



King Edward's

WITLEY

OCTOBER 2024



LEARNING JOURNEYS

WELCOME

ANTHONY KIRK-BURGESS



As I reflect on my first half-term, I firstly wish to thank all of the numerous members of the school community - parents, pupils and staff - who have made me feel so welcome at King Edward's Witley. It is now my turn for welcomes, as I introduce you to the inaugural Learning Journeys update, our half-termly newsletter for all things academic at KESW.

As the Deputy Head Academic, my role is to oversee learning and teaching across the school. Whether it is advising departments with their curriculum choices, supporting teachers with their continued professional development or promoting academic ambition and independent learning amongst our pupils, my remit is ultimately to ensure that our pupils have the best learning opportunities and outcomes.

On the curriculum-side, there have been some exciting developments at KESW this term, including the introduction of BTECs in sport and music and the level 3 diploma in food technology. Furthermore, we have just been successfully accredited as a centre for City and Guilds in design technology. There will be more information on these qualifications in our next edition of Learning Journeys, which will complement our existing suite of GCSEs and A levels in providing opportunities to support a more skills-based learning experience, whilst also maintaining academic rigour and excellence.

A key part of any academic leaders' role is to promote and embed a culture of active learning. Indeed, I do not see a KESW education ending when our school leavers head to university (and you can read more about our Next Steps programming in Mrs Davies' article on Page 4). Instead, I expect our pupils to develop the positive habits of learning and those critical thinking and metacognitive skills which allow them to become lifelong learners. I will explore this concept further a little bit later ...

You cannot help but notice the rise of artificial intelligence in the past year, in particular the increasing impact of generative AI. Schools are having to educate pupils in the ethical and safe use of generative AI, especially when it comes to the temptation of plagiarism, and KESW is no exception. However, we also recognise the benefits of using AI in enhancing learning and, under the leadership of Mr Downs, Head of Digital Strategy and Innovation, we are now actively using AI in the classroom and you can read more about this on page 6. Mr Downs and Mr Campbell have recently contributed an article to Teaching Geography journal on the benefits of 'promptcraft' when using ChatGPT, showing how a detailed prompting strategy can provide adapted learning resources to maximise the learning potential of all pupils; please do contact me if you'd like a copy of this article.



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Finally, I mentioned the importance of a learning culture earlier and I now wish to consider this in more detail. If I had one piece of advice to an individual pupil as to how to take their learning further, it would be to move from being a passive learner to an active one. A passive learner is someone who compliantly learns exactly what their teacher tells them to learn, but without questioning or challenging this learning. A passive learner will diligently complete all of their homework (assuming they do not get stuck

on a question) but will do no more than what was set. A passive learner wants to know what they need to learn to pass their exams, but no more than this.

At KESW, we believe in enabling active learning. Active learners understand how they learn best (metacognition), they take responsibility for and ownership of their own learning (agency), and they learn for the joy of learning (curiosity). If we can develop metacognition, agency and curiosity in our pupils then they will become truly independent learners and better prepared for the challenges ahead in life.

So, the next time that your child says that they have no homework, or they finished it too quickly, please ask them to challenge themselves in their learning. Could they find something interesting or unique about the topic? Could they go deeper with their understanding? Could they reflect not only on what they learned, but how they learned? I am sure they will thank me later!

Anthony Kirk-Burgess
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NEXT STEPS THROUGHOUT THE KING EDWARD'S PUPIL JOURNEY



King Edward's pupils boast diverse aspirations, and their onward journeys from our school reflect their ambitions. Each year around two thirds of our pupils transition to Oxbridge and Russell Group universities; others progress to a range of other, often specialist universities, to apprenticeships or directly to their chosen careers.



Our Head of Careers and Higher Education, Mrs Moira Davies, explains our Next Steps programme in more detail:

"I, and my colleagues, have a passion to encourage pupils to be self-aware and support them to make informed decisions that will help them remain relevant and employable throughout their careers. Pupils are provided with impartial and tailored information, support, and guidance throughout their journey at KESW, empowering them to choose the pathway that will lead to a successful and fulfilling future beyond our school.

During 1st and 2nd form, pupils embark on their career development journey by contemplating key questions such as, "What am I good at?" and "What do I enjoy?" as they reflect on the overarching inquiry, "Who am I?" 3rd form pupils then receive valuable information, advice, and guidance through their tutor groups and PSHE lessons, enabling them to select a specialized GCSE curriculum that aligns with their future career aspirations and individual needs.

Our 4th and 5th form pupils continue their self-reflection journey through recognised psychometric quizzes whilst exploring current labour market information that support them in making informed decisions for their post-GCSE options. Each pupil receives individual feedback on their interview skills, accompanied by clear guidance on further development, after mock interviews conducted by employers including our alumni and parents, and creates a personalised action plan, including their post-16 options, which they will continually update in the remainder of their time with us.

Our programme accelerates in Sixth Form, with all pupils benefitting from access to the Unifrog platform to support them in preparing for their future as they:

- Research potential careers, university courses and apprenticeships
- Build a record of their experiences, skills and competencies
- Learn how to draft effective personal statements, CVs, covering letters and interview skills
- Attend university taster days, UCAS university and careers fairs
- Seek super-curricular activities that enrich personal aspirations



NEXT STEPS THROUGHOUT THE KING EDWARD'S PUPIL JOURNEY



With extensive 1:1 support and guidance, pupils navigate their aspirations, whether that involves applying to a selective UK or, increasingly, an international university, pursuing an apprenticeship, entering a school-leaver program, or planning a gap year. Our pupils are encouraged to explore the widest range of higher education disciplines and their inquisition is reflected in the breadth of programmes our leavers enjoy; in 2024 alone, these included subjects ranging from English, Engineering, Fashion Management, Football Coaching, Industrial Economics, Illustration, Land Economy, Medicine and Modern Languages amongst many more.

We review our careers and HE provision annually to ensure that our pupils are best prepared for wherever their ambitions take them. We are proud of our pupils' personal paths chosen after leaving King Edward's and look forward to the class of 2025 completing their Next Steps and academic programmes at school during the remainder of this academic year".

Our 2024 University Placements

City, University of London	Accounting and Finance	University of Exeter	Engineering
Durham University	Physics	University of Exeter	Marketing and Management
Durham University	Chemistry	University of Exeter	Computer Science
Durham University	Psychology	University of Exeter	Medicine
Imperial College London	Chemical Engineering	University of Kent	Psychology with Foundation Year
King's College London	International Management	University of Leeds	Chemistry and Mathematics
King's College London	Business Management	University of Leeds	Modern Languages and Business
King's College London	General Engineering	University of Manchester	Sociology and Data Analytics
King's College London	Mathematics with Management & Finance	University of Manchester	Fashion Management
Kingston University London	Aviation Operations with Commercial pilot training	University of Nottingham	Industrial Economics
Lancaster University	Business Economics	University of Nottingham	Environmental Biology
LSE	International Social and Public Policy and Economics	University of Nottingham	Finance, Accounting and Management
Nottingham Trent University	Accounting and Finance	University of Portsmouth	Illustration
Oxford Brookes University	Criminology	University of Reading	Geography with placement experience
St Mary's University, Twickenham	Chelsea Football Club Foundation Coaching and Development	University of Southampton	Aeronautics and Astronautics with industrial year
UCL	History, Politics and Economics	University of Southampton	Artificial Intelligence
UCL	English and European Law (French)	University of St Andrews	Classical Studies
University of Manchester	Modern Language and Business Management	University of Sussex	Mechanical Engineering
University of Bath	International Development with Economics	University of Sussex	Psychology
University of Bath	Architecture (with placement year)	University of the Arts London	Advertising
University of Bath	International Management with work/study abroad	University of the Arts London	Architecture
University of Cambridge	Land Economy	University of Warwick	History
University of Essex	Politics and Internal Relations	University of Westminster	Psychology with Foundation Year
University of Essex	Law with Business	University of Westminster	Accounting and Business Management
University of Exeter	Business Analytics with Industrial experience	University of Winchester	Marketing

KESbots INTEGRATING AI INTO OUR LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS



We are excited to share with you some of the innovative ways we are integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into our learning environments to support and enhance our pupils' education. As part of our ongoing digital strategy, we have developed subject-specific tutor bots, known as KESbots, designed to assist both GCSE and A Level pupils in their studies. These KESbots, powered by ChatGPT, offer pupils a unique, interactive experience where they can explore key subject areas in



greater depth, test their understanding, and even stretch their knowledge with challenge questions. Each bot provides focused content on the chosen topic, along with key terminology and consolidation questions to reinforce learning, all within a secure and supportive framework guided by our subject specialists.

The introduction of these KESbots is aimed at creating a safe and ethical space for our pupils to engage with AI in their learning journey. While the use of AI in education is rapidly expanding, we are committed to ensuring that its integration at our school is thoughtful, purposeful, and aligned with our academic values. The KESbots allow pupils to access personalized support at their own pace, encouraging independent learning while also reinforcing classroom instruction. The bots act as an extension of our teaching staff, offering pupils tailored guidance to help them grasp difficult concepts and excel in their studies.

We believe that the controlled use of AI in this way will not only improve academic outcomes but also help pupils develop the digital literacy skills they will need in the future. In a world where AI is becoming increasingly prominent, we want our pupils to understand how to use these tools responsibly and effectively. By curating the KESbots with input from our subject experts, we ensure that the information pupils receive is accurate, relevant, and aligned with our curriculum.

As always, we remain committed to providing a high-quality, forward-thinking education for all our pupils. The use of AI through our KESbots is just one of the many ways we are embracing innovation to enhance the learning experience and help every pupil achieve their full potential. We are confident that these initiatives will continue to make a positive impact on their academic progress and personal development.

Mr Jack Downs, Head of Digital Strategy and Innovation

