'drop ins'.

### **Differentiation**

- All sessions at KTS on any of the curriculum pathways are differentiated to meet the individual needs of pupils with a wide range of barriers to learning. This may involve an alternative activity, a personalised timetable, a multisensory approach, group size, additional resources – the list of ways to differentiate is endless and is led by the staff knowing the needs of the pupils. Differentiation is detailed in medium term and weekly planning. Learning objectives and activities are specified for all differentiated teaching using pupils' initials or group names where pupils are working in small groups.

### **Marking – Semi- Formal/ Formal Pathway**

We believe in the importance of feedback to pupils, as it is key to rewarding pupil progress and achievement. For those pupils on the semi-formal/ formal curriculum this is often given verbally as the pupils are working. It gives pupils the opportunity to learn and develop. When written feedback is appropriate it is shared with pupils and is regular and purposeful.

### **Observation**

Staff complete observations in each area of learning which include: description of what happened, how much support, how the pupil engaged, whether they self-initiated the activity or needed prompting. They also identify which of the characteristics of effective learning were taking place. Teachers use this information

to inform the Bsquared assessments. In identifying the characteristic of effective learning, teachers will be able to see which activities engaged the children the most and therefore plan more activities like this in the future - extending the pupil's learning.

### **Learning Environment**

Teachers are responsible for providing a caring, supportive and stimulating learning environment in which all children are helped to reach their emotional and academic potential.

We believe there are positive effects on standards and motivation of pupils associated with the physical environment. Factors include the use of displays, music, the use of resources including ICT, and the consideration of pupil groupings in the physical layout of the room, whilst also considering the low stimulation environment preferred by some of our pupils with a diagnosis of Autism.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring a positive classroom ethos by:

- Promoting a calm working environment
- Focussing on the development of social skills and independence
- Establishing clear and familiar classroom routines
- Arranging furniture and space to create a safe, flexible learning environment
- Making sure the equipment is labelled and accessible to promote independent learning
- Creating where appropriate an individual learning space for those students who learn in this way
- Teaching, and expecting, children to respect and care for their environment
- Ensuring classrooms are tidy and free from clutter to promote a calm, productive learning environment
- Depending upon the needs of the learners - providing an attractive reading area where, an environment to regulate sensory needs, areas for continuous provision and access to visuals to aid communication.

### **Risk Assessments in Teaching and Learning**

At KTS Academy, we are committed to providing a safe learning environment while ensuring our pupils can access a broad, balanced and engaging curriculum. We recognise that effective risk assessment enables pupils to participate in a wide range of learning experiences appropriate to their needs.

### **When Risk Assessments are Required**

Risk assessments must be completed for:

- **Practical subjects and activities** – including food technology, design and technology, science experiments, art activities involving potentially hazardous materials, and physical education.
- **Off-site learning** – including educational visits, trips to the community, work experience placements, swimming sessions, and any learning that takes place outside the school premises

- **Activities involving specialist equipment** – such as hydrotherapy pools, sensory equipment, hoists, and mobility aids
- **Activities involving pupils with complex needs** – where individual pupils' medical, physical, sensory, or behavioural needs require specific consideration to ensure safe participation
- **New or significantly changed activities** – any activity that is new to the school or has changed significantly since it was last carried out
- **Activities with external providers** – when working with visiting specialists, external coaches, or other agencies

### **Individual Pupil Risk Assessments**

Many of our pupils have complex needs that require individual consideration. Staff must:

- Be familiar with individual pupil risk assessments and care plans
- Consider information from EHCPs, medical care plans, behaviour support plans, and guidance from professionals (such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and speech and language therapists) when planning activities
- Adapt activities and environments to enable pupils to participate safely while developing their independence
- Review individual risk assessments regularly and whenever there is a change in a pupil's needs or circumstances

### **Dynamic Risk Assessment**

Staff are trained to carry out dynamic risk assessments during activities. This means:

- Continuously monitoring situations as they develop
- Being alert to changes in pupil behaviour, mood, or physical state that may increase risk
- Adapting activities or environments in response to emerging risks
- Knowing when to stop an activity if it becomes unsafe

### **Responsibility for Risk Assessments**

- **Class teachers** are responsible for ensuring risk assessments are completed for activities within their classroom and for off-site visits they lead
- **The Senior Leadership Team** are responsible for ensuring systems are in place for risk assessment across the school
- **All staff** are responsible for reading and following risk assessments, and for reporting any concerns about safety

### **Recording and Review**

- All risk assessments must be recorded in writing and stored in accordance with our Health and Safety Policy
- Generic risk assessments for regular activities (such as swimming, food technology, or community visits) should be reviewed annually or whenever there is a significant change
- Pupil support plans should be reviewed at least termly, or more frequently if needs change
- Risk assessments for one-off events or trips should be completed in advance and shared with all staff involved

## **Balancing Risk and Learning Opportunities**

We recognise that learning involves an element of risk-taking and that pupils need opportunities to develop their independence and resilience. Our approach to risk assessment is designed to:

- Enable pupils to access rich and varied learning experiences
- Support pupils to develop skills in managing risk appropriately
- Promote independence while maintaining safety
- Avoid unnecessary restrictions that limit learning opportunities

Risk assessment is not about eliminating all risk, but about identifying hazards, evaluating the level of risk, and putting appropriate control measures in place to manage that risk effectively.

For full details of our risk assessment procedures, please refer to our Health and Safety Policy.

## **High expectations**

- All teachers establish positive working relationships with the children and young people. They treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities.
- All teachers follow the school policy with regard to behaviour and classroom management. At KTS a positive approach is key to how we work with all of the pupils. Recognising and celebrating good behaviour and achievements is very important. Each class operates their own way of doing this that is dependent on the individual needs and understanding of the pupils.
- Classroom staff are deployed in a variety of ways. Sometimes they work with individual children or they may work with small groups. All classroom staff are involved in the delivery of the curriculum pathway and other programs throughout the school day.
- All teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of staff pupils, parents and the wider community**

### **Role of Governors**

Monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. This includes the reports to governors, link governor learning walks, the SEF and the information shared in the Raising Standards Committee.

### **Role of Parents**

Our families have a fundamental role to play in helping their children to learn. We work hard to inform and support parents in how they can help further their children's learning and confidence at school. A family support group meet once a fortnight.

As children begin at KTS Academy they follow our transition process which gradually introduces the child to their new teacher and class and to the sort of experiences they will be having. Families will also have a home visit to get to know the class teacher.

Families receive a report at the end of the academic year and an education report for the EHCP annual review. Personal Goals and reviews are shared with families each term.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation - Impact**

- Curriculum Review, Subject development and long-term planning is monitored annually by the Deputy Head and Assistant Heads alongside the Lead Practitioner of Curriculum and Subject Co-Ordinators.
- Medium term planning reviewed termly by Assistant Heads and the Lead Practitioner of Curriculum. In response to a specific school development plan focus curriculum subject co-ordinators may also take part. Feedback is shared with teachers – ‘what went well’ and ‘even better if’.
- Learning walks and Lesson Drop Ins are carried out termly by Assistant Heads, Deputy Head and the Lead Practitioner of Curriculum. Feedback is shared with teachers – ‘what went well’ and ‘even better if’.
- Work scrutiny/review regularly by Assistant Heads, Deputy Head and Curriculum Coordinators. Feedback is shared with teachers – ‘what went well’ and ‘even better if’.
- In school moderation opportunities take place within curriculum pathways. Annual moderation takes place with other special schools in the North East. Annual moderation in line with LA guidance also takes place.

*At KTS, we are holder of the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) UK Rights Respecting Schools Gold Award (RRSA). Embedded into the curriculum is the ethos and culture of the children's human rights. The award recognises our achievement in putting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) at the heart of a school's practice to improve well-being and help all children realise their potential. The staff at KTS are committed to the principles contained in the CRC and the school demonstrates its commitment through ensuring it is embedded within school policy.*

*Within the Learning and Teaching Policy, Article 28 applies (You have the right to an education).*