

Self Evaluation Report

Agreed



Kiltonthorpe Specialist Academy

URN: 139110

School Context

BRIEF SUMMARY

Kilton Thorpe Specialist Academy (KTS Academy) is located in a semi-rural location of East Cleveland in the village of Brotton. KTS Academy is a 3-19 generic specialist provision. The school converted to an academy December 2012 and continues to be a single academy. KTS is a successful school which has continued to be graded as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted since 2011, with its most recent inspection in May 2022.

The academy operates buildings across 2 sites.

The main site houses 128 pupils across 3 buildings. The KTS+ site houses 60 pupils, it is based on Linden Road and is in walking distance of the other buildings.

Main Site KTS1 & 2 building (this building is located on Marshall Drive)	89 pupils Nursery to Y14	11 classes	2 EYFS 6 Engagement 2 Pre-formal 1 Semi-formal
Main Site KTS3 building (This building is located on our main site and access is via a steep incline)	39 pupils Y5 to Y14	classes	1 Engagement 2 Pre-formal 1 Semi-formal
KTS+ (this building is located on Linden Road)	60 pupils Y7 to Y14	5 classes	5 Formal

The school's catchment area breakdown:

Redcar and Cleveland	92.06%
North Yorkshire	5.82%
Middlesbrough	2.11%

Current School Cohort by Deprivation Characteristic:

Characteristics	
No. on roll	189 including 8 nursery pupils
% free school meals	42.33%
% pupil premium	32.28%
% first language not English	2.12%%
% Male	70.90%
% Female	20.10%

The population includes children and young people with:

Medical Condition (61.90%). Alongside this they may also have the following Primary SEN Need:

Autism (54.50.4%), Severe Learning Difficulties (21.16%), Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (5.29%), Physical Difficulties/SLD (2.65%), Speech Language and Communication Need (6.8%), Specific Learning Difficulty (1.59%), Other difficulty/disability (0.53%), Multi-sensory Impairment (0.53%)

A high proportion of our population have complex learning difficulties and disabilities with co-morbid diagnoses, so the number of pupils with a diagnosis of Autism is actually much higher. As a result, they require a higher level of resources and staffing and therefore receive greater amount of high needs funding top up. Funding for school age pupils is agreed based on the Redcar and Cleveland Range Descriptors with Range 6 being the highest level of funding

	KS1 & 2	KS3 & 4	KS5	Total
Range 4.1	0%	0%	1.10%	1.10%
Range 4.2	0%	3.86%	2.20%	6.06%
Range 5	40.88%	29.83%	12.15%	82.86%
Range 6	1.10%	5.52%	3.31%	9.93%

- 20 pupils have additional medical needs which require various levels of involvement from the in-house clinical nursing support or class team to provide daily medication, gastrostomy feeds or administer daily or emergency medication.
- 21 of our pupils have CAMHS/LDCAMHS input (13 of these have regular medical reviews in school with the psychiatric consultant from LDCAMHS as they are prescribed medication).

- We also have support from a physiotherapist and physiotherapy assistant and Speech and Language therapists. Referrals can be made to the NHS Occupational Therapist for assessments for specialist seating and hoisting.
- In addition, the Academy employs an Occupational Therapist specialising in sensory processing needs (3 days per month).

Due to the increased vulnerability and complexity of need of our population, we have continued to invest in and develop our provision. This includes increased staffing levels (we have over 120 staff involved directly with the children in teaching and learning). We currently have 2 young people who have their own areas of the school and follow an individual timetable with permanent 2:1 or 1:1 support.

All pupils have Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP) which are reviewed annually, except those pupils in the nursery who are on the EHCP assessment process. Our pupils and students are not working within age-related expectations and attainment on entry is well below national expectations and remains low in relation to their chronological age. We use B Squared assessment to baseline and measure progress. The levels that our pupils are working at range from 0-11 months through to Level 1 equivalent of Adult Curriculum.

In Sept 2018, we introduced a new curriculum across all areas of the school. Initially this was based on two pathways - The Developmental Curriculum and The Formal Curriculum, with Post-16 students following the developmental or formal post-16 study programme. The curriculum has continued to be developed, in order to meet the needs of the current cohort of pupils. The curriculum offer document, which is on the school website, explains what learning may look like for pupils who are on the EYFS, Engagement, Pre-formal, Semi-formal, Formal and Post 16 pathways. Learning and how the curriculum is delivered, looks different for pupils depending on their needs.

Quality of Education

JUDGEMENT



Curriculum

When devising the KTS Curriculum, many different curriculums were researched and reviewed, from other SEND schools as well as mainstream schools. Agencies were also consulted including the Speech and Language service and Occupational Therapy service. Based on the information that was gathered, the KTS Curriculum was developed. The pre National Curriculum element of the curriculum (sometimes referred to as the Developmental Curriculum) has its basis in Development Matters with the prime areas of learning being Communication, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. Our learners who are able to work in a subject specific manner follow an adapted National Curriculum (sometimes referred to as the Formal Curriculum). Preparing for Adulthood is embedded throughout school. We have ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced not just in its coverage but also with the careful selection of case studies and texts that the pupils are exposed to. Pupils learn about the familiar with regards to their local area and the faith and culture (95.6% White British) however they also learn about cultures from around the globe, other faiths and the experiences of people who are different to them.

There are four pathways within the KTS curriculum as well as our Early Years Foundation Stage and Post 16 provision. These consist of;

- Engagement Pathway
- Pre-Formal Pathway
- Semi-Formal Pathway
- Formal Pathway

EYFS

On entry to school aged 3 (Nursery) or 4 (Reception) all pupils follow the Early Years Foundation stage framework. Pupils then move onto one of the four pathways. The characteristics of the learners on each pathway are as follows:

Engagement Pathway

Pupils on the Engagement pathway follow an educational offer which is often non-subject specific and instead starts with the child and their interests and development. Pupils on this pathway will have an Engagement Profile which is used to ensure that teachers are tuned in to what motivates and engages them to ensure that activities are tailored to each child. Many pupils on this pathway are pre-verbal or non-linguistic so communication is a key teaching focus. The aim within this pathway is to support learners to explore their environment and engage in play, develop positive relationships with others, become active within their learning and to develop skills to support them to be as independent as possible.

Pre-Formal Pathway

Pupils on the pre-formal pathway also follow an educational offer which is often non-subject specific and starts with the pupils, offering structure and routine. Pupils on this pathway will sometimes have an Engagement profile to support their learning journey but they are beginning to attend to adult directed learning for longer periods of time and therefore will engage in some whole class/small group teaching. Pupils have emerging communication needs and require support to grow in confidence with this. The aims of this pathway are to support learners to engage with an increased level of adult direction within their learning, to manage their needs with increasing independence and to develop their relationships both with adults and peers.

Semi-Formal Pathway

Pupils on the semi-formal curriculum follow an adapted subject specific based curriculum (derived from the EYFS areas of learning). Pupils on this pathway can work for extended periods of time on adult directed tasks however they still need opportunities throughout the day to engage in play-based learning. The aims of this pathway are to support pupils with more formalised learning tasks, to develop pupils into being able to manage their own needs through increasing independence and develop the skills to keep themselves safe.

Formal Pathway

Pupils on the formal pathway follow an adapted National Curriculum and engage in subject specific learning. The aims of this pathway are to support pupils to continue their academic education alongside negotiating the world around them as independently and safely as possible.

Topic

All classes (except the Post 16 formal curriculum classes) follow a half termly topic on a 3 year rolling programme. The same topic is chosen across the school so that resources and enrichment events can be shared. Topics reflect a selection of themes which support Understanding the World and Science subject areas and reflect the interests of the cohort of pupils.

Post 16 Study Programme

Post 16 students have personalised study programmes. These include vocational opportunities and work experience. The vocational pathways are Make and Bake, Support and Create and Build and Grow. They gain qualifications that prepare them for their next steps with all pupils going onto appropriate destinations. Transitions out of KTS Academy are supported by our Lead Practitioner for Preparing for Adulthood.

The breadth of curriculum is demonstrated through regular use of the community, through educational visits, and through accessing local learning provisions e.g. leisure centre, Beyond Boundaries and Senses Centre. Enrichment weeks ensure areas of the curriculum are enhanced and accessed by all e.g. healthy school week, arts week and multicultural week.

Educational Visits and Visitors

Trips and visits are an integral part of the curriculum because they provide valuable learning opportunities that extend beyond the classroom. They offer pupils the chance to engage with the world in a hands-on, immersive way, promoting various aspects of their development. They offer experiential learning that goes beyond what can be learned in the classroom. For example, a trip to a farm lets pupils see animals and learn about farming, while a visit from a community helper (like a firefighter or police officer) brings their roles to life in an immediate and meaningful way. Interacting with new environments, people, and situations can help pupils develop confidence, resilience, and social skills. They learn to navigate unfamiliar places, communicate with others, and manage their emotions in new settings.

Quality Assurance

There is a rigorous quality assurance process in place where termly planning reviews, lesson drop ins, learning walks and book/evidence reviews are regularly undertaken by the extended leadership team. Detailed and supportive feedback is given to staff teams. This includes 'what went well and even better ifs'.

The governing body are informed about the quality of teaching and learning through the Deputy Headteacher's termly report to Governors. Link governors also accompany the extended leadership team on learning walks.

Planning reviews and lesson drop ins show that teachers use the curriculum documents to plan quality, engaging and differentiated lessons and activities. 'Teachers know every pupil exceptionally well. Staff plan carefully to help every individual do better' Ofsted May 2022. Pupils are challenged where this is appropriate to do so. The use of the curriculum documents ensures that lessons planned demonstrate sequenced learning over time.

Book/file and evidence reviews demonstrate that for the:

Developmental curriculum - staff have a good understanding of how to record observations of progress made. Staff record observations on the online journal Tapestry and ensure that there are a broad range of observations across the areas of learning. Subject leaders are able to access and filter their subject area to look at the quality of teaching and learning across their subject area. Time is set aside for this process to take place.

For those pupils working at 8-20 months staff identify which of the five areas of engagement they have observed during the observation and will use this information to create an 'engagement profile' for the pupil. This is used in planning engaging

activities for that pupil.

Formal curriculum – staff use the marking policy effectively and record the level of support and the feedback given to the pupil.

Assessment and Progress

The Bsquared online assessment system is used effectively throughout KTS demonstrating that pupils make exceptional progress from starting points. Pupils who are not yet working at National Curriculum level use Early Steps for all 7 areas of learning and those who are following subject specific learning use Primary Steps for; English, Maths, PSHE, and PE. This allows assessment data to be carried over. A progress overview is completed each half term for pupils on the formal pathway for subject areas not covered by the Bsquared, this provides information for starting points for future planning.

The evidence/observations and pupils' work are used when data is collected each term and from these next steps are identified and used in future planning.

The Basic and Key Skills Builder (BKSB) assessment is used by the Post 16 formal curriculum students to assess how strong they are in maths and English and are a precursor to them working towards Functional Skills qualifications.

Progress for all pupils (including pupil premium, 35% of the population) is at least good and frequently outstanding (Evidence: pupil progress data from Bsquared, pupil Progress Meetings and Pupil Premium Statement).

To ensure pupils are making the best progress they can, the Assistant Headteachers meet with teachers termly for a pupil progress meeting. This will identify which pupils are making 'Expected' or 'Better than expected' progress and also identifying any pupils who aren't making expected progress. During the meeting actions will be agreed on how to support these pupils. Teachers will be asked to bring along evidence (observations or work books etc), planning and assessments and talk through the pupil's progress to verify the conclusions the teacher has reached when completing the Pupil Progress summary. If SLT felt there were any concerns with the teacher's judgement, then support would be put in place. During these meetings pupil's Personal Goals which are drawn down from their EHCP are also reviewed which allows for a holistic view of each child's progress.

There is no apparent difference in achievement between pupil premium pupils and other pupils, or indeed between any particular groups of pupils. Any areas for concern and actions are identified in the pupil progress meetings.

Behaviour and Attitudes

JUDGEMENT



Behaviour and Attitudes

- At KTS Academy, the safety and wellbeing of our pupils is a priority at all times. KTS provides a safe, calm, nurturing, supportive and happy environment, in which our pupils can learn develop, thrive and achieve. Behaviour is managed well, with clear expectations and modelling.
- A Lead Professional is responsible for Behaviour and Wellbeing and they oversee a team of Positive Behaviour Support trained staff who deliver training and provide support to class teams.
- Parents have had the opportunity to attend workshops led by the Behaviour Team.
- Part of KTS' preventative approach to risk reduction involves looking for early warning signs, learning and communicating any factors which may influence inappropriate behaviour and taking steps to divert behaviours leading towards foreseeable risk. For some pupils who need more support, or a planned consistent approach to their behaviours, a support plan is put in place. These plans are written by the class teacher, in collaboration with their teaching assistants and the behaviour team if needed. Pupils are encouraged to participate in the development of their own support plans by focusing on positive alternatives and choices, if this is appropriate.
- Ongoing CPD is provided to all staff to ensure that they have the most up to date knowledge and skills to support the pupils. This includes training on trauma and attachment, sensory integration, best practice in Autism education and facilitating interaction and communication.

Exclusion Data: Fixed and Permanent

- There have been three fixed term suspensions in 2024-2025

Bullying & Discrimination

- Incidents of bullying and discrimination are extremely rare and pupils told Ofsted inspectors 'that they trust adults to sort out any problems when they do happen'. Pupils are aware of how to remain safe because of the excellent support system and teaching.
- Pupils are aware of bullying terminology and are encouraged to discuss and ask for support if they are uncertain or worried. This is supported by the PSHE curriculum, RRSA Rights of the Week and assemblies. Staff know pupils exceptionally well and can talk in detail about individual strategies used to support children.
- Any incidents are swiftly dealt with and recorded on the electronic system CPOMS with an electronic document providing an overview of incidents and actions. Parents are informed to ensure there is no re-occurrence. Pupils feel safe in school (pupil annual survey April 2024). 97.22% of parents felt their children were safe in school (parent annual survey April 2024) and 2.7% being neutral.
- Any incidents of bullying, peer on peer and racial abuse are logged, monitored and actions are drawn from them at the monthly safeguarding meetings with the DSL and DDSL.
- Pupils with different backgrounds get on extremely well across the school. Ofsted reported that pupils 'know that it is important to respect and treat each other equally'.
- Pupils are educated on internet safety termly to ensure they have the skills to keep themselves safe online and on social media. Parents were also offered internet safety training which was delivered online.
- Pupils on the student council were involved in the development of a visual/child friendly version on the anti-bullying charter and policy.

- The RRSA Accreditation report describes KTS as 'a school with inclusion at its heart, where pupils feel safe and secure and where the values of dignity and respect are lived and valued by children and staff'.

Attendance & Punctuality

- 2022-2023 90.5%
- 2023-2024 91.7%
- 2024-2025 90.6% up to 07/01/2025
- KTS has a graduated response to monitoring and addressing attendance. Initial absence - the office staff will contact families on the first day of absence if families have not already contacted school. They will continue to monitor for the first week depending upon the reason for absence. Class teachers use Class Dojo as an alternative to home school communication books and parents/carers will often let staff know if their child is absent and why. The class teacher will then, if not before, contact families and offer additional support this may be to collect a child and bring them into school if they are anxious or struggling to separate from their care giver, contact other professionals if it is a medical reason or provide work and activities to be delivered at home.
- Pupil attendance is on the agenda for SLT meetings and monthly Safeguarding Meeting with DSL and DDSL.
- For persistently absent pupils the school may choose to get support from the Redcar and Cleveland Attendance and Welfare Service. KTS has previously used alternative provision and the local hospital school service to engage a chronically disengaged pupil. Home visits/welfare checks are made every 10 days for pupils not attending school for any reason.

Current barriers to improving attendance:

- Some parents find that taking their children on holiday in term time is more effective for their child as they struggle with busy environments
- The majority of pupils rely on home school transport and if they live out of the immediate catchment area will often have a full day off school for a medical appointment
- A number of pupils have complex medical needs and have had been admitted to hospital for in particular respiratory illnesses or for medical procedures

Personal Development

JUDGEMENT



Personal Development

- Pupil’s Personal Development is paramount at KTS the pupils are ‘happy, confident, children.’ KTS has an ‘ethos that places positive relationships based on mutual respect at the heart of school life’ (RRSA Accreditation Report May 2022)
- The curriculum is carefully planned out, to ensure it contributes to personal development and focuses on the skills and experiences the pupils will need to prepare them for life and flourish in our society. This includes lots of practical experiences both in school and the local community.
- At KTS, the enriched curriculum ensures learning goes ‘beyond the academic’ to increase engagement and provide pupils with culturally rich and exciting experiences they may not otherwise have. These include theatre trips, museum visits and art galleries.
- Regardless of age or ability, KTS aims to develop respectful, active citizens who are able to play their part and become actively involved in public life – how they do this will vary vastly, depending on each individual.
- Throughout school, pupils are taught to be accepting and empathetic towards one another. Older pupils enjoy supporting younger pupils and the inclusive nature of our school ensures that our students learn to support each other and be respectful of each other’s varying needs. For example, a common sight is seeing an older student, supporting one of the younger pupils to their classroom after their journey together on the bus.
- Through mutual respect, pupils learn tolerance. KTS values include the ‘Unique Child’, which reflects how we celebrate individuality and pupils are encouraged to express themselves. Whole school and department events including talent shows and school discos help develop pupil’s confidence and pupils are encouraged to express themselves.
- Through the curriculum, assemblies, wider opportunities, visits, discussions and everyday experiences, pupils develop understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law, and mutual respect and tolerance, which is also reflected in the mission statement: "Supporting lifelong learning through quality education respect and equality for all"
- Pupils attend KTS from across Redcar and Cleveland and also from neighbouring boroughs, with many of the villages having poor transport links and community resources. The isolation many families face means the experiences pupils have can be limited. Consequently, many pupils lack confidence in new places or situations, which impacts on their life experiences and well-being; it’s crucial they are given these opportunities.
- Using pupil premium funding to enhance the curriculum can lead to increased engagement, developing confidence, resilience and knowledge. Teachers report that these experiences have a big impact on pupils. This includes funding to regularly visit a local health and well-being centre (Senses), theatre visits and annual events such as arts week and healthy school week. giving pupils culture-rich experiences that will provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life.
- Pupils are encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle and right from early years, they are given a choice of healthy breakfast every day, provided by the Magic Breakfast scheme.
- Encouraging physical activity and exercise is high priority and play times and breaks are carefully planned and budgeted for to ensure pupils have access to resources which encourage physical activity, which is inclusive and accessible to all.
- As part of the PE curriculum, Bikeability events take place regularly, as well as regular opportunities for pupils through Cleveland School Sports Partnership who run inclusive sports events across the borough.

- Sports day is a whole school event and this year, sports leaders from a local secondary school came along to help. This was a fantastic, community event.
- Healthy Schools week is another popular whole-school event, where the week is dedicated to healthy lifestyles. Pupils are encouraged to taste new foods and take part in physical activities – the PSHE coordinator organises this alongside the PE leads and ensures it is including and enjoyable for all. A range of external providers come into school to maximise engagement and fun!
- All pupils have the opportunity to access the hydrotherapy pool and then learn to swim at the local swimming pool and this continues until they leave school, encouraging life-long healthy lifestyles.

Relationships, health and sex education (RSE) & PSHE and equality

- The ambitious PSED and PSHE curriculum, which are core elements for both curriculum pathways, give students knowledge, skills and understanding to help them lead confident, healthy, independent lives and become as informed, active and responsible as they are able.
- PSED/PSHE covers mental health and well-being; physical health (including healthy lifestyles and first aid); learning about safe, healthy relationships (on and offline) and sex. It also addresses safeguarding risks both on and offline. With the pupils often having increased vulnerability around relationships, this is done sensitively and sometimes on an individual basis. Brook Education provide 1:1 sessions to those pupils who teachers identify as needing extra support. The PSED/PSHE curriculum meet all of the statutory requirements..
- PSED/PSHE subject leaders and curriculum leader, have been on So Safe, Sex Factor and Team Teach RSHE Training. In addition to this, they have liaised with other special schools (including attending the FLSE regional conference) to share good practice and ensure the curriculum reflects best practise in specialist education.
- PSED/PSHE curriculum is based on an adapted version of SCARF, however teachers use additional resources including the NSPCC Speak Out Stay Safe Programme, Curriculum4Life to supplement these lessons, as well as adapting them to meet individual needs.
- Secondary age pupils have workshops provided by Brook Education who provide RSE sessions at the appropriate level for groups or individuals.
- The headteacher or behaviour and well-being lead attend the local authority half-termly Mental Health Lead meetings.
- Pupils are informed and learn about safe internet use including the use of social networking sites and mobile technology and this is incorporated into the curriculum. Each half term there is at least one session dedicated to internet safety, within the Purple Mash (computing) scheme, as well the coverage through PSHE units.

Pupil mental health and well-being

- At KTS the mental health and well-being of our students and staff are a high priority. We have staff trained in mental health first aid for both adults and children in school who are able to offer support. The headteacher trained through Thrive as the Designated Mental Health Lead using the DFE funding.
- The Behaviour and Well-being lead is a licensed Thrive Practitioner.
- KTS employs a counsellor through Time4U and staff can put in a referral for pupils who need additional support.
- KTS also work closely with the Tees, Esk and Wear Valley Children and Adolescent Mental Health Team. Medication reviews are held in school, observations take place by LDCAMHS professionals and positive behaviour support plans are shared and implemented in school.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) & British Values

- 'The schools Rights Respecting Gold Award is the foundation for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development' Ofsted May 2022.
- Pupils who are able can speak about their rights and give examples of what they mean to them. Displays around school promote children's rights and Rights for the Week are discussed in assemblies and through the curriculum,

- The PSED/PSHE curriculum alongside planned enrichment weeks such as multicultural week, black history week and religious celebrations throughout the year, ensure that spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC) is extremely well supported.
- All pupils on the formal pathway have weekly RE lessons, adapted from the agreed syllabus, which form part of the KTS Curriculum. This supports pupils SMSC development.
- Where this is not appropriate, pupils 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.
- Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a range of exciting including, whole school experiences including; participating in a Chinese dragon parade, exploring black history, heritage, culture and achievements at a level matched to their understanding and taking part in KTS Pride, which conveys the message that everyone at KTS is loved and respected for their own individuality regardless of their gender, ethnicity, religion, or background . As a result, pupils are equipped to be thoughtful, caring and active citizens.
- The school council are involved in deciding which charities to support and how e.g. Children in Need, Comic Relief and Save the Children.
- The fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs are embedded not only in the curriculum, but in day-to-day school life.
- Children learn to have an understanding of right/wrong through class rules, consistent boundaries, modelling, support plans, social stories, and through reward systems.

Pupil voice

- KTS has three student council groups across school who meet several times each half term. Minutes are taken of the meeting and shared with the leadership team and discussed.
- The RRSA Accreditation recognised that one of the strengths at KTS is 'The school's respect and empowerment of the children is extremely clear and highly effective. Pupils are listened to and involved in decision making at all levels and are confident that their views are taken seriously.'

Preparation for next stage of learning/careers guidance

- Pupils' excellent attitudes to learning, high levels of attendance and positive self-esteem equip them to successfully function as responsible citizens, highly effective learners and confident individuals prepared for the next stages in their education and lives. The provision of impartial careers advice supports the pupils as they move through the school. This begins at the start of KS3, with greater focus at 14+ transition reviews and increases in intensity as they prepare to leave the school.
- The school has invested in training a Level 6 Careers Adviser (Assistant Headteacher) who supports students with impartial careers advice and works within a team to ensure students and their families are aware of options when leaving KTS at the appropriate point
- Annual KTS Transition Events take place each year to give information and guidance to support our students and parents to make informed decisions about their next steps. Parents and students from Year 11-14 are invited to attend. The event focuses on colleges, welfare rights and careers advice, as well as on day services, social care, health transition and independent travel. All providers have information stalls. Parents can choose which providers to visit depending upon the needs of their individual young person.
- The post 16 curriculum is determined by the needs, interests and aspirations of the students and their families. A clear focus is maintained on independence, next steps and preparation for work or further training. Where appropriate, this includes a continued focus on national curriculum subjects (with accreditation offered for Functional Maths and Functional English) and opportunities for work experience. The students are offered a comprehensive transition programme to ensure they are supported and ready to move to the next stage of their lives.
- Students engage in various learning opportunities to develop independence, confidence and communication with others. The PfA outcomes are embedded in the curriculum for all students in school starting from early years. The curriculum

has been developed around the Preparation for Adulthood agenda which is to support young people into adulthood with paid employment, good health, independent living options, friends, relationships and community inclusion.

- Each year, our leavers have the opportunity to celebrate their time at KTS with an annual prom. This is free for all students in classes with pupils who are leaving. Our PfA lead co-ordinates this event and ensures that all students are suitably attired and have transport.

Leadership and Management

JUDGEMENT



Leadership and Management

There is a strong culture of respect, compassion and care throughout the school. The standards of behaviour are excellent and the staff and pupils are respectful and caring towards others.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding at KTS are effective with Ofsted reporting that ‘There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders ensure that all staff are well trained. Leaders ensure that staff have a clear understanding of the additional needs and vulnerabilities of their pupils and know how to keep them safe. Governors ensure that policies and procedures are effective.’ (Evidence Ofsted Report May 2022)

The school’s safeguarding policies and procedures are fully compliant with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and are audited and evaluated regularly by staff, governors, and the LA. The school's Single Central Record reflects that full checks on all members of staff currently employed in the school are stringently applied. The Human Resources Manager and Office Manager have undertaken training on the Single Central Record. Members of the extended leadership team governing body have undertaken safer recruitment training.

Safeguarding leads keep up to date with local and national safeguarding developments and attend half termly Safeguarding in Education Network Meetings with other schools in the local authority. They complete annual LADO training in addition to the DSL Core Training. KTS have used Safeguarding Support to deliver professional development to all staff and have a planned safeguarding audit for Spring 2025.

School training and policy ensures that staff are confident and competent at bringing any concerns which may suggest a child is at risk, to the attention of the safeguarding leaders. They know when to bring this information immediately and when this may be a monitoring concern to be added to CPOMS. CPOMS is used to record all concerns in addition to any communication with families and professionals. This thorough process allows leaders to monitor individual cases and be proactive in referring to outside agencies when this is needed. All actions are recorded on CPOMS.

Leaders and staff teams work extremely effectively with external partners to support pupils who are at risk or subject to multi-agency involvement (medical CAMHS, CIN, CIOC). Safeguarding is a standing agenda at all SLT and governor meetings. The DSL or DDSL (head, deputy or assistant headteachers) attend all strategies, CP conferences and core groups. Through training, staff are aware that, because of their additional needs, pupils are more vulnerable to abuse and/or less able to speak out if something isn’t right.

Pupils are taught through the PSED/PSHE curriculum about how to keep themselves safe and know whom to speak to if they have concerns. Child friendly safeguarding posters are placed around school so pupils know who they can talk to. Staff have good relationships with pupils and they will often speak about concerns with those who they trust and school policy and procedures are then followed. Each building has a secure entrance area and electronic signing in procedure. Incidents of Child on Child Abuse are rare at KTS. Any concerns are reported by staff to the safeguarding leads and also recorded on CPOMS alongside the action and outcome.

Self Evaluation

School self-review and evaluation demonstrates ambitious and aspirational practices for continual improvement. A clear framework of rigorous and robust quality assurance, which supports teaching and learning, builds expertise and capacity and delivers positive outcomes for all pupils, is in place.

Senior Leaders successfully encourage staff teams to express their views on the curriculum and their feedback on school standards and provision impacts on future development, this takes place in focused teacher meetings. Parents and carers also have a range of

opportunities to express their views via questionnaires, meetings, and the EHCP process.

Governance

SLT and Governors demonstrate excellent skills, knowledge and understanding of the school improvement process. Governors also gain a good insight into the quality of standards through our termly curriculum and standards, learning walks, observations and full governing body meetings.

Governors are effective, accountable and ethical, have a great deal of experience, high levels of expertise and are well-grounded in their knowledge of the life and work of the school. Two parent governors have recently added their skills to the governing body as has the appointment of the KTS retiring headteacher. They robustly monitor and evaluate aspects of school life, such as achievement, finance, safeguarding, curriculum and standards. They are confident to challenge with knowledge and authority; issues are very well addressed and statutory responsibilities are expertly fulfilled.

The Governors and SLT have a clear vision and are aware of what is required to maintain standards and move the school forward. The leadership team lead by example and there is clear evidence that standards have not only been maintained but that standards have continued to develop and improve in all areas. Leaders and governors continue to create a culture that enables pupils and staff to excel.

The school has a team of experienced and skilled Governors who promote high standards, inclusiveness and care at all levels and who firmly place pupils at the centre of all decisions. Governors are ambitious to further develop the school, have highest expectations for all of our learners, and expect all staff at all levels to demonstrate the highest professional standards.

The KTS leadership are held rigorously to account by the Governing body and the governors receive reports and data on a termly basis from the leaders in the school. Pupils, staff, parent/carers and the school community play a significant role in the evaluation processes (including annual surveys of staff and parents, and pupil voice from the student council).

The Deputy headteacher is responsible for the monitoring, assessing and reporting on how well the pupil premium and sports premium are utilised. She works closely with teachers and reports on progress on a regular basis to the Governing body. Progression data clearly demonstrates that our pupils on Pupil Premium achieve at a similar rate to their peers and is also a focus for discussion in the pupil progress meetings.

Appraisal and Performance Management systems and procedures are well embedded and underpinned by national professional standards to maintain the highest of standards in teaching and learning.

Staff teams at all levels express and demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The impact of increased accountability via the appraisal process is well supported by a strong programme of challenge, support and professional development and has created highly effective teams in all areas of the school. School leaders are actively involved across all areas of the school to ensure they are aware of issues facing staff at all levels. The SLT and Extended Leadership Team effectively monitor progress of groups of children and individuals. At the weekly leadership meetings any concerns regarding individual pupils are brought to the attention of the group for discussion and resolution.

Middle Leaders

Teachers have an increased awareness and understanding of their individual and collective roles and strategic responsibilities. The impact of increased accountability via the appraisal process has created a highly effective distributed leadership model, which continues to impact positively on raising standards. The school continues to invest in the development of middle leaders, and effective succession planning strengthening the overall leadership and management capacity within the school through targeted CPD. The addition of six teachers as TLRs with responsibility for; Behaviour and Wellbeing, Autism and Parental Engagement, Curriculum, EYFS and Preparing for Adulthood has increased the capacity to implement strategic developments across the school.

Continuous Professional Development

The school has the capacity and systems to ensure staff improvement through CPD including induction sessions, training, coaching and support for its staff. All new staff are assigned a mentor to offer support and guidance and have regular meetings throughout the probation period. The AHTs monitor performance of staff and if individual staff are finding it difficult to maintain our required standard then they are given support and guidance. CPD and its impact is reported to the Governors on a termly basis. We have supported staff to gain nationally recognised qualifications in Rebound Therapy, Team Teach, Manual Handling, Makaton and Thrive. KTS have recently supported a non-qualified teacher to gain her QTS through the assessment only route, this was a great success and the same process in being followed for another staff member. All of the TLRs are currently working towards or have achieved Best Practice Network NPQ qualifications.

Well-being

Staff well-being is given a high priority. In 2018, the school had a series of training events and signed up to the Time 2 Change pledge in supporting the health and well-being of its staff. The school now has in place a well-being lead who organises events to support the staff well-being and morale. We operate The KTS Hub, a staff Facebook page where staff can leave messages and share positive experiences between each other. Changes in curriculum, assessment systems and data collection have resulted in a reduction in teacher workload and reduced paperwork. A 'no emails after 6 o'clock' decision has also been effective in addressing work / life balance issues. Leaders previously used the TES Pulse to send out monthly online surveys to gain insights about how staff are feeling. This has been replaced with 'feedback Friday'. Each week staff have the opportunity to be heard through 'feedback Friday'. They are able to say what went well and what could have gone better each week, the leadership team acknowledge what could have gone better and what can be done to support with this. Staff also write 'shout outs' to each other, which are shared in Monday morning briefing. Briefing notes are shared with all staff so they can be reviewed. Staff can self refer or can be referred to Health Assured which is an employee assistance programme. Three members of the leadership team are also trained mental health first aiders.

Early Years

JUDGEMENT



Overview

KTS Academy fully meets the statutory requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), including the Safeguarding and Welfare requirements.

KTS 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.

EYFS phase is made up of pupils in Nursery, Reception and occasionally some students in Year 1 (depending on individual needs of the pupils). There are currently two classes within EYFS. One class contains Nursery and Reception aged pupils where the other contains pupils in Reception and Year 1. Our nursery currently has 8 pupils who are split into two groups of four who receive 15 hours across the week. This is split into two full days and one half day.

Pupils in the Early Years Foundation stage benefit from a period of observation which is then used to build individual learner profiles that identify the learner characteristics, engagement profile and motivators. This then allows us to identify the appropriate pathway for them as they move through into KS1. Early Years is overseen by our Lead Practitioner for EYFS and the Assistant Head for Lower School.

Intent

KTS Academy is committed to the Four Core Principles of the EYFS Framework: A Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments and Learning and Development and the constantly developing pedagogy and practice are based on these.

All pupils in the EYFS follows the KTS Curriculum at a level which is appropriate to them. This meets the statutory requirements for Learning and Development within the EYFS and also incorporates a multi-disciplinary and holistic approach. Therapies including physiotherapy, speech and langue therapy and sensory integration, are embedded within the curriculum, meaning learning is not disrupted by these taking place; they take place alongside and within the wider curriculum delivery.

The curriculum has a strong focus on enjoyment, engagement, communication, independence, self-help and self-regulation, resilience, behaviour for learning, and early literacy and numeracy skills.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are also considered in terms of how they might look for pupils, with staff reflecting and recording progress continuously. Alongside this, staff consider the 5 areas of engagement, as many pupils may not move onto subject specific learning in the future.

The KTS Curriculum is sequential and ambitious and fully reflects the needs of the pupils. This is constantly reflected on and added/tweaked to ensure it contains the most up-to-date ‘best practice’ and the pupils achieve the best possible outcomes. For example, programmes such as ‘Attention Autism’ and ‘TAC PAC’, are included and staff are trained in these. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides no limits or barriers to what pupils can achieve.

Staff work in unison with a host of other agencies to deliver holistic, personalised programmes for the pupils e.g. - SALT, OT, HI Service and Physiotherapist.

The curriculum plan, design and implementation gives pupils the knowledge, self-belief and cultural capital they need, preparing them for what comes next in their lives. This might look different depending on pupil’s individual needs and providing pupils with the chance to experience ‘awe and wonder’ is high on the agenda and written into the school

development plan for example a pantomime visiting annually, live music performances, visiting local museums, parks and cafes. Annual events including 'Arts Week and 'Multi-cultural Week', Black History Week, further these opportunities.

Implementation

All seven 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. At KTS, the children's cognitive development proceeds hand-in-hand with their social and personal development and this is the ethos right across school until they move on.?

Long-term topic plans are produced collaboratively. This can be flexible and sometimes mini-topics are included which follow children's own interests or special events ensuring that their learning is consistently meaningful and relevant to them. 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 the Department's HLTA.?

Outdoor learning is of high importance in EYFS and across the wider school. Pupils have access to the outdoor areas throughout the day. The planning for our outdoor areas has a strong focus on Physical Development. The Outdoor areas include a hard surface and Astroturf alongside a fenced off area which is suitable for "messier" play such as sand and the mud kitchen. Pupils also have access to a large playground, an area dedicated to bikes and scooters, a grassy area with willow tunnel and also a larger mud kitchen, which all groups access. The outdoor areas are well-organised and planned for, with groups sharing responsibility for them. The emphasis on outdoor learning means that children's learning develops as well outside as it does inside. Children are supported to take managed risks and challenges as they are supported to be active and physical in their play.

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. The EYFS classrooms have a shared area and free flow often takes place across the three indoor spaces.

Staff have been trained in the systematic phonics scheme 'Read Write Inc' (RWI) as well as training in supporting pupils with their pre reading skills. The English leads ensure all staff are trained and this is integrated into the staff induction programme. All new teachers attend the two-day RWI training. For pupils at the earlier stages of development, a 'sensory Read Write Inc' programme has been developed alongside Speech and Language Therapists which focuses on early reading, writing skills and language development. There is a sharp focus on communication and many of the pupils have plans from SALT which are implemented by staff. We provide a "story rich" environment for the pupils where staff share stories with pupils in a way that excites and engages them, introducing them to new ideas, concepts and vocabulary.

Staff are also trained in White Rose Maths Scheme which is included in the curriculum to support mathematical development. Regular In-house training also takes place on different aspects of the curriculum offer such as play theory, intensive interaction and fine motor development.

We have a bank of CPD videos which are now available for all staff to access. This includes training from Speech and Language Therapists on key programmes, training on early reading from our English leads and EYFS training from our Local Authority EYFS adviser. Working this way has meant that all staff have been able to access training and we have included key training in our CPD induction package for new staff.?

Teaching assistants are utilised extremely well and are an integral part of the teaching and learning process. The investment in quality support staff and the high staff: pupil ratio can be seen to directly impact on pupils learning, which has been recognised during learning walks and lesson observations, planning reviews and work scrutiny.?

Impact

Teaching is outstanding in the early years and children make excellent progress. The teaching practitioners within the phase have an extensive knowledge and understanding of the EYFS and have a great deal of experience. The curriculum design ensures that the content, sequencing and progression across all areas of learning is clear and staff have the skills to deliver this effectively and creatively.

The curriculum impact is monitored by the SLT, the Lead Practitioners for EYFS & Curriculum alongside subject co-ordinators, through drop-in observations, learning walks, planning reviews and work scrutiny. Quality teaching has been found to have a

direct, positive impact upon learning and pupils make significant progress from their starting points and within their capabilities. Teaching is inspirational, engaging and well-matched to pupil's individual abilities and needs.

Pupils in EYFS make outstanding progress from their starting points to the end of their time within the phase. On entry, the vast majority of children start well below the national expectations of 30 – 50 months. Their starting points generally range from 0 – 11 months through to 16 – 26 months. All pupils are base-lined on entry to school using Bsquared, which we have been using since 2017. B squared is a very thorough assessment which breaks down the EYFS stages from birth to exceeding Early Learning Goals, into very small steps. Bsquared also highlights pupil's 'next steps' (referred to as 'assessments to be mastered'). This information is used by the teacher to inform them of the progress they are making in the curriculum and in turn, identifies their next steps.

Pupil progress is monitored and recorded continually through daily formative assessment, which informs the teachers when teaching and planning and helps them identify 'next steps'. Staff make observations and record them on Tapestry, where achievements can be shared with families. As well as observations being linked to the areas of learning, staff are also able to link to personal development, PfA and the areas of engagement.

Each half term, teachers meet with the Assistant Head to discuss the pupils and identify any pupils who are not making expected progress. This might happen if a child has had their learning disrupted due to a medical issue, for example. An action plan put together to support the pupil which is then reviewed at the following meeting.

Working with families is key and parents/carers are informed about the curriculum and their child's learning through a presentation given by the Lead Practitioner for Curriculum at the beginning of the academic year and through class dojo. Families are also invited into school for celebration events throughout the year. Pupils are set termly 'Goals', which are shared with parents/carers and they are invited to contribute to these. These are drawn down from the pupil's EHCP's and are used to inform planning. A review of the goals is then sent home each term to keep parents further informed of their child's ongoing progress. We also run the Early Bird and Early Bird Plus course alongside the National Autistic Society to support families with understanding their child's Autism.

We work alongside partners in other Special Schools across the North East to ensure we are sharing good practice and supporting each other with moderation.

Sixth Form

JUDGEMENT



Aims

- To support the personal development of our young people in every aspect, ensuring students feel safe, secure, stimulated and happy
- To provide a broad, balanced and fully inclusive curriculum, which meets each student’s individual needs, ensuring students make excellent progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points (article 29 RRSA)
- To ensure the provision for post 16 students is innovative, strong and personalised
- To secure appropriate placements for students leaving KTS, with the best chances of success, including opportunities for paid or voluntary employment and access to day services or further education

The post 16 curriculum is driven by the needs and wants of the students and their families. Whilst we follow a curriculum, there is flexibility within the structure for students to access specific elements which interest them and will support them to pursue their goals and interests in future settings. Students’ learning is tailored to the individual and each aspect of their curriculum is differentiated to match the level of challenge required for them to progress. There are currently 5 classes across the Academy with post 16 students, following 4 curriculum pathways.

Intent

The curriculum plan, design and implementation give students the knowledge, self-belief and cultural capital they need, preparing them for what comes next in their lives, whatever this looks like. The curriculum has been built around the Preparing for Adulthood agenda, focussing on employment, good health, independent living and community inclusion. PFA is taught as a specific learning opportunity, but underpins all learning across the curriculum, including in vocational pathways for formal learners.

Post 16 students working below entry level 1 are based within KTS3 and KTS+ across 4 classes. Some of these students are able to access elements of the formal curriculum, but not consistently, and so their curriculum delivery is particularly bespoke. The developmental curriculum has a strong focus on enjoyment, engagement, communication, independence, self-help and self-regulation, resilience, behaviour for learning, early literacy and numeracy skills and understanding of the world. Students have access to various outdoor spaces, sensory and therapy areas.

Post 16 students working at entry level 1 or above are based within KTS+ across 2 classes. These students access a modified national curriculum offer to continue their academic learning 3 days per week. This aspect of their curriculum continues to build on communication and independence along with formal study of mathematics, English and understanding the world. In addition to this, students access 2 days of dedicated vocational learning through a number of vocational pathways. The pathway offer is evaluated and developed based on the needs and wants of the learners, though each aims to provide the same essential skills. We use the expanded universal framework from Skills Builder to teach 8 essential to students, and support them to reflect upon how they have used these skills through their vocational pathways. Learners are then encouraged to demonstrate their skills and knowledge through regular work experience opportunities and visits. Students are able to access work environments through the KTS Café for students working on the Make and Bake pathway and Beyond Boundaries (a farming day service based in Comondale) for students on the Build and Grow pathway. We are also looking to expand this offer for students following the Support and Create pathway to work with product design, development and retail.

The KTS curriculum is sequential and ambitious and fully reflects the diverse needs of our students. We constantly review our schemes of learning and accreditation offer to ensure that the most up to date practices are being used effectively. Staff work closely with other professionals and agencies in order to deliver holistic, personalised programmes for students.

Students will learn to keep themselves safe in the community, including online, through the modelling and teaching around appropriate use of technology. Technology will be used to support the curriculum in a way that also supports the students to use it effectively and safely in their day to day lives.

Implementation

The developmental study programme includes:

- Accreditation through ASDAN Personal Progress (including PMLD units) (Pre Entry Level to E1)
- Expressive Art and Design
- Understanding the World
- Physical Development (including therapies and Leisure Studies where appropriate)
- PSED
- PfA sessions focussing on the 4 key aspects
- 'Work Experience' (offered at an appropriate level for the student through access to services and enterprise activities)

The formal study programme includes:

- Accreditation through NOCN Functional Skills English and Maths (E1-L2)
- Accreditation through ASDAN Employ-ability (E2-L2)
- Work Experience through the vocational pathways
- Enterprise Experiences
- Leisure Studies
- PfA sessions focussing on the 4 key aspects

Regular quality assurance of planning, teaching and learning takes place throughout the academic year. This is carried out by members of the extended leadership team and includes lesson drop-ins, observations, planning checks and pupil progress meetings.

The use of technology to deliver the curriculum is constantly under review and up to date practice around online safety and safeguarding is implemented and shared with staff. Formal learner have access to an individual iPad, which is monitored and used to develop skills around online safety as well as research and creativity. Online packages and applications are also used to support learning in English, mathematics and other subjects.

Students have access to meaningful encounters and experiences with employers, day service providers and further education institutions throughout their time at KTS. These are delivered both as regular elements of the curriculum but also through standalone events throughout the academic year. The school has invested in training a L6 Careers Adviser (Assistant Headteacher) so that impartial, quality advice can be shared with the students but from a source that is familiar to the student, promoting positive, purposeful interactions. Compass+ is used to monitor the compliance with the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks, outlining best practice for a quality careers programme. Bench-marking shows 100% compliance and is agreed with an external Careers Coordinator from the Tees Valley Combined Authority.

Transition out of KTS is supported by a team including an Assistant Headteacher (who is also the L6 Careers Advisor), a member of the Extended Leadership Team with a responsibility for PfA and the class teachers. Students and their families are offered, on average, three meetings during their final year to ensure transition to the next setting(s) is successful. Professionals from other settings are invited to these meetings (including health, education and social care) to ensure a holistic transition package is implemented.

Impact

Learning is outstanding for post 16 students and students are able to make excellent progress from their starting points, in line with the EHCPs. The teams working within the post 16 classes contain a wealth of experience, ambition and expertise. They have high expectations and aspirations for the students in their care. The curriculum design ensures that the content, sequencing and progression across all areas of learning is clear, and staff have the skills to deliver this effectively and creatively.

Curriculum impact is monitored by the SLT, ELT and subject leads through drop-in observations, learning walks, planning reviews and work scrutiny. Quality teaching has been found to have a direct, positive impact upon learning and students make significant progress from their starting point and within their capabilities. Teaching is inspirational, engaging and well-matched to students' individual abilities and their needs. The use of technology continues to develop and positively impact the learning taking place.

Teachers use a combination of Tapestry and BSquared to monitor the progress of students, and use the information collected to shape their planning and delivery of future sessions. Periodic Pupil Progress Meetings facilitate conversations with members of the SLT and ELT to monitor this process. Students on the formal pathway are also encouraged to make their own Tapestry entries, to reflect on their learning and next steps. Tapestry entries, for all students, contribute to the collection of evidence for accredited units in the relevant ASDAN qualifications. These may be in the form of text entries, videos or photos (or a combination thereof).

Students accessing formal English and Maths use an online assessment package, BKSb, to inform them and staff of their current working levels, along with strengths and gaps. This supports the delivery of the curriculum, but does not dictate the offer, in order to avoid a 'teach to test' ethos. The use of BKSb shows progress over time, but also supports with accurate identification of accreditation levels, to ensure that students are succeeding at as high a level as possible without adding unnecessary stresses and anxieties.

All students move on to appropriate next steps placements and courses, as highlighted by destination data. Transition is supported by the member of ELT responsible for PfA, with them facilitating visits to day services and FE settings. We also encourage longer transitions and work experience placements where appropriate and have had students successfully access voluntary roles at local businesses and day services both during and post KTS. Independent living options are explored where appropriate, and parents are signposted to the services and professionals that can support with transition from children's to adults' services. Annual transition events allow parents to access all relevant settings for their young people (including DWP, transitions nurses, apprenticeships and social services) to ask advice and explore provision. These are offered to any parents who would like to attend, with a particular focus on post 16 families. They are well attended by parents and students alike.

Communication with parents is key to ensuring successful transitions, and this happens regularly through various meetings and online communications by teachers and leaders. There are also several parent events throughout the year, involving opportunities for parents to see the work their young people are doing as well as enterprise events where students put into practice their skills and knowledge from their learning. Personal Goals are set and then reviewed termly, and these are shared with parents through Tapestry. The Personal Goals also form part of the discussions at Pupil Progress Meetings.

The leadership and management in post 16 is outstanding. The teachers ensure high quality teamwork and the provision of an effective curriculum are tailored to the individual needs for all groups of students. The upper school is led by an Assistant Headteacher who is relatively new to the school and to special education but brings a wealth of experience in leadership, including pastoral and behaviour, as well as experience from the private sector. The team also includes the Careers Coordinator, who teaches in the post 16 formal curriculum classes, and the lead practitioner for PfA.

Post 16 learners at KTS are confident learners. They feel safe and well supported. The independence and resilience of students is both nurtured and challenged on a daily basis as they are prepared for life beyond KTS. Our focus is to prepare young people, to the best of their ability, for their own individual adulthood.

Overall

JUDGEMENT



KTS Academy was inspected by Ofsted in May 2022 and was graded as 'Outstanding'. We believe that the school continues to be outstanding in all areas. This is due to the continuing developments since the last inspection.

Significant Developments and improvements since the last inspection in May 2022.

- **Quality of Education**
- Quality assurance of teaching and learning take place each term and involves the extended leadership team. It has been validated externally by Challenge Partners Reviews in 2023 and planned for 2025.
- PfA is embedded across school and both curriculum and this is evident through rigorous quality assurance - learning walks, planning and pupil work/evidence.
- Subject leaders now meet with subject leaders from other local special schools and through the North East Challenge Partner Hub and share good practice in their subject area. Subject leaders are working with the TLR leading on curriculum to further improve the curriculum offer e.g. SCARF resources for PSHE which are now written into the curriculum. Curriculum lead offered a curriculum workshop with parents and also delivered an RSE/PSHE session for parents.
- Further development of the Maths curriculum by the assistant headteacher and math subject leaders. Following the Ofsted inspection, a review of the implementation and impact of Numicon was carried out in 2022. White Rose Maths was introduced to provide a more sequential maths curriculum with resources which would better suit the formal curriculum, reduce teacher workload and improve staff subject knowledge, therefore improve learning outcomes for pupils. All staff attended whole school training and the curriculum is being updated to reflect the use of White Rose Maths. The calculation policy has been updated to reflect the White Rose methodology and staff have received training around this.
- Staff plan in clusters of teaching groups with pupils on the same curriculum and with similar learning styles.
- Subject leaders meet with subject leaders from other local special schools and share good practice in their subject area. Subject leaders are working with the TLR leading on curriculum to further improve the curriculum offer e.g. SCARF resources for PSHE which are now written into the curriculum. Curriculum lead offered a curriculum workshop with parents and also delivered an RSE/PSHE session for parents.
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- Staff plan in clusters of teaching groups with pupils on the same curriculum and with similar learning styles.
- Pupil evidence and assessment is now recorded on the online platform Tapestry. This has reduced teacher workload and also allows evidence for each areas of learning to viewed easily.
- KTS took part in a research project, in 2023-2024, with another North East special school about the effectiveness of an engagement-based play approach.
- Leaders worked with other North East special school and delivered a professional development day for teaching assistants across five schools in October 2024.
- **Behaviour and Attitudes**
- Additional staff have been trained to deliver Team Teach training to staff and CPD to support staff with strategies for managing challenging behaviour and to monitor, analyse and report on behaviour data.
- Link governors meets the behaviour and well-being lead, looks at behaviour data and feeds back to the governing body.
- Behaviour Team have delivered workshops to parents with positive feedback.
- **Personal Development**

- Pupils Cultural Capital is planned for across the year with the continuation of the enrichment activities to support the whole curriculum. This involves activities such as theatre trips, using public transport, educational outings and arts week.
- Pupils Voice - the school council has been further developed and now has three groups across the phases of the school. The leadership team attend some of the meetings to discuss pupils views and ideas.
- RRSA - KTS is a Gold Rights Respecting School and plans to complete a re-accreditation visit in 2025.
- Magic Breakfast was introduced across the school which supports with PFA, healthy living and social skills.
- KTS worked with the Arts Council and other local special schools to produce a 'creative play space' which was used by pupils across school.
- **Leadership and Management**
- New senior leadership team in place from September 2022, due to the retirement of the previous headteacher and promotion of the deputy to headteacher and the assistant head to deputy. Two new assistant headteachers appointed one with experience in special education and the other with experience in leadership in a mainstream setting.
- From September 2024 the assistant headteachers were added to the safeguarding team.
- Development of middle leaders to form an extended leadership team. Appointment of additional teachers with a teaching and learning responsibility and their roles defined to support the development of the school with specific responsibilities for leading on behaviour and well-being, Autism and parental engagement, curriculum development, EYFS and PFA. Extended leadership team all in the process of completing or have completed a variety of NPQ qualifications.
- Extended leadership team, staff, pupils and governors reviewed the mission, vision and values to ensure that they reflect the current school community and the stakeholders vision for the school. From this a 3 year strategic plan was developed and agreed.
- Spring 2023 two additional classrooms were built to make room for the remodelling of two classrooms into specific Reception and Nursery classrooms.
- An assessment nursery provision for 8 pupil opened in September 2023 following the refurbishment of two rooms to accommodate the EYFS department.
- Specialist areas within the school building such as a sensory room and two light rooms have been upgraded to meet the needs of the pupils with more complex needs.
- The leadership team worked with a local MAT to agree a license for an additional learning space for 60 learners. This replaced two buildings leased from the local authority which were situated over a mile away. The new building provided a high quality learning environment for young people with SEND which is in walking distance of the main site. Pupils moved into the building in September 2024.
- Leaders value regular feedback from staff. Each week staff have the opportunity to be heard through 'feedback Friday'. They are able to say what went well and what could have gone better each week, the leadership team acknowledge what could have gone better and what can be done to support with this. Staff also write 'shout outs' to each other, which are shared in a Monday morning briefing.
- TLR leading on Autism successfully delivers the Early Bird, Early Bird Plus and Teen Life course to parents, alongside colleagues from KTS and the local authority SEND Team.
- Following a survey of teacher workload in 2024 - teaching staff can complete PPA at home and occasional teacher meetings follow on from a staff meeting so that there is only one meeting night. Staff are asked, where possible, not to email before 8am and after 6pm.