

# ACCREDITATION

## CASE STUDY



### Introduction

Kesgrave High School is an academy teaching 11-18 year old students near Martlesham Heath, Suffolk.

Part of the Farlingaye and Kesgrave Teaching Alliance incorporating schools from all sectors, universities and the local authority, Kesgrave and Farlingaye High Schools were designated a joint teaching school in July 2011.

The aim of the alliance is to continually strive to improve the quality of teaching, learning and standards for students. By working together the various establishments aim to bring about exciting and valuable developments for local students.

Kesgrave School's ethos is that school should be a place to enjoy and somewhere students can stretch

their imaginations, explore their interests and reach their potential.

Activities range from building rockets to field trips abroad. Teaching is creative and ambitious, delivering exciting lessons that engage every student.

Divided vertically into five houses - Bader, Hillary, Keller, Nuffield and Royal - the names reflect 20th century figures that excelled in various areas of achievement, both personal and public. Kesgrave's ambition is to ensure all its students have opportunities to do the same.

It is the first school to be awarded APM accreditation for its project management training programme.

## Looking to the future

An Introduction to Project Management for Secondary Schools is being delivered at Kesgrave through its Science Faculty by teacher Dave Green, who changed his commercial career with BT for teaching.

Open to all 6th form students in years 12 and 13 studying A level courses, it aims to give them project management skills that they can expand and build upon in their future careers.

Kesgrave is one of a few forward-looking schools keen to work with the Association for Project Management (APM) on educating children about project management. Project management underpins careers based on STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects, so by pioneering a project management course at secondary level Kesgrave is offering its students a natural first step into a higher level apprenticeship or a degree such as engineering, maths and physics.

The school is working with STEM ambassadors on a major initiative backed by large companies such as Rolls-Royce to support and encourage interest in STEM subjects in schools.

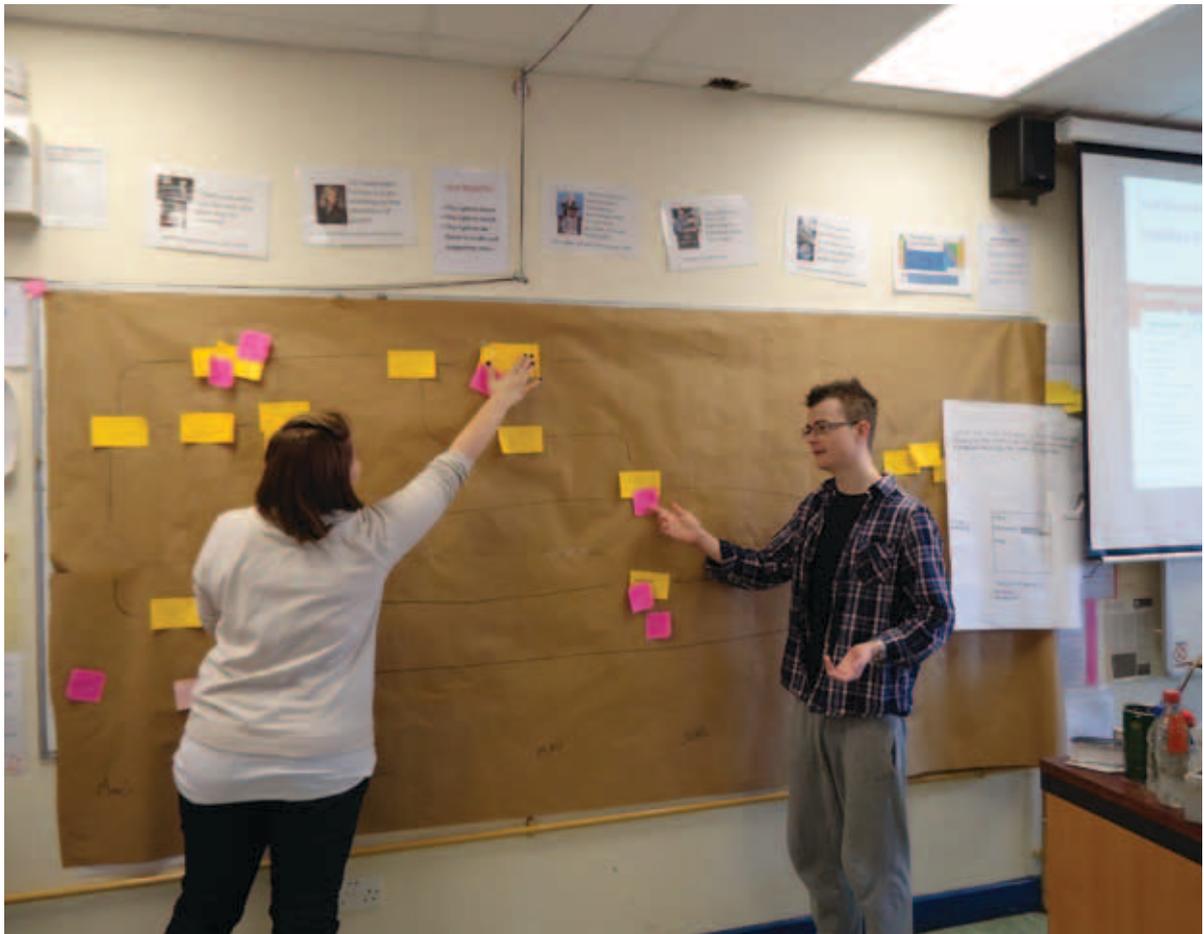
The project management course has been running for some four years, helping pupils learn by getting their teeth

into real projects. One such project involved the feasibility of the school installing a wind turbine. The project recommended that the school did not go ahead with a wind turbine due to financial risks and long payback.

The students' report was very well received when presented to a governors' meeting and a video was made of the presentation to support future training. Other projects have included looking at implementing QR codes for the local council in a local park, and organising a science fair and science week for local primary schools.

Development and accreditation of the course was part of the school's entry into the 2012 Rolls-Royce science prize, and while it did not win it did achieve a welcome £6,000 for making it to the final, which was used to further develop the project management course.

The course adopts a 'hands on' approach to project management competencies, skills and knowledge and is aligned with the *APM Body of Knowledge*. It provides young adults with the opportunity to explore and understand the basic project management principles. In line with the school's ethos of 'learning by doing' it involves both simulated and real projects for the students to tackle.



## Project management – a life skill and a professional qualification

With extensive project management experience, course leader Dave Green is appropriately qualified to maintain and deliver the course, with the support of external resources and contingencies.

However, should student numbers grow as expected consideration will be given to how the school provides additional support for this popular subject – not just in terms of current academic success but also future development.

Head teacher Nigel Burgoyne has agreed to identify options for development of other staff and a scheme of work will be developed together with a teaching plan to assist in this process.

Following updating of the course materials there is adequate reference and alignment to the *APM Body of Knowledge*. Teaching materials clearly demonstrate the role of APM and students learn the significance of the topics within the *APM Body of Knowledge*.

"APM is the main professional body for project management in the UK and as a member it seemed logical for me to try and get APM interested in endorsing a course for secondary schools based on the enrichment course I produced for our sixth form," said Dave Green.

"If we can inspire secondary students then future APM membership should be secure and the UK should have much better project managers in the future – and ultimately help the UK to compete in a global market."

“ I am excited at the prospect of making project management skills in secondary education more mainstream by working with the Association for Project Management.”

Dave Green, course leader, Kesgrave High School



Tony Stanway, chairman of APM East of England branch (right) presents teacher Dave Green with the APM accreditation certificate.

As it is an enrichment subject the course does not attract UCAS points. As such, there is no fixed curriculum requiring formal updating. But the course leader is aware of the need to refresh the course following publication of the *APM Body of Knowledge 6th Edition*.

Assessment is through team and individual presentations made to the head teacher and governing body. As a summative assessment, this works very well and student outputs are impressive. Going forward, some consideration might be given to elements of formative assessment to support the learning process.

The course draws heavily on BTEC Procedures and Practice Policy for matters relating to accreditation, auditing and evaluation. Course management, administration, accreditation and evaluation are appropriately addressed as part of the school's standard procedures and policies.

Content can also be expanded to include more on the subjects of project roles and responsibilities, such as sponsor, project manager, team member and user. The course is assessed against key project management criteria and at the conclusion students should be able to demonstrate they have acquired these skills through their performance in the project simulations or real projects they have tackled.

At the end of the course they also present an example project to senior managers and an APM representative if possible, demonstrating they have met the key criteria of project management.

## What the students say...

### What have you learnt and what benefit has the course has provided?

|| The ability to manage a team effectively and reach an important and all too real deadline. Realising that a group needs motivation and drive to succeed."

"It has allowed me to take charge of a team."

"Being able to plan effectively and improve my communication skills."

"I learnt how to organise and condense information better and how to work in a team effectively, such as sharing responsibilities."

### What part of the course worked best and why?

|| The chance to manage a proper project and having real responsibility. Having the freedom to try things and fail helped set the lessons in my memory."

"Taking turns being the project manager and taking responsibility for a real project was great."

"Having a live project to which to apply the skills."

"I found milestone and affinity planning really effective. Learning to scope and set realistic objectives."

### Would you recommend the course to other students?

|| Yes – teaches vital skills and was fun, interesting and the freedom to work in a team was very enjoyable."

"Yes, it teaches important project skills that are essential to lots of jobs".

"I would, as it offers you the chance to expand your skills which can be applied to various aspects of work and life".

## Association for Project Management and Kesgrave High School

Kesgrave High School is a corporate member of APM and has adopted the association's *Five Dimensions of Professionalism* as the cornerstone of its Introductory Course on Project Management. The school promotes APM to the students and invites practitioners from local organisations, including other APM corporate members, to speak to students.

The course is offered to sixth form students as to take alongside their A levels and is consistent with the *APM Body of Knowledge*, with course materials clearly aligned. As part of the course, students practice the key competencies on a real life project.

APM president, Tom Taylor, has long advocated adopting project management in schools.

"There is definitely demand for projects everywhere to meet the needs of society and for skilled, professional people who can deal with issues and people, define success and benefits and to deliver the goods.

"Most project management is about being competent, reliable, thorough and interested, so school is a good place to start observing and practicing these skills while learning how to be team member, a team supporter and a team leader – all essential aspects of successful projects and a good life.

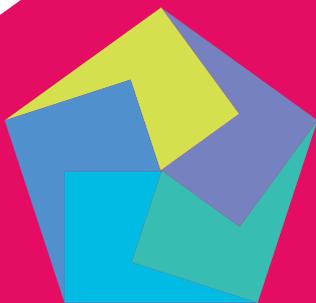
"So start early. I did – although I did not realise it at the time."



## Association for Project Management

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### **FIVE**Dimensions of Professionalism

#### **APM Corporate Accreditation**

APM Corporate Accreditation will help you stand out as an exemplar in the development of project management professionals. It provides assurances to your customers and suppliers and allows you to attract and retain the best project management talent in the country.

APM Corporate Accreditation recognises the commitment of organisations and professional development services to the defined, APM Five Dimensions of Professionalism, each of which is supported by an APM standard:

#### **Breadth**

The APM Body of Knowledge defines the knowledge needed to manage any kind of project. It underpins many project management standards and methods including the National Occupational Standard in Project Management.

#### **Depth**

The APM Competence Framework provides a guide to project management competences. It is part of your professional toolkit; mapping levels of knowledge and experience to help you progress your skills and abilities.

#### **Achievement**

APM qualifications take your career in new and exciting directions. They are recognised across the profession and aligned with IPMA's 4 level Certification Program.

#### **Commitment**

Continuing Professional Development helps develop your project management practice. A targeted development plan will enhance your project management career.

#### **Accountability**

The APM Code of Professional Conduct outlines the ethical practice expected of a professional. Becoming an APM member shows your commitment to the Code and sets you apart from others.