

The Curriculum and Beyond policy

Knowledge Triumphant

Knowledge Triumphant is the name of the late Franz Rosenthal's comprehensive study on the place of knowledge in Islam. He observes that *"the Islamic civilization is one that is essentially characterized by knowledge ('ilm), for 'ilm is one of those concepts that have dominated Islam and given Muslim civilization its distinctive shape and complexion."*

And it is this knowledge triumphant that lies at the heart of our school and more specifically our curriculum, designed to instil a great love and value for knowledge in all its forms.

And to Allah belongs the east and the west. So wherever you [might] turn, there is the Face of Allah . Indeed, Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing. [2:115]

We offer a rich and diverse curriculum, aiming to educate the head, heart and hands of our students.

We create varied opportunities beyond the classroom in order to prepare our students for their lives beyond school as confident, self-assured, articulate Muslim women.

Basic Principles

1. Quranic knowledge and Islamic principles pervade all of the subjects at LNS, not just 'Islamic' ones, as we believe that the Quran worldview provides the framework for all knowledge. We do not believe that there are 'Islamic' subjects and non-Islamic, or 'secular', subjects – we believe all subjects, whether from the Humanities or the Sciences are theological- are all 'Islamic'- in the sense that they are studied for and to know God. With the correct intention, studying these subjects is an act of worship if we know that God's signs (ayaat) pervade everything from the smallest gnat to the unfathomable black hole.



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2. Learning is a change to long-term memory.
3. Our aims are to ensure that our students experience a wide breadth of study and have, by the end of each key stage, long-term memory of an ambitious body of procedural and semantic knowledge.

Curriculum Intent

1. Curriculum drivers help shape our curriculum breadth. They are derived from basic principles highlighted above. They are used to ensure we give our students appropriate and ambitious curriculum opportunities.
2. Cultural capital gives our students the vital background knowledge required to be informed and thoughtful members of the wider community who understand and uphold (British) values.
3. Curriculum breadth is shaped by our curriculum drivers, cultural capital, subject topics and our ambition for students to study the best of what has been thought and said by many generations of academics and scholars.
4. Our curriculum distinguishes between subject topics, 'threshold concepts' and core skills. Subject topics are the specific aspects of subjects that are studied.
5. Threshold concepts tie together the subject topics into meaningful schema. The same concepts are explored in a wide breadth of topics. Through this 'forwards-and-backwards engineering' of the curriculum, students return to the same concepts over and over and gradually build understanding of them.
6. Core skills are essential skills needed in a subject area which allow students to access the material in a meaningful way. They are continuously revisited and developed over time to build procedural fluency. This provides us with a progression model.
7. Cognitive science tell us that working memory is limited and that cognitive load is too high if students are rushed through content. This limits the acquisition of long-term memory. Cognitive science also tells us that in order for students to become creative thinkers, or have a greater depth of understanding they must first master the basics, which takes time.



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Implementation

Our curriculum design is based on evidence from cognitive science; three main principles underpin it:

- learning is most effective with spaced repetition.
- Interleaving helps pupils to discriminate between topics and aids long-term retention.
- Retrieval of previously learned content is frequent and regular, which increases both storage and retrieval strength.

8. In addition to the three principles we also understand that learning is invisible in the short-term and that sustained mastery takes time.

9. Our content is subject specific. We make intra-curricular links (where appropriate) to strengthen schema.

Impact

10. Because learning is a change to long-term memory it is impossible to see impact in the short term.

11. We do use summative and formative assessments, with a focus on low stakes testing to assess learning and monitor individual progress.

Breadth

In Keystage three (Year 7 and Year 8), students study English, Maths, Science, Islamic Studies, Quran, Computer Science, Arabic, PE, French, History, Geography, RE, Art and Life Skills. Further details can be found in subject policies available on the website.

In Keystage four (Years 9-11), students study English language, English literature, Maths, Science (double or triple award), History, Islamic Studies, Quran, PE, RE, Cultural Literacy, Life Skills and Arabic. Options are chosen for non core subjects and vary year to year depending on the year group. Subjects have included Art, French, Psychology, Geography and Business Studies.



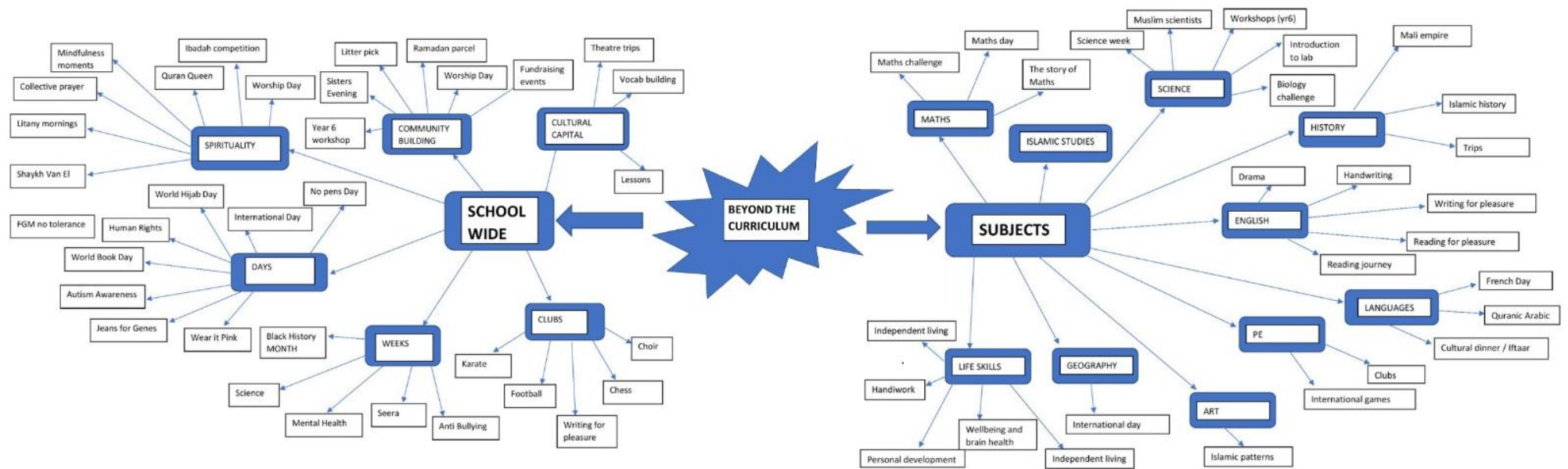
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Beyond the Curriculum

At LNS 'Beyond the Curriculum' refers to an experience of learning which goes beyond the limitations of the National Curriculum. It is based on an understanding that a student's experience of school must involve far more than the number of qualifications they have gained. We highly value the number of minds we have broadened, the number of hearts we have enlightened, the number of friendships we have fostered, and the number of students who leave LNS equipped to face the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

We move beyond the curriculum in NC subject areas as well as extracurricular activities as can be seen by the diagram below:

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