

CURRICULUM POLICY

Aims

The school's curriculum follows statutory requirements. It is balanced and broadly based, and promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils and of society and prepares our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The school provides full time supervised education for all pupils, which gives them experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education, appropriate for their ages and aptitudes.

Pupils are expected to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy.

Personal, social and health education is provided in the Infant, Junior and Senior departments, reflecting the school's aims and ethos.

Appropriate careers guidance is provided.

The school sets out to:

- ensure that pupils develop the essential literacy and numeracy skills
- provide pupils with a full and rounded entitlement to learning
- foster pupils' creativity and develop essential skills, including learning skills
- promote a healthy lifestyle
- inspire pupils to a commitment to learning which will last a lifetime
- promote high standards in all learning and teaching
- ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress

As a school with a Christian Foundation, Religious Education, including access to other faiths, is also provided for all pupils.

Pupils enter Kingsmead School at a variety of ages, but most commonly at the beginning of Key Stage 1 (Nursery or Reception) Key Stage 2 (Year 3) or Key Stage 3 (Year 7).

It is the aim of Kingsmead School to prepare pupils for the next stage of their education. A few pupils will move at:

age 11 (on completion of Year 6, Key Stage 2), normally to attend Grammar Schools or Independent Day Schools.

age 16 (on completion of year 11, GCSE).

It is the school's objective that every pupil should be prepared for the next stage of their

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education so that they are:

- a) able to do their best in the appropriate assessment tests (e.g. the 11+ exam), and board exams (e.g. GCSE).
- b) able to succeed in their next school because of the subject matter they have been taught and the way it has been taught to them.

Kingsmead School therefore aims to provide a learning environment which will be appropriate for pupils of a wide range of ability, including both those who continue at the school from the age of 3 to 16 and those who transfer out of (or in to) the school at various points.

Equal Opportunities

Entry to all programmes of study is based on academic suitability and appropriateness, regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief.

Disabilities: in accordance with the statutory requirements the school aims to make the curriculum accessible to all pupils as far as is reasonably practicable. The school has an Accessibility Plan which is available to parents on request.

Differentiation

Kingsmead School aims to help each individual child to fulfil his/her potential. It is recognised that each child is different, with particular talents. The school aims to build on each pupil's strengths, increasing self-confidence and providing a sense of achievement. At the same time, the school aims to help those who may have any kind of difficulty in certain subject areas (e.g. writing, maths, study skills).

A variety of differing teaching and learning methods and materials are used in all courses to suit pupils' different needs.

Subjects Offered

The following subjects are offered to all pupils in addition to the options system operating in Years 10 & 11.

Infant Department:

Kindergarten , Foundation 1& 2 Communication, Language and Literacy; Creative Development.

Knowledge and understanding of the world; Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Physical Development, Religious Studies, ICT.

Foundation 2 also Handwriting and Swimming.

Junior Department:

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Years 1 – 6 English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, French, ICT, Music, Design Technology, Art, PSHE, PE, Games, Verbal Reasoning

Senior Department:

Years 7 – 9 English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, French, Spanish, Design Technology, Music, Drama, Art, PE, Games, PSHE, Religious Studies

Year 9 English, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Geography, French, Spanish, Design Technology, Music, Drama, Art, PE, Games, PSHE, Religious Studies

Years 10 & 11 (Seniors GCSE Options) all students study English, Mathematics, Religious Studies and PSHE. In addition, students study subjects from the following: - English Literature, Media Studies, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, combined Science, Food & Nutrition, Art, Physical Education, ICT, History, Geography, Expressive Arts and Music.

Organization and class structure

The school is divided into three departments:

Infants	-	Age 2 - 7, Kindergarten, Nursery, Reception Years 1 + 2
Juniors	-	Age 7 - 11 Years 3 - 6
Seniors	-	Age 11 - 16 Years 7 – 11

Classes generally consist of a maximum of 18 pupils. In some Year groups when there are more than 18 pupils, two parallel teaching groups are formed. Pupils are allocated to the two sections on some or all of the following criteria

- friendship groups
- boy/girl ratio
- academic ability

Staff involvement

Each class has a form teacher who is responsible for the overall care of the pupils in that class. In the Infant department, the form teacher generally teaches all the subjects. In the Senior school, all subjects are taught by specialists.

All members of the teaching staff are assigned "duty days" both on weekdays and at weekends. Duties provide an opportunity for interaction between pupils and teachers on a more informal basis.

Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to cooperate and to communicate with teachers so that each pupil benefits to the maximum extent possible from their education at Kingsmead.

Parents are not generally involved in the teaching programme in the classroom, although they often come along on field trips, sports fixtures etc and help in a variety of ways. The school aims to provide parents with opportunities to be involved where they so desire but not to get

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parents to do things which are properly the duty of teachers.

Proportion of time allocated to each subject area

At present, Kingsmead operates an eight period day, five days a week (Monday - Friday). Most periods are 40 minutes long, though some are 35 minutes. In some subjects, double periods are the norm. A timetable is drawn up before the start of the Autumn Term which remains in place for the academic year.

Admissions policy and ability range of pupils

Criteria for admission vary according to the age of the child.

From Year 2 onwards, it is the school's policy to ask pupil applicants to sit an entrance test to assess their ability and potential in key areas such as Reading, Spelling, Mathematics and Reasoning.

Reference is normally made to the pupil's previous school.

If an applicant performs satisfactorily on the admission test, if the report from the previous school is satisfactory, and if there is space available in the boarding house and/or class, admission is normally offered.

Kingsmead School aims to cater to a wide ability range of pupils, although in classes where space is limited admission may be offered first to those who do best in the admissions test. Admission will be offered to an applicant only when the school considers it is in a position to provide a successful educational and social experience at Kingsmead.

Place of the National Curriculum

The programmes of study followed in Kingsmead School follow closely the guidelines set out in the National Curriculum. However, adherence to the National Curriculum is not so strict as to preclude the possibility of a teacher pursuing a topic which is of particular interest, or relevance, to the pupils.

Assessment of pupils' progress

What a pupil has learned is assessed through class work, homework, periodic tasks and tests (e.g. at the end of a topic). In Year 7 and above, structured examinations in the various subject areas are taken at the end of the Autumn and Summer Terms.

Reporting to Parents

Teachers record pupils' progress in a variety of ways.

Progress is reported to the parents through written reports and through parents' evenings. At present, the policy is to have written reports as follows

Nursery	-	Year 6	a) end of January, b) July
Year 7	-	Year 11	End of Autumn Term and Summer Term
			Mid term grades Autumn, Spring x 2, Summer

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On written reports, especially in year 7 and above, it is the school's policy to include the pupil's exam mark, together with attainment grade: A - E (A - G in Years 10 and 11). An effort mark is also awarded, normally on the scale:

1	=	Excellent
2	=	Good
3	=	Moderate
4	=	Poor
5	=	Very poor (causing concern)

Parents' evenings are held as follows:

Nursery – Year 5	-	early February, July
Year 6	-	September, May
Year 7	-	Summer Term
Year 8	-	Autumn Term
Year 9	-	Spring Term
Year 10 & 11	-	Autumn & Spring Terms

Additional parents' evenings may be arranged from time to time. Alternatively (and especially for parents of boarders) appointments to discuss pupils' progress can be arranged at a time which is mutually convenient.

Marking policy

It is the school's policy that all pupils' work should be marked correctly, clearly, fairly and promptly. Work should normally be marked and handed back the day after it was handed in (or the next day there is a lesson). A written comment may often be included, which should be legible, relevant, encouraging (if possible) and should preferably give advice on how improvements may be effected.

Teachers use a variety of marking strategies (e.g. marks out of 10 or 20, letter grades etc.). The main principle is that the marks should be understood by the pupil concerned.

Religious Education and collective worship

Religious Education is available to all pupils and is compulsory for all ages. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from religious education.

All pupils are expected to take part in school assemblies, the Christmas Carol Service, the end of year Thanksgiving Service and other occasional services. Boarders are expected to attend boarders' chapel services when present in school at weekends.

Sex Education

The school provides sex education in the basic curriculum for all, in which pupils are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life.

A full statement of the school's sex education policy is available to parents.

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In accordance with the law, the biological aspects of human reproduction remain compulsory for all pupils, but parents may withdraw their children from any other part of the sex education provided.

Political Education

The promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school is forbidden by law. Political issues are introduced in a number of courses and are presented in a balanced manner.

PE and Games

All pupils are expected to take part in the school's Physical Education and Games programme. Pupils can only be excused from PE and Games lessons for medical reasons, for which a note from a parent will suffice, or other reasons agreed with the school.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The school has a wide and varied programme of cultural and sporting activities that take place outside the formal curriculum. All pupils are encouraged to take part in the programme.

Homework

The school expects homework to be undertaken by all pupils each weekday evening. As guidance the school expects pupils to spend the following times on homework:

Years 3 – 4	30 minutes each night plus reading
Year 5	45 minutes each night plus reading
Year 6	60 minutes each night plus reading
Years 7 and 8	2 x 30 minutes
Year 9	3 x 30 minutes
Years 10 and 11	3 x 45 minutes

Special Educational Needs

The school has a special educational needs policy and, where deemed to be in the best interests of a pupil, may modify the courses followed by the pupil in consultation with the parents.

Concerns and Complaints

Parents who have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum should discuss these in the first instance with the pupil's form tutor or subject teacher.

If the issue cannot be resolved in this way, parents are invited to seek an appointment with the head of department.

Monitoring and Review

The curriculum policy document is reviewed, and revised where necessary, each year. This review normally takes place early in the Summer Term when the timetable for the following year is under consideration, and when decisions are made about the time allocated to each subject and possible introduction of new subject areas. The responsibility for this review lies with the Headmaster.

The subject policy documents are reviewed annually and revised as appropriate. Responsibility for this review lies with the member of staff responsible for the subject area concerned.

The subject practice documents are reviewed constantly and updated as each topic and area of study is completed. These documents are personal, working files of lesson notes, plans etc. Responsibility for updating these documents lies with the teacher concerned.

The Headmaster will report to the governing body's Academic Committee on the progress of the policy and will recommend any changes.

Compiled	March 2011	M G Gibbons
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