

Exam and Qualification Success Report

KWS School

Academic Year: 2024-2025



Executive Summary

We are delighted to report on the outstanding examination and qualification achievements of our students in the 2025-2026 academic year. Despite the significant social, emotional and mental health challenges our students face, **100% of our Year 11 cohort achieved formal qualifications**, demonstrating the effectiveness of our personalised, trauma-informed approach to education.

Key Headlines

- **4 students** sat formal examinations and qualifications
- **100% achievement rate** – all students gained recognised qualifications
- **2 students** achieved **5 GCSE passes** between them
- **2 students** achieved **Level 2 Functional Skills** in both Maths and English
- **100% of students** are now progressing to appropriate post-16 destinations
- **Significant personal progress** made by all students in terms of attendance, engagement and wellbeing

This represents an exceptional achievement for our cohort, particularly given that:

- All students have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) for SEMH needs
- 75% of students arrived at our school having experienced significant educational disruption
- Average attendance on entry was 42%, improving to 87% by Year 11
- All students had experienced previous exclusions or managed moves

Our school has exceeded expectations by:

- Achieving 100% qualification success rate
- Improving average attendance from 42% on entry to 87% in Year 11
- Supporting 100% of students into positive post-16 destinations
- Enabling students to achieve qualifications despite significant barriers

Factors Contributing to Success

1. Personalised Learning Pathways

We recognised early that a one-size-fits-all approach would not work for our cohort. Each student had:

- **Individual learning plan** tailored to their SEMH needs, learning profile and aspirations
- **Flexible curriculum** allowing students to study at appropriate levels
- **Choice of qualification routes** (GCSE or Functional Skills) based on individual strengths and needs
- **Personalised timetables** accommodating therapeutic interventions and regulation needs

2. Trauma-Informed Teaching and Assessment

All staff are trained in trauma-informed practice, enabling us to:

- Understand behaviour as communication of unmet needs
- Build secure, trusting relationships as foundation for learning
- Create predictable, safe learning environments
- Recognise and respond to trauma triggers
- Support emotional regulation before and during assessments

3. Therapeutic Support

Every student accessed:

- **Weekly counselling or therapeutic intervention**
- **Occupational therapy** for sensory and motor needs
- **Speech and language therapy** for communication needs
- **Mentoring and coaching**

This holistic approach addressed underlying barriers to learning and enabled students to engage with academic study.

4. Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

We worked closely with specialist assessors to ensure every student had appropriate access arrangements:

- **100% of students** had personalised access arrangements
- **Separate invigilation** in familiar, low-arousal environments
- **Extra time** to accommodate processing difficulties and anxiety
- **Rest breaks** to support regulation
- **Assistive technology** including readers, scribes and word processors
- **Familiar adults** to reduce anxiety
- **Flexible assessment schedules** to accommodate therapeutic needs

5. Small Class Sizes and High Staff Ratios

Our staffing model enables:

- **Maximum class size of 4 students**
- **1:3 staff-to-student ratio** in most lessons
- **1:1 support** for students who need it
- **Consistent key workers** for relationship-building
- **Rapid response** to dysregulation and crisis

6. Exam Preparation and Resilience Building

We implemented a graduated approach to exam preparation:

- **Year 9:** Introduction to assessment formats through low-stakes quizzes
- **Year 10:** Practice assessments in familiar environments with full support
- **Year 11:** Progressive reduction of support, building towards exam conditions
- **Mock examinations** with full access arrangements in place
- **Exam resilience workshops** addressing anxiety and coping strategies
- **Celebration of effort** not just outcomes

7. Partnership with Families

We worked closely with parents/carers and social workers to:

- Share progress and celebrate successes
- Address barriers to attendance and engagement
- Provide consistent messages about expectations and support
- Involve families in decision-making about qualifications and destinations
- Support exam preparation at home

Destinations and Next Steps

All four students are progressing to positive destinations:

Student	Destination	Qualification Level	Support in Place
Student A	Out of county college, due to house move	Level 1	EHCP support, key worker, reduced timetable initially

Student	Destination	Qualification Level	Support in Place
Student B	KWS year 12	Level 2	EHCP support, independence skills, personal trainer
Student C	College placement in childcare.	Level 1	EHCP
Student D	Entry Level Animal Studies at Moulton College	Entry 3	EHCP support, autism-specific adjustments, PEP

100% of students secured their first-choice destination, demonstrating the effectiveness of our transition planning and careers guidance.

Lessons Learned and Areas for Development

What Worked Well

- ✓ Flexible qualification pathways (GCSE and Functional Skills)
- ✓ Comprehensive access arrangements for all students
- ✓ Integration of therapeutic and academic support
- ✓ Early and sustained transition planning
- ✓ Small class sizes and high staff ratios
- ✓ Trauma-informed approach to teaching and assessment

Areas for Development

- ✗ **Earlier intervention in literacy and numeracy** – some students would have benefited from intensive intervention earlier in their school journey
- ✗ **Broader curriculum offer** – exploring additional vocational qualifications (e.g. GCSE, Entry Level qualifications) to provide more pathways
- ✗ **Work experience opportunities** – expanding our partnerships with local employers to provide meaningful work experience
- ✗ **Mental health support** – increasing access to specialist mental health services (CAMHS waiting times remain a barrier)
- ✗ **Post-16 tracking** – developing systems to track student progress and wellbeing in their post-16 destinations
- ✗ **Parental engagement** – continuing to develop strategies to engage harder-to-reach families

Looking Ahead: 2025-2026 Cohort

We have **5 students** in our current Year 11 cohort who will sit examinations in summer 2027. Based on current progress, we are targeting:

- **2 students** on track for **3-54GCSEs** (grades 4-6)
- **2 students** on track for **Level 2 Functional Skills** in English and Maths
- **1 student** on track for **Level 1 Functional Skills** and **Entry Level qualifications**

We are also exploring:

- **GCSE** in Citizenship
- **Entry Level qualifications** in Science and Humanities for students working below Level 1
- **ASDAN Personal and Social Development** qualifications

Conclusion

The examination and qualification success of our 2025-2026 cohort demonstrates that with the right support, students with SEMH needs can achieve outstanding outcomes. Our 100% achievement rate reflects:

- ✦ The dedication and expertise of our staff
- ✦ The resilience and determination of our students
- ✦ The effectiveness of our trauma-informed, personalised approach
- ✦ The power of believing in every child's potential

These qualifications are not just pieces of paper – they represent transformed lives, opened doors, and bright futures. Every student who walked through our exam hall doors had overcome significant barriers to get there. Every student who opened their results envelope did so with pride, knowing they had achieved something they once thought impossible.

We are immensely proud of our students and excited to see them flourish in their next chapters.

Prepared by: Sarah Nichols-Weaver, Headteacher

Date: 20 August 2025

Next Review: August 2026
