



Kingussie High School

Curriculum Rationale

(updated - August 2018)

Kingussie High School is a school with traditional values but a modern approach. Where possible we like to support our learners through the use of our local environment and appropriate technology.

At the heart of Kingussie High School is its curriculum which is designed to promote the four capacities of successful learners, responsible citizens, confident individuals and effective contributors in all our young people.

We have developed and will deliver our curriculum through the ethos and life of the school using the following as curricular guidelines:

- A broad general education with some personalisation and choice in the first three years (S1-3).
- A senior phase (S4-6) which leads all students to achieve success in appropriate national exams and qualifications.
- Maximise the range and progression of educational opportunities offered in the curriculum, given the constraints in staffing and resources for a school of this size.

Just some of the things that makes our curriculum different

- Assembly and pupil support time is an integrated part of the curriculum.
- We offer electives in the Broad General Education (some of these are stage-not-age electives).
- Thursday afternoon is a flexible provision to support the Broad General Education (BGE).
- We timetable S4 - S6 together.
- S4 students take Higher awards if they are appropriate (again stage-not-age).
- We run three different types of interlocking Senior Phase timetables.
- Some of our courses run on a Saturday (for example, Drama through Eden Court).
- We have made a considerable and long term investment in digital technologies.
- Partners work with us to deliver many of our courses.
- We provide a comprehensive extra-curricular and community programme to extend the curriculum.

Excellent Learning and Teaching

We believe that quality Learning and Teaching lie at the heart of the educational experience for all our learners. Underpinning this philosophy is the shared **Expectations for an Excellent Lesson** at Kingussie High School - we ask all staff to revisit and review these expectations annually.



The various curricular areas and subjects which we provide discretely or, increasingly, through an interdisciplinary approach, develop knowledge and skills that equip our young people to be active and responsible members of the local and global community. Staff understand that they have a collective responsibility to develop young people's skills in Literacy, Numeracy and Health & Well-being as well as specific skills relating to curriculum areas.

We regularly review learning (through whole school surveys and departmental quality assurance) to ensure that teachers match learning activities appropriately to the needs of individuals and groups of students. In particular, we focus on how learners learn and progress, we set challenging goals and we share our expectations with our students. We seek to make teaching engaging, active and collaborative, and strive to provide quality feedback on progress in a variety of ways to all our students.

Support To Help Pupils Learn And Develop

We place great importance on supporting pupils at KHS. Every pupil has a guidance teacher and a personal support tutor. In the BGE personal support classes are vertical (*ie made up of pupils from S1 - S3*). In the Senior Phase personal support classes take place in year groups and tutors take on more of a mentoring role. Personal support tutors regularly have learning conversations with pupils in their class and classes are kept small to make sure that this can be done as effectively as possible. Personal Support tutors are provided with data (on a pupils effort, progress, etc.) so discussions are meaningful and based on evidence. Along with the Senior Leadership Team and Guidance staff, personal support tutors have an important role when it comes to tracking pupils both in the BGE and Senior Phase of the Curriculum.

S2 - S3 Electives and Short Courses

S2 have one, while S3 are offered two elective classes where they can choose to explore a subject in greater depth. One of the elective classes (S2/3) is stage-not-age and provides an opportunity for young people in the BGE to work with peers across year groups.

In S2 students have the opportunity to experience further breadth of their curriculum through a range of classes which run for 8 weeks. These subjects include Technology (Sustainability), English (Media), Geography (Outdoor Learning), Art, and further input from their Guidance Teacher delivering PSHE. These classes operate on a rota basis.

In S3 students have the opportunity to have some taster sessions in subjects they may choose in the senior phase. These classes include Art, Gaelic, Media, Rural Skills and Computing Science and Digital Literacy (an introduction to Digital Passport). These classes operate on a rota basis.

Thursday Afternoon (*flexi*)

Our flexible Thursday afternoons are a work in progress but bring a number of benefits to the BGE including:

- Larger blocks of time for subject areas to explore concepts in more depth.
- Opens up opportunities for outdoor learning, extended activities and working with partners.
- Some activities can be carried out without impacting on core curriculum time.
- The structures and timescales allow staff to experiment, reflect and implement change over a short period of time.
- Flexibility to work with a whole year group (e.g. *Youth Philanthropy Initiative, Project Content, Pupil Voice*).
- Provides space in the curriculum for activities that traditionally might have been classed as 'extra-curricular' (e.g. *Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme*).
- Allows more imaginative timetabling to ensure learners receive their curriculum entitlements (eg: *Home Economics*).
- Allows staff to have an input into curriculum areas outside their subject specialism.
- Gives pupils exposure to staff they may not always come into contact with (SLT & SfL staff)
- Can provide opportunities for different groups of staff to work together
- Encourages staff to think in a different way.

The flexible Thursday afternoon also brings a number of benefits to the senior phase, including:

- Additional flexibility in the senior phase to run a range of 'other' courses with minimum impact on core curriculum time. For example: *Rural Skills, Early Education and Childcare, ZEST, Business Management & Activity Tourism*.

Thursday afternoons are normally project based and themed around Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) Numeracy, Literacy and Languages & Culture.

Open and Distance Learning

With our partners at The Open University, Inverness College:UHI and Edinburgh College we offer a variety of Open and Distance Learning Courses at Higher Level (SCQF Level 6) and Advanced Higher Level (SCQF Level 7). Pupils who take part in Open and Distance Learning are supported by a member of staff at KHS and they also have the option to be timetabled into the Open and Distance Learning Lab (room 18A).

School on a Saturday

As well as practical workshops for our Open and Distance Learning students there is also an option for young people to take National 5 Drama, Higher Drama and Higher Dance on a Saturday with our partners at Eden Court.

Pupils who attend school on a Saturday have the option of a more flexible timetable or study periods on a Monday - Friday.

PSHE

In the BGE Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) is delivered by a young person's guidance teacher and a range of specialists (such as our NHS Highland school nurse and our Careers Coach from Skills Development Scotland).

In S4 PSHE is delivered in small groups by the Personal Support Tutors. We are continuing to develop the curriculum in this area and see Mental Health as the core element of PSHE in S4. S4 pupils also see their Guidance teacher every three weeks to discuss their progress at school.

In S5 - S6 PSHE is delivered via an extensive extraction programme that uses outside experts and speakers. Pupils in S5 - S6 also see their Guidance teacher every three weeks to discuss their progress at school. S6 pupils register with our guidance staff every Friday morning where there is an opportunity for an update on S6 clubs and activities (e.g. the yearbook committee).

In S6 all pupils have the opportunity to take the SQA Leadership award at SCQF Level 6.

Health and Wellbeing

Up until the end of S4 all pupils get two periods a week of PE (many pupils in S4 also opt to take National or Higher PE in S4).

Core PE in S3 is timetabled as a double period to allow more use of partners and off-site facilities (eg: *Cairngorm Mountain or Loch Insh Watersports Centre*).

In S5/6 there is the opportunity to take a PE Course at National 4, National 5, Higher, Advanced Higher, Sport & Recreation, Exercise & Fitness Leadership or Activity Tourism.

Home Economics is a key part of the curriculum in S1 - S3. Young people get one period a week in S1 and S2 and a double period (on a rota in S3). The double period allows for progression and for young people to be more imaginative with recipes as they have a large block of time to prepare and cook.

Other health topics (such as mental health, drugs and alcohol) are covered in a variety of subjects

such as PSHE, Science and Personal Support Time.

Achieving Positive Destinations

Kingussie High School is very proud of the destinations achieved by our leavers and throughout the Senior Phase pupils have an opportunity to think about where they would like to be after they have left school. They also receive input from specialists from College, University and Enterprise. Careers Education is now an integrated part of the PSHE curriculum in the BGE. Young people in S5 and S6 also have the opportunity to become My World of Work Ambassadors who then have the job of supporting young people in S1/S2 to start thinking about skills and future careers.

Extending the curriculum

Kingussie High School has a popular and large range of extracurricular clubs and activities which are all seen as being an important part of the curriculum. Each year young people are challenged to try and take part in something new. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, the John Muir Award Scheme (via the Junior Ranger Programme) and Saltire Volunteering Awards have become increasingly important to the school in recent years.

Achievement

As a school we appreciate the role that we can have in developing a young person's potential through both the formal and informal curriculum. We actively encourage personal achievement not only through in-class, study activities and extracurricular (see above) opportunities but also by recognising participation and achievement in community, recreational and personal activities undertaken in the student's own time.

Wider achievement is celebrated in the school at Assembly and at our Annual Prize-giving in June. Young people in the BGE have access to the 'My Sticker' Reward system that is integrated into our established House System at the School. In the Senior Phase young people can gain Commendations via a member of staff.

Young people in the BGE are able to track their Achievements via their ePortfolio.

Transitions

We aim to make learning as seamless as possible from age 3 through to 18. We build upon the curricular experiences gained in our associated primary schools and engage with a variety of partners to ensure that appropriate transitions are made at every stage.

Ongoing Curriculum Development

As a school, we value the contribution that our teachers and other educational partners make to the learning process and to the evolution of the curriculum. As part of the life-long learning process we promote professional development and reflection around the curriculum, adapting it to local circumstances and involving all stakeholders in its evolution. We encourage both self-evaluation and innovation in a spirit of continuous improvement for all members of the school community.

Summary:

S1

All pupils have a common core curriculum including PE (2 periods), PSE (1), RE (1) and HE (1). Additional RMPS and Citizenship is delivered through year group assemblies.

Each pupil is allocated to a 'Tutor Group' linking them with a mentor to monitor, encourage and discuss progress.

An afternoon double period will be timetabled for additional (Interdisciplinary Learning, IDL) activities including Learning in the Outdoors.

S2

As above, with the addition of an elective column for pupils to make individual choices along with a short course column.

S3

As above, with two elective columns, an extra period dedicated to Literacy and a column including short courses.

S4-6

A six column (4 x 5 periods & 2 x 4 periods) structure for students who elect to take subjects at National 4/5

OR

A 6x5 period structure for Higher (Nat6) and Advanced Higher (Nat7) as appropriate.

All S4 continue PSE and RE in Assembly/tutor time.

An afternoon is set aside for IDL in S1-3 and core PE (may include some S5's).

S5/6 not participating in a Nat5/6 course in Columns 1 & 6 (2 periods) will be allocated to additional activities (IDL helpers etc.) including vocational training.

Nat6/Nat7 students will have their PSE, PE and RMPS delivered via the tutor time, assemblies, extraction or through direct student choice (eg: opt to take RMPS at Higher Level or PE at National 5 level).

The curriculum structure sheets show this in more detail, especially regarding the Senior Phase Option columns and choices.