



Kirkcaldy High School

Curriculum Rationale (Updated August 2024 to be reviewed August 2025)

Introduction

It is important that we have a clear rationale behind our curriculum as we want all our young people at Kirkcaldy High School to experience a high-quality curriculum supporting their needs, maximising their attainment, releasing their potential, and hence ensuring positive post-school destinations.

HGIOS²⁴, Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum and more recent reports such as the Muir Report (2021) and Hayward recommendations (2023) have helped to steer us towards our current curriculum design. The rationale for our curriculum is based on being **Ambitious, Inclusive** and **Supportive** for our learners. We want all learners to achieve their full potential, unique to their talents and ambitions.

The following recommendations are key drivers for our curriculum development:

- a focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing at every stage (BTC3)
- more opportunities to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for all young people at every stage (BTC3)
- Digital learning must be at the core of Scottish education so that all learners in Scotland have choice, opportunity, and security in their lives, both now and in the future. (All Learners in Scotland Matter 2023)

Our School Context

We aim always to be:

“A supportive learning community, working together to improve wellbeing and life chances”.

Our values are:

Respect for Self

Respect for Others

Respect for Learning

- We are a large secondary school with a current roll of approximately 1470 learners. This allows a wide variety of courses and levels to be offered within each curricular area.
- Our catchment area extends from Redcraigs in the west to Hendry Road in the east and includes the Valley and Templehall areas of the town, as well as Dunnikier Estate and the new developments to the north of Chapel Level.
- Our cluster of primary schools are Capshard, Fair Isle, Torbain and Valley, although each year we receive many placing requests from other parts of the town, especially Smeaton and Gallatown. We also attract significant numbers from Cardenden.
- 29% of our learners come from SIMD 1 or 2 and 58% live in SIMDs 1- 4.

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- Our FME is 23.8% and the percentage of children under 16 living in poverty is typically 3 or 4% higher than the Fife average.
- We have a successful Department of Additional Support, with 5 classes totaling 48 pupils over a full range of S1 to S6.
- We work closely with our Parent/Carer council and meet once per term. At each meeting, we listen to the concerns raised and share planning around our school improvement priorities and plans. We actively seek the views of the council and use these views to shape next steps.
- We want our young people to feel valued and heard and so we have a strong commitment to pupil voice. (Focus groups, questionnaires, learning council etc.)
- We have invested PEF funding on the following targeted initiatives: Increase attendance and engagement, set up an Inclusion Hub and improve numeracy and literacy.
- By the end of S3, most learners achieve Level 3 in reading, writing, talking and numeracy. Most learners achieve National 5 Literacy by the end of S4 and the majority achieve National 5 Numeracy.
- We have built very positive partnership working with Fife College and the Community Trade Hub, offering additional curricular experiences. We have also increased our partnership working to include, but is not limited to, Police Scotland, Safer Communities, Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) and Kirkcaldy Sport & Leisure Alliance (KSLA).
- Destinations figures have steadily increased over the last 3 years because of improved partnership working. The percentage of school leavers going into a positive destination in 2023 was 95.22%, which is within 1 percent of the national average.
- Our destination data shows that approximately 30% of our young people go on to further education and 25% go to university. This means that the percentage of leavers going into employment/further training at KHS is higher than the Fife and National average.
- We have a wide variety of wider achievement opportunities such as: Active Schools Young Leader, Duke of Edinburgh, YPI, Best of You Programme, First Chances, Lift Off, First Aid, Saltire etc.
- We have a strong ethos of equality, rights, and inclusion and this has contributed towards KHS being one of the first schools in Scotland to achieve the Gold Rights Respecting Schools Award. Our ongoing work in this area has resulted in the school recently being reaccredited with this award.
- Building positive relationships is extremely important to us and we believe relationships should be characterised by respect, kindness, and compassion. All adults and young people have a responsibility to help each other to develop positive attitudes and behaviour, and to prevent bullying and allow everyone to learn.



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Developing our Curriculum Rationale

In session 2022-23, we consulted staff, learners, parents/carers, and partners on our curriculum rationale. We focussed on the uniqueness of our school and discussed strengths and development needs around our curriculum. We also contacted local employers to get their perspective on what they felt we should be focussing on in terms of skills development. The following infographic was developed and shared across our school community.



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Transforming Our Curriculum

In October 2023, we launched our curriculum change consultation, involving all stakeholders – “Transforming our curriculum...Creating our future...Improving life chances”.

We proposed a curriculum rationale that reflected the values, diversity, history, community, and geographical context of our school. Based on this rationale, the following changes to our learning experiences were proposed and accepted:

Changes to our Curriculum	Rationale for Change
Increased learning time for all young people moving from 27 hours to 27.5 hours (an additional 30 minutes per week).	We can now deliver the national entitlements of PSE and RME to our learners in S5/6. All learners will benefit from increased learning time.
The introduction of a 33-period week to provide more efficient blocks of learning with a more balanced curriculum and better progression. Our school week is now aligned with the other secondary schools in Kirkcaldy allowing for consortia arrangements and more collegiate working between the schools.	In S3/4 learners were not getting equal learning time across their elective subjects. Improved efficiency allows us to offer additional courses that are more appropriate and relevant for our young people.
Targeted tutorial support classes have been introduced into the core curriculum for all senior phase learners.	Study support classes that were being offered out with the core curriculum were not being attended by the young people in most need of the support. The introduction of a timetabled study support period, in a subject of choice, will hopefully raise attainment.
We will ensure our young people will continue to experience their BGE entitlements until the end of S3	Previously young people in S2 were given free subject choices with no guidance/recommendation around their BGE entitlements, this resulted in a significant narrowing of the curriculum for many learners in S3.
We have developed planning documents for S1 to help improve the quality of learning experiences across the curriculum. Our S1 curriculum has been split into 5 Learning Programmes.	Previously we did not have consistency in terms of expectations around planning within the BGE. This meant that learners were not guaranteed the same high-quality curricular experiences across the school. This Learning Programmes will help identify naturally occurring Interdisciplinary Learning and where skills and knowledge can be transferred across the curriculum.



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<p>We have introduced a wider achievements period into S3, where young people can gain additional skills and qualifications through courses such as Duke of Edinburgh, Survival Cookery, Radio Broadcasting etc. Our S5/6 learners will also have the opportunity of gaining the following qualifications during their core periods: Employability Award, Tenancy and Wellbeing Award</p>	<p>Previously, the wider achievements offered were for smaller groups of young people and not offered universally.</p> <p>We have seen an increase in mental health issues, hence the reason for offering the Wellbeing Award and Tenancy was chosen because of learner feedback showing young people would like skills and knowledge around managing a home, including finance.</p>
<p>We have introduced the Fresh Start Project, which is a catch-up literacy initiative for young people who are at risk of falling behind their peers.</p>	<p>Typically, we have around 6% of our S1 who are working on early or first level literacy. Without intervention, this group of young people will struggle to access the curriculum.</p>
<p>Our young people furthest from achievement will have support through our STEPS programme to support them to gain qualifications, with a particular focus on literacy and numeracy.</p>	<p>Approximately 8% of our young people are not gaining at least National 3 Literacy and Numeracy by the end of S4. Earlier identification and intervention will hopefully reduce this number.</p>
<p>We have introduced a period of Numeracy and Literacy for all S1 as we understand that numeracy and literacy are core to all aspects of learning, teaching, and skills development.</p>	<p>We want our young people to recognise that literacy and numeracy skills are fundamental for accessing other areas of learning and are key skills for life and work.</p>
<p>We have changed our curricular offering to provide pathways that are appropriate for our young people, collaborating with partners to offer subjects/courses relevant to our local labour market intelligence. (Eg. Hair & Beauty, Childcare, Barista, work placements etc.)</p>	<p>We want to make sure that we can offer more flexible pathways, which help to develop personal attributes, skills, and experiences alongside the offering of the more 'traditional academia' pathways.</p>
<p>We have allocated significant time to new leadership posts such as DHT and PT2 Raising Attainment & Achievement and PT1 Continuous Improvement (L&T)</p>	<p>We want these leadership roles to help drive forward our curriculum aims. We need learning to be interesting, enjoyable and to maximise achievement. We think these leadership roles will work with faculties to make this happen.</p>



Some of our Horticulture learners proudly showing some of the produce they have grown in school.





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Curriculum Structure

From session 2024-25 our school week will consist of:

- 33 periods of 50-minute lessons Monday to Friday
- 7 periods per day from Monday to Thursday
- 5 periods on Friday
- Total learning time is 27.5 hours

Monday to Thursday	Times	Friday	Times
Period 1	8.40 – 9.30	Period 1	8.40 – 9.30
Period 2	9.30 – 10.20	Period 2	9.30 – 10.20
INTERVAL (15 MINS)	10.20 – 10.35	INTERVAL (15 MINS)	10.20 – 10.35
Period 3	10.35 – 11.25	Period 3	10.35 – 11.25
Period 4	11.25 – 12.15	Period 4	11.25 – 12.15
Period 5	12.15 – 1.05	Period 5	12.15 – 1.05
LUNCH (40 MINS)	1.05 – 1.45		
Period 6	1.45 – 2.35		
Period 7	2.35 – 3.25		

Our curriculum is structured as per the KHS Curriculum Overview (See Appendix B), underpinned by the following principles:

- We have ensured the four CfE capacities are central to our curriculum planning, helping our young people become, Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Effective Contributors and Responsible Citizens.
- We are supporting all pupils by removing barriers to learning through planned curriculum experiences and aim to increase opportunities for young people to feel part of our community and to be active citizens. (Eg. Volunteering Award, Saltire, DofE etc.)
- We encourage our learners to have **respect for learning** by having high expectations for all learners through rich, meaningful, and challenging learning experiences.
- We support learners to have **respect for self** by advising them to make safe, healthy choices and to have a positive mindset. (PSE, MVP, Tenancy etc.)
- We encourage learners to show **respect for others** and the world around them by promoting positive relationships and fostering a sense of community and solidarity.
- We aim to create young people who are resilient, hard-working and realise the importance of transferable skills. (See Appendix A for our KHS Skills Framework)



S4-6 pupils attending Fife Council Building Services for an apprenticeship inspiration event.



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Our Curriculum and Course Choice Process

Our learners in S1 and S2 follow a Broad General Education providing them with a wide range of knowledge, skills, and experiences. Their learning time consists of a range of subjects across all 8 curricular areas. Each curricular area is broken down into experiences and outcomes, describing the expectations for learning and progression.

Our learners in S3 will continue to experience subjects from each of the 8 curricular areas, however they will start to specialise within each curricular area. The learning undertaken in S3 will provide strong foundations for their subject qualifications in S4. In S3, learners will study the following mandatory subjects: English, Mathematics, Health & Wellbeing (PE/SE) and Religious & Moral Education. They will also select a subject from each of the following curricular areas: Science, Social Subjects, Expressive Arts and Technologies and a final choice from any curricular area.

Our learners in S4 move into the Senior Phase where they will have the opportunity to take a range of qualifications based on their subject choices from S3.

Our learners in S5 are recommended to continue studying 5 subjects within their curricular pathway from the 7 subjects studied in S4. They are also recommended to continue studying a literacy based subject and unless they have already achieved at least a Nat 5 Numeracy, a numeracy-based subject also.

Our learners in S6 will choose 5 subjects, one which may be a study column where there is an expectation that they will complete a wider achievement award.

Course choice timeline 2024-25

Course choice process	Place and Date
S2, S4 and S5 will complete their mock course choice	December - during SE with guidance teacher
Pathways Evening for Parents/Carers	3 rd February – 5pm to 7pm in Assembly Hall
Course choice information issued to parents/carers	Week beginning 3 rd Feb – sent via Groupcall email
S2 will complete final course choice	11 th February – with guidance teacher in school
S4 will complete final course choice	24 th February – with guidance teacher in school
S5 will complete final course choice	26 th February – with guidance teacher in school



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Our Curriculum Development for 2024-25

- We are planning to review our Vision, Values and Aims and will continue to develop our curriculum through a clear, well-planned process of self-evaluation, considering the views of all members of the community.
- We will continue to improve our BGE planning documents to ensure they are useful in supporting planning, assessment, and moderation.
- We want our learners' employability skills to be developed in a progressive way across the curriculum. (With a focus on S1 and S5/6)
- We want to place an emphasis on improving understanding and use of the SCQF amongst our stakeholders to maximise the attainment of young people through offering appropriate SCQF awards.



S6 studying Business Management, learning about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and Fair-Trade products when visiting The Chocolatarium.



Duke of Edinburgh Silver Practice Expedition

Appendix A – KHS Skills Framework



Skills Framework

Collegiate Session

Respect for Self



Focusing

I can set goals and targets for myself and work towards them.



Integrity

I can stand up for what I believe in a respectful manner.



Adapting

I can receive and respond to feedback in a positive way.



Initiative

I can take responsibility for my learning and break larger goals into smaller ones.

Respect for Others



Communicating

I can communicate with others in different ways - such as written, verbal and digitally.



Feeling

I can understand how others might be feeling in different circumstances and show kindness.



Collaborating

I can work well in a group and listen to other people's opinions respectfully.



Leading

I can take the lead in a group situation making sure everyone has clear purpose.

Respect for Learning



Curiosity

I have a positive attitude when learning a new topic or skill.



Creativity

I can think creatively about solutions to problems.



Sense-Making

I can ask, research, and answer questions about the world and identify patterns.



Critical Thinking

I can come to a reasoned judgement for a problem or challenge.

Appendix B – KHS Curriculum Overview 2024-25

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
BROAD GENERAL EDUCATION (BGE) S1-3	S1	English and Literacy (4)				Modern Languages (4) All young people to experience both French and Spanish			Mathematics and Numeracy (4)				Science (3) Biology, Chemistry and Physics taught through rotations		Social Subjects (3) Geography, History and Modern Studies taught through rotations			Expressive Arts (3) Comprised of Art, Drama and Music (1 period each)		Technologies (3) Comprised of DET (1), Digital (1) and Business Tech (1)		Skills and Enrichment (3) Comprised of Literacy (1), Numeracy (1) and Rights (1)		HWB (5) Comprised of PE (3), HE (1) and PSE (1)										
	S2	English and Literacy (4)				Modern Languages (3) All young people to experience both French and Spanish		Mathematics and Numeracy (4)			Science (3) Biology, Chemistry and Physics taught through rotations		Social Subjects (3) Geography, History and Modern Studies taught through rotations			Expressive Arts (4) Comprised of Art (1), Drama (1) and Music (2)		Technologies (4) Comprised of DET (1), Digital (1) and Business Tech (2)		Skills and Enrichment (2) Comprised of Citizenship (1) and Classics (1)		HWB (5) Comprised of PE (3), HE (1) and PSE (1)												
	S3	English and Literacy (4)				Mathematics and Numeracy (4)		Personalisation, Choice and Depth (5 subjects x 4 periods) Continuation of BGE and all Curriculum areas																NPA - Elective (1)	HWB (3) Comprised of PE (2) and PSE (1)									
SENIOR PHASE (SP) S4-6	S4	English and Literacy (4)				Mathematics and Numeracy (4)		Personalisation, Choice and Depth (5 subjects x 4 periods) Continuation from S3 subjects																Study Support (1)	HWB (3) Comprised of PE (2) and PSE (1)									
	S5	English and Literacy (6) All young people to complete English Qualification or equivalent at level 5 or better						Mathematics and Numeracy (6) All young people must achieve level 5 numeracy by end of S4 if not choosing Maths Qualification or equivalent			Personalisation and choice 3 subjects from S4 courses studied 3 subjects x 6 periods = 18 periods: Opportunities to study Foundation Apprenticeships, College course, work experience etc.																Tutorial / Enrichment (1)	HWB: PSE (1)						
	S6	Personalisation and choice 4/5 subjects x 6 periods = 24 / 30 periods: Opportunities to study Foundation Apprenticeships, College course, work experience etc.																Tutorial / Enrichment (1)	HWB: PSE (1)															
		RELIGIOUS AND MORAL EDUCATION (1 period)																																