

Kingston Educational Trust (KET)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is KET?

Kingston Educational Trust (KET) is a state funded educational charity and a company limited by guarantee (i.e. one with no shares or shareholders). Its mission is to operate schools that give children and young people opportunities to build fulfilling, sustainable futures.

A copy of KET's Values and Principles is contained at the end of this document in Annex 1.

Further information about KET can be found [here](#).

2. What is its purpose?

KET was formed in 2010 to be a vehicle for establishing a new 11-18, co-educational, non-denominational secondary school in North Kingston.

From the outset it has been driven by principles of localism, inclusivity, partnership and civic engagement, all of which are developed further in its Values and Principles.

3. Who controls it?

Ultimate control of the trust is the responsibility of its members. The members of the trust are guardians of KET's charitable objectives and governance. KET's members are:

- Kingston Council (currently represented by Councillor David Ryder-Mills)
- Kingston University (represented by Jen Edwards)
- Kingston College (part of South Thames Colleges Group, currently represented by Peter Mayhew-Smith)

Members meet infrequently but at least once per year.

The members are able to appoint and remove trustees to ensure that the trust's charitable object is carried out. Accordingly, the trust board (formed of the trustees) submits an annual report on the performance of the trust to the members.

The trustees are responsible for the strategic development of the trust and its operations.

4. What is the role of the trustees?

KET is a charitable company and so trustees are both charity trustees (within the terms of section 177(1) of the Charities Act 2011) and company directors. Together they form the trust board.

The trust board is responsible for the general control and management of the administration of the trust. In accordance with the provisions set out in KET's memorandum and articles of association and its funding agreement, the board is legally responsible and accountable for all statutory functions, for the performance of all schools within the trust, and must approve a written scheme of delegation of financial powers that maintains robust internal control arrangements.

In addition, the trust board must carry out the three core governance functions:

1. Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Hold the executive to account for the educational performance of the trust's schools and their pupils, and the performance management of staff
3. Oversee the financial performance of the trust and make sure its money is well spent

KET also recognises that stakeholder engagement is a fundamental component of governance and as it grows, will work to ensure that the voices of stakeholders continue to be heard and taken account of.

5. Can the trust board delegate its responsibilities?

- The trust board may establish committees to carry out some of its governance functions. This may include making decisions, although any decisions made will be deemed decisions of the trust board.
- The responsibility for decision making at any level is detailed within the KET Scheme of Delegation.
- The membership and responsibilities of all board committees are set out in each committee's terms of reference.
- The trust board appoints committee chairs and committee members according to their skills and in line with the terms of reference of each committee.
- The board of trustees has the right to review and adapt its governance structure at any time which includes removing delegation.

Further details can be found [here](#).

6. Who are the trustees?

Details of the current KET trustees can be found [here](#).

KET's trust board has very robust procedures in place for ensuring that its ways of working are effective, compliant and fit for purpose. A number of strategies are employed:

- Annual self-review of performance (both at an individual trustee and board level).
- Annual skills-analysis to inform trustee recruitment and training.
- Trustee recruitment process is transparent, based upon skills, qualification and experience. Applicants are interviewed and professional references taken up.
- Annual strategic development exercise to inform direction.
- Regular meetings and board training events to keep members informed of developments.

- A weekly newsletter to update trustees on changes which impact on their roles and to keep them informed of best practice and developments within both the local and national educational environment.

KET takes great care to ensure that it abides by the directions and regulations contained within its Articles of Association, the Academies Financial Handbook and the Governance Handbook from the Department for Education. Trustees are fully aware of their legal responsibilities under company and charity law and the wider statutory framework in which KET and schools operate. KET's Head of Governance and Legal oversees this aspect of its work.

KET trustees also recognise that as leaders in education and public servants, high standards of conduct are required at all times. The current code of conduct can be found [here](#).

KET is a pathfinder for the [Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education](#) and is embedding the principles of ethical leadership throughout its structures and decision making.

7. What is KET's long term plan?

Having successfully opened and developed The Kingston Academy (Ofsted 2018 Outstanding in all aspects, heavily oversubscribed) KET is open to any possibilities to contribute to the educational landscape within its area of operation and to ways in which it might support its local communities.

KET is not seeking to become a large multi-academy trust though it welcomes opportunities to work with other schools locally in any way that adds value to their shared educational provision.

8. How does KET seek to 'Go Beyond'?

KET has always strived to go above and beyond, constantly seeking to push boundaries and looking for new ways to strengthen the experiences and opportunities parents and carers may typically expect for their child, from their schools.

For example, TKA has a mantra to '*go beyond what schools' ordinarily do*' which ensures that it constantly strives to do more and better for its community. This is evidenced through the bespoke Going Beyond curriculum which provides a wealth of experiences including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and a wealth of trips, all with the intent to develop an adventurous spirit, enquiring minds, cultural capital and essential life skills; TKA's commitment to the innovative use of technology and TKA's highly inclusive culture is not typical and a hallmark of KET's ambition to 'go beyond'.

9. Do the trust's member organisations play any active part in supporting KET?

KET's members (KU, KC, RBK) provide the trust with a range of very exciting possibilities. Since TKA opened its doors in 2015, KET partners have provided a wealth of special opportunities and experiences for both staff and pupils. Examples include:

- Student Ambassadors and lecturers from both the College and University working alongside pupils and staff in a range of curriculum areas such as Science, Art, Music, Sport, Maths and Drama
- Access to high quality facilities such as the Arthur Cotterell Theatre at Kingston College and the Rose Theatre through our association with Kingston University
- Unique access to staff development and training opportunities at Masters and EdD level

KET is seeking to develop those practical links with its partners further as it grows.

Annex 1: KET Values and Principles

Kingston Educational Trust (KET) is an educational charity. Its mission is to operate schools that give children and young people opportunities to build fulfilling, sustainable futures.

KET's motto is: *"Going beyond what schools/trusts ordinarily do"*

KET's core values are:

- An expectation of the highest possible standards of ethical behaviour
- A commitment to the wellbeing of every member of its community of learners, staff and volunteers
- An appreciation of the importance of localism, partnership and collaboration
- A determination to being fully inclusive
- A constant striving for excellence

KET believes that:

- **Excellence is to be expected in all that it does**

This will be realised by:

- insisting that every aspect of the Trust's work – however small or far removed from the frontline of education - should be of the highest possible standard, continuously seeking improvement and welcoming the challenge to do so;
- remembering that high quality outcomes arise most sustainably from constructive professional discourse;
- drawing on the very best practice that exists elsewhere, identifying it through having a culture of research and investigation.

- **High aspiration is the driving force behind all success**

This will be realised by:

- being ambitious in identifying goals for our children and young people, our schools, our employees and the Trust itself;
- ensuring that all who work within the Trust welcome the pursuit of challenging targets both for themselves but, more importantly, for the children and young people that we serve;
- maintain an expectation that there should be no arbitrary limits to what can be achieved, in particular through challenging the relative underperformance of any identifiable groups within its school populations.

- **The development of an appetite and preparedness for lifelong learning is essential**

This will be realised by:

- remembering that intelligence is not fixed and can be developed and grown as learning is itself a skill and children and young people can be helped to develop it;

- challenging children and young people to learn more effectively through stimulating their curiosity and encouraging them to risk failure, to collaborate, to reflect on their experiences and to persevere to overcome adversity and difficulty;
 - ensuring that their children and young people will leave with a range of experiences and qualifications that are of genuine value to them and which will enable them to progress to their next stage of learning or work.
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- **Children and young people have an entitlement to teaching that is exemplary**
This will be realised by:
 - ensuring our schools are led by headteachers who themselves are outstanding teachers, clear in their own understanding of what successful teaching looks like and how to encourage and develop it in others;
 - insisting that all teaching leads to outstanding progress for all learners, regardless of their individual challenges;
 - leading learning through inspiring, enthusing and raising the aspirations of all learners.
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- **High quality pastoral care must underpin all that we seek to achieve with our children and young people**
This will be realised by:
 - recognising that children and young people respond positively when they feel that they are well-known and understood;
 - developing pastoral systems that promote the sense of belonging within the school;
 - supporting and encouraging children and young people to make choices that contribute positively to the adoption of healthy lifestyles.
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- **It has a responsibility to do all that it can to foster the wellbeing of all members of its community of learners, staff and volunteers.**
This will be realised by:
 - supporting our schools to embed well-being, and the factors known to enhance well-being through their culture, ethos and the curriculum;
 - reviewing how our schools use the evidence base which supports well-being, including government guidance;
 - always considering the well-being of staff and volunteers in their contribution to the delivery of high-quality education.
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- **All schools are unique**
This will be realised by:
 - recognising that every school has its own unique context and that approaches adopted with them need to be tailored to each setting individually;
 - seeking to balance the desire to allow all of our schools to be as autonomous as possible with our requirement to remain ultimately accountable for their individual performance;
 - granting as much freedom to each of our constituent schools as possible while recognising that this freedom must be earned through performance.

- **Schools should serve their local community**

This will be realised by:

- striving to become the first-choice destination for children and young people who live close by;
- being familiar with and responsive to the educational needs and aspirations of local families;
- making our facilities and resources available to our local communities as extensively as is possible.

- **Schools should listen to the communities from which they are made**

This will be realised by:

- adopting practices that allow their children and young people to contribute meaningfully to the development of our schools;
- seeking the views of parents to ensure they have a genuine voice in shaping our schools;
- creating opportunities for the wider community to share its views about our schools.

- **It should at all times remain mindful of its civic origins and local responsibility**

This will be realised by:

- ensuring that our schools are active participants in local networks and partnerships;
- maintaining a positive relationship with our local authorities and striving to be seen as a significant partner in meeting the needs of children and young people and families;
- always exploring ways of supporting others within the educational community if called upon and welcoming the opportunity to do so.

- **Schools are enriched through the diversity of their populations**

This will be realised by:

- being fully inclusive places of learning in which no children or young people will be denied entry on the grounds of faith, ethnic origin, prior attainment, special educational needs or any other such categorisations;
- welcoming all children and young people upon entry and giving them access to any additional programmes and support that they are individually identified as needing;
- celebrating their diversity through assemblies, enrichment programmes, display and focus events at every possible opportunity.

- **The development of an appreciation of what constitutes good citizenship is a fundamental goal**

This will be realised by:

- pursuing the goal of aiding all of our children and young people to become well-rounded citizens with aspirations to make a difference in the local, national and global community;
- developing programmes to provide children and young people with opportunities to experience active citizenship within the school context;
- promoting respect and care for others regardless of difference.

- **The promotion of British values is an important responsibility for all who work and study in schools**

This will be realised by:

- being intolerant of prejudice and discrimination and always acting swiftly to tackle it in the most appropriate way;
- adopting programmes designed to ensure that all of our children and young people develop an understanding of what constitutes British values;
- helping children and young people to incorporate British values into their view of the world and in their role as global citizens.

- **Schools should take a lead in promoting environmental responsibility**

This will be realised by:

- promoting positive attitudes to sustainability in our children and young people;
- being mindful of the need to protect the environment and doing all that we can to support efforts to conserve it;
- minimising our consumption of energy and other non-renewable resources.

- **Schools benefit from strong leadership and governance**

This will be realised by:

- appointing as senior leaders only professionals who welcome challenge as well as support;
- expecting that all leaders understand the importance of empowering others and are committed to a distributed model of leadership;
- ensuring that KET's governance membership and structures are able to effectively meet its ethical, moral and statutory obligations.

- **Financial resources for education are not unlimited**

This will be realised by:

- adopting the highest possible standards of financial budgeting and monitoring;
- maximising financial efficiency across the Trust and ensuring that our public finances are used ethically at all times;
- ensuring that the highest possible proportion of its income is dedicated to front line education.

- **Technology should be harnessed to support all that the Trust does**

This will be realised by:

- expecting that all staff and children and young people are encouraged and supported to embrace mobile working and study;
- making extensive use of the opportunities provided by technology to enhance effective communication throughout the organisation and with all stakeholders;
- harnessing smart technology in pursuit of maximum organisational efficiency.