

Al-Khair Secondary Schools

Curriculum Policy



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1. Aims

This policy sets out Al-Khair's aims, principles and strategies for our curriculum and should be used in conjunction with all subject policy documents which demonstrate its implementation within the school.

By curriculum we mean:

A framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and understanding to be gained at each stage (intent). Translating that framework over time into a structure and narrative, within an institutional context (implementation) and evaluating what knowledge and understanding pupils have gained against expectations (impact).

INTENT

Al-Khair school aims to provide a holistic education which comprises both Islamic Studies as well as the National Curriculum from Year 7 to Key Stage 4. It is through this mission that the schools' vision stands firm; to be dedicated in helping our students achieve excellence in education within a caring and secure Islamic environment. Our school motto "Balance without compromise," is a key factor in which our students strive to become active and positive members of the community.

This document sets the framework in which Al-Khair Secondary School's broad and balanced education provision is based upon. It covers the subjects offered as well as the extra-curricular opportunities available and charts the journey our pupils take when they join our school.

The tenets our curriculum policy is based on are to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils
- Help pupils develop a robust understanding of their faith
- Support pupils' personal development, behaviour and attitude
- Support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning
- Ensure equal access to learning, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Provide subject choices that support pupils' learning and progression, and enable them to work towards achieving their goals
- Develop pupils' independent learning skills, life skills and resilience, to equip them for further education and life beyond school.

IMPLEMENTATION

Throughout the implementation of the curriculum we audit the following at least once at the beginning of each academic year and then as needed within departments.

In these audits we aim to ensure that:

- We are making KS3 a strong foundation for KS4, to avoid interventions and catching up in year 11. Ensuring that schemes of work provide a solid foundation for the demands at GCSE
- There is a sound justification for shortening KS3 so that pupils get long enough to develop depth and breadth of learning before being narrowed into GCSE subjects.
- Pupils aren't unnecessarily restricted from taking whatever subjects they like and that there's a wide range of options available, particularly for disadvantaged groups and pupils with low attainment
- We have dedicated substantial timetable slots beyond the 'core' subjects
- We have structured the timetable to allow for a wider range of subjects and extra-curricular opportunities, e.g. our Enrichment Clubs, the dedicated PSHE lessons, theme days and activities etc.
- We have pitched our year 7 work at the correct level.
- We have Encouraged the take-up of core EBacc subjects at GCSE, such as the humanities and languages, alongside the arts and creative subjects
- We do not push pupils into less rigorous qualifications to boost league table positions or spend a disproportionate amount of time on test or exam preparation at the expense of teaching
- We continue to offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits, trips and visitors to complement and broaden the curriculum
- We continue to encourage reading for pleasure at all ages

Curriculum Content

In this section, an outline is briefly sketched highlighting the subjects taught at each key stage, as well as, the different approaches and mannerism in which topics and themes are introduced at each ascending key stage. It is hoped through this systematic plan that the students acquire good language skills, excellence within the different subjects, and most importantly confidence and the development of a healthy and balanced personality.

The National Curriculum:

Key Stage 3:

The subjects offered are the following: English, Mathematics, Science, Arabic, History, Geography, I.S/R.S, Art, P.E, Citizenship, PSHE, Computer Science & EC (Enrichment Clubs)

These subjects provide a broad range of knowledge that is delivered in an effective and creative ways to ensure that the students are challenged as well as enjoy their time at school. It is hoped that through these subjects, a platform is provided for the students to engage in all sorts of activities that promote leadership skills and critical and creative thinking, which are some of the skills that we hope the students learn and adopt as they continue with their education.

Throughout the school we place emphasis upon the areas of public speaking, community work and leadership & life skills. This forms part of our enrichment and empowerment drive. This is woven into the curriculum and the school day throughout assemblies, competitions and themed days.

We also aim to foster a love for reading in the students via a school wide literacy strategy and facilitate the ESB Qualification to promote skills in debating and public speaking. We also enter all of our pupils annually for the UKMT to enable high achievement in mathematics.

Additionally, we cater for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme to promote resilience, independence and a wide range of extracurricular opportunities through charity work, sports and skills development.

Key Stage 4:

At the end of Key Stage 3 students are introduced to a number of new subject areas in order to expand their GCSE options. The GCSE bundle the school offers is a rigorous one comprising of English Language, English Literature, History, Math, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Arabic, Religious Studies, Computer Science and Citizenship.

As the GCSE package is one that is rigorous in nature, it is hoped that the students will be able to take any career path of their choice by the time they leave school. Indeed, a student in year 9 might not always know or be able to make informed decisions about further education or career choices at such a young age. This is the rationale behind the variety of GCSE options within this intensive bundle.

However, for students who feel unable to cope with the load, and after consultation with parents, the option to drop and swap GCSE subjects is available. The empty slots in the timetable are then allocated to providing extra support dependent upon the needs of that particular cohort.

We also assign a learning mentor and provide Booster classes in the key subjects of English, Math and Science after schools for those pupils still failing to show progress despite consistent and regular in-class support and differentiation by the teachers.

As for the students who wish to take additional subjects, we offer Further and Additional Math after school and facilitate an extra modern foreign language (Spanish). It is hoped that through these measures the students are fully engaged and our curriculum is accessible to all.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE & PROGRESSION INTO HIGHER YEARS:

Our GCSE Results are in the top performing schools in our borough, averaging over 90% EBacc entry and pass rate.

The majority of our pupils go on to take the traditional route of A levels at their college of choice and the subjects they opt for are varied, demonstrating the diverse interests and future aspirations of the pupils. A small percentage follow the apprenticeship route as a fast track career choice.

ISLAMIC ETHOS

There are some subjects which are key to the delivery of the Islamic studies curriculum. These subjects are Islamic Studies, R.E, Arabic, and Quran. The very nature of these subjects makes them rich in cross-curriculum links and contributes towards developing critical thinking and promoting a spirit of tolerance and community spirit.

In R.E students learn about different faiths and key arguments for pressing contemporary issues such as rights to abortion, freedom of choice and protected characteristics. Arguments for and against any issues are presented to the students. Furthermore, students are expected to develop, support, and clearly communicate their opinions.

The school's ethos is part of an Islamic one; therefore the primary bond is a religious one. Harmony and inclusion are promoted during prayer times which is at least once a day. Every Friday students also take part in the Congregational Friday prayer. The prayers help the students to experience a sense of community that is separate from an educational community, but the unity felt will aid the educational aspects of the school. The school works to promote harmony amongst different groups by participating in team building days, inset days, and extra-curricular trips. Racism goes against the school's Islamic ethos, as the school aims to nurture Islamic bonds of unity between the students. If there are instances of racism in the school, this is treated with utmost seriousness on the school's part. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be carried out depending on the nature of the incident.

ENRICHMENT, EMPOWERMENT & LEADERSHIP

The value of education cannot be defined in terms of academic grades alone. Equally important is the Islamic personality (tarbiyyah) of our pupils and it is here that our 'Leadership program' is key.

Our Vision/Intent:

Al-Khair School creates future leaders with a humanitarian and Islamic perspective which truly does allow the pupils who leave the school to be Ambassadors of Islam

Although we take great pride in our academic achievements, academic success and excellence are seen as a consequence of good character.

At our school, we believe that educational advancement should not be limited to school performance and league tables. We believe in providing our students with a balanced and stimulating educational experience. Therefore, we have devised a creative and rich 3-year program which will develop key leadership skills into our pupils – from the art of public speaking to fostering empathy with those less fortunate.

This 3-year program consists of weekly EC lessons in which pupils gain experience in a variety of skills, from elite sports such as fencing and horse riding to improving their oracy through public speaking lessons and examinations.

Archery:

Under the guidance of a specialised outsourced instructor, students will benefit and learn the key skills of this sport. Archery is the art, practice, or skill of propelling arrows with the use of a bow. Archery has historically been used for hunting and combat; in modern times, however, its main use is that of a recreational activity. One who practices archery is typically known as an “archer” or “bowman”, and one who is fond of or an expert at archery can be referred to as a “toxophilite”

Martial Arts:

A professional instructor will teach the students the key skills of this professional sport. A 6-week structured course will be taught by giving them a taste of what Martial Arts entails. At the end of this course, students will receive a certificate from the British Combat Association.

Charity House Competition:

During this session, students will work within a group and plan a charity event for a cause of their choice. They will plan projects, contribute with different ideas and execute the whole delivery of the project from start to finish. The activity will be student-led under the guidance of their teacher. A key principle of the leadership of the program is to teach the key skills to become better leaders for the future, a big part of this is for students to help people less fortunate than them through different ways. As a school, we thrive on helping different causes through fundraising events which we teach and develop the students to lead. This particular session gives the students the key skills to enable this in a fun and effective way.

Horse Riding:

This course will be delivered by Kingsmead Horse Riding Centre in Sanderstead. Students will undertake a 6-week course, learning how to professionally horse and also learn other aspects of the sport.

Djembe Drumming:

A djembe or jembe (/ˈdʒɛmbɛɪ/ JEM-bay; from Malinke jembe [dʲɛ̃bɛ] is a rope-tuned skin-covered goblet drum played with bare hands, originally from West Africa. According to the Bambara people in Mali, the name of the djembe comes from the saying “Anke djé, anke bé” which translates to “everyone gather together in peace” and defines the drum’s purpose. In the Bambara language, “djé” is the verb for “gather” and “bé” translates as “peace.”

The djembe has a body (or shell) carved of hardwood and a drumhead made of untreated rawhide, most commonly made from goatskin. Excluding rings, djembes have an exterior diameter of 30–38 cm (12–15 in) and a height of 58–63 cm (23–25 in). The majority have a diameter in the 13 to 14-inch range. The weight of a djembe ranges from 5 kg to 13 kg (11–29 lb) and depends on the size and shell material. A medium-size djembe carved from one of the traditional woods (including skin, rings, and rope) weighs around 9 kg (20 lb).

The djembe can produce a wide variety of sounds, making it a most versatile drum. The drum is very loud, allowing it to be heard clearly as a solo instrument over a large percussion ensemble. The Malinké people say that a skilled drummer is one who “can make the djembe talk”, meaning that the player can tell an emotional story.

Golf:

We teach all our pupils’ golf at Addington Golf Club, with a bespoke curriculum created with schools in mind. While being a healthy sport, golf also teaches valuable skills that translate into the business world. Strategy, planning, and decision-making are all skills that will serve your children well in the great big world. Many business deals get done during a round of golf as it’s a great environment for collaborating.

Capoeira:

Capoeira (pronounced cap-wearer) is a Brazilian martial art form, combining self-defense, acrobatics, dance, music, and song. It was developed by slaves who used it to disguise the fact that they were practicing fight moves. Capoeira is ‘played’ (it’s known as the ‘game’, or jogo) in a circle called a roda, accompanied by music and singing. Only the hands and feet touch the floor. It is a unique sport and one which is not usually accessible to young people in Croydon, and we are sure our pupils take full advantage to benefit from this opportunity.

Duke of Edinburgh Award:

Pupils from Year 9 all have the opportunity to enroll in the Duke of Edinburgh Award. This scheme is fully facilitated by our own team and the overnight expeditions are led by our Executive head teachers who are qualified in Basic Expedition Leadership as well as being qualified Expedition Assessors too.

Public Speaking Skills (ESB):

Public Speaking and presenting will likely be a skill that our pupils will use in their future career, but not everyone has the confidence and the right skills to stand up and present to an audience. At Al-Khair we offer the ESB Award which will help improve confidence and skills in public speaking and presenting. Pupils also achieve a certificate in public speaking that is recognized by employers, looks great on your CV and gives UCAS points too.

UK Math Challenge (UKMT):

We offer all our pupils to take part in the Junior, Intermediate and Senior challenges of the UKMT, giving them an opportunity to compete with pupils all over the UK in testing their math skills with a variety of complex problems. For example,

“You eat more than I do,” said Tweedledee to Tweedledum. “That is not true,” said Tweedledum to Tweedledee. “You are both wrong,” said Alice, to them both. “You are right,” said the White Rabbit to Alice. How many of the four statements were true?

Puzzling indeed!

House Groups:

The house system at Al-Khair School plays a vital part in the life of the school and involves many of the students in wider extracurricular experiences. Houses are led by a member of staff and supported by teachers.

The four houses are named Bukhari, AbuDawood, Tirmidhi and Muslim after leading scholars and collectors of hadith in Islam.

All students are placed in one of our four houses at the start of Year 7. They remain in these house throughout their time at the school, working in teams across the wider school and supporting the ethos we strive to achieve.

Students represent their House in events such as sports, competitions, debates throughout the year, enjoying the competition with the support of their House Master.

House events encourage participation, organization, and commitment from all House members involved.

When asked what they remember from school we can confidently say that our ex Al-Khair students remember their House and the contribution they made as well as the experiences they had together.

IMPACT

We conduct regulate departmental and whole school curriculum audits to ensure that we think about 'outcomes' more broadly than exam results by analysing progression and leavers' destinations.

Other important indicators are the number of pupils completing the Duke of Edinburgh Award, or participating in the UKMT or taking the ESB exams

Other useful indicators when measuring impact are the contributions of the Prefects and Head Pupils, the number of charity drives and house competitions and the results of the annual pupil satisfaction surveys conducted throughout the school year.

Within the realm of subject lessons we aim to use a range of both qualitative and quantitative data is used to analyse how much pupils are learning. We ensure that the quality of work in pupils' books is of a good standard so that we can identify clearly how pupils are progressing and the kinds of tasks they're doing as well as outcomes of conversations/assessments with pupils and teachers.

4. Legislation and guidance

This policy is in line with the Independent Schools Legal Standards

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The governing board (when applicable)

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

The governing board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- All courses provided for pupils below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and A-levels, are approved by the secretary of state

- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum

5.2 Headteacher

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

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board (when applicable)
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The governing board (when applicable) is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The governing board (when applicable) is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with additional learning needs.

5.3 Other staff

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

Heads of Department will

- Ensure that their subject policies and handbooks are in tune with the Curriculum Policy
- Conduct regular curriculum audits within their Departments and with HoD team
- Hold regular review meetings within their Depts to ensure Dept targets are being followed
- Ensure that their curriculum is accessible through differentiation and planned use of additional support (where applicable)

6. Organisation and planning

The curriculum is organised via Key Stages with a greater breadth of subjects offered in Years 7-9 and a narrowing in Years 10 & 11 to focus upon Ebacc GCSE subjects.

We aim for 100% of our pupils taking the Ebacc Qualifications and ensure that they have sufficient guidance and choice to enable them to have the full range of career pathways open to them when they go onto further education.

As a Faith based School, the pupils also have the opportunity to develop a firm understanding of their faith along with the knowledge and desire to use it to become productive British citizens and contribute to society inclusively and positively.

This policy is to be read along with the subject policies which break down how each subject will be taught.

7. Inclusion

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

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with additional learning needs
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

8. Monitoring arrangements

The Head teacher, SLT and Heads of department monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by:

- Learning walks, book scrutinies, and Department meeting audits

This policy will be reviewed annually by the head teacher

At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board (when applicable).