



Integrated Curriculum Model in Character Development Based on Sirah Nabawiyah

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Abstract: In the 21st century, the curriculum must be developed to prepare better graduates with superior knowledge, character, skills, and critical abilities. The curriculum becomes a tool to achieve the goals of educational institutions. For the curriculum, it is necessary to synergize all aspects of human life. The integrative curriculum as an integrated system is essential in several disciplines and with the realities of human life. This research is explanatory with a case study approach. There were 23 respondents, consisting of the head and teachers of Kuttub Al Fatih (KAF) Sidoarjo, Indonesia. The data analysis used descriptive statistics to analyze responses from questionnaire items. This study finds that the Sirah Nabawiyah-based integrative curriculum shows good results in developing children's character education. Transdisciplinary integration is the philosophical foundation of the development of the KAF curriculum.

Keywords: integrative curriculum, character, sirah nabawiyah

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INTRODUCTION

One of the optimal learning processes is formed by a curriculum under students' needs (Bens et al., 2021). The school curriculum must support and develop the character of each individual who is the subject and object of education (Pike et al., 2021). Teachers' knowledge, skills, and dedication will affect how well the curriculum is implemented (Shin, 2022). The initiation of the Integrative Curriculum is closely related to 21st-century learning (Ferguson-Patrick et al., 2018). Students must have literacy, communication, leadership, collaboration, problem-solving, and character qualities (Sigit, 2022; Rentzou, 2021). These skills need to be trained and developed from a young age because they can help the child's psychological growth and improve as the child grows up. They can also show how well the child can reach his full potential (Shrestha et al., 2019).

An individual is born with millions of neurons, and the quality of experience they have while studying has the potential to determine their growth, development, and future (Frimpong, 2021). It makes quality early childhood education very important and becomes the best investment that benefits the child, the family, the education system, and society (Gobena, 2020). In Law on the National Education System (No. 20/2003), early childhood education is one of the national education priorities. Coaching efforts aimed at children from birth to six are carried out by providing educational stimuli to help growth and development. Physical and spiritual development is essential for children to pursue higher education (Government of Indonesia, 2003).

Educational institutions have a strategic role in character building (Mahanani, 2022). Education can contribute to a country-wide welfare framework in the long term by increasing productivity (Pane & Patriana, 2016). The responsibility of educators is to improve their personalities, and Muslim educators must make the Prophet Muhammad a role model (Saud et al., 2022). The best education is contained in the history of the Prophet Muhammad (Yusoff, 2012). Every event and phase has wisdom, so taking lessons from Sirah eagerly and teaching them to students can significantly contribute to creating a brilliant generation of change agents (Mohamed, 2021).

Character values are integrated into the teaching and learning process, as in the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Concerning Strengthening Character Education, which has formulated character values that will be developed for Indonesian students and young generations. Those character values are religiousness, honesty, tolerance, discipline, creativity, hard work, independence, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love for the homeland, achievement awards, communicative friendliness, peace-orientedness, reading-orientedness, environmental care, social care, and responsibility (Government of Indonesia, 2018). Character education seeks to develop these values into a habit.

Character building requires a continuous habit and more time because changing individual behavior requires more effort and time than changing cognitive skills (Yudhar et al., 2021). Previous studies have shown that habituation is one viable way to instill values. Habituation can be done in different ways, and schools are

one place that needs to set up several programs that focus on making educational values or good character a habit (Cheung & Lee, 2010; Rokhman & Syaifudin, 2014).

Furthermore, efforts to develop character in students are carried out using an integrative curriculum model (Drake & Reid, 2018). The integrative curriculum was developed to better prepare individuals with superior knowledge, skills, and character (Woodside et al., 2020) and can lead to deeper learning. Learners can explore knowledge in various related subjects to create higher-quality learning (Drake & Reid, 2018; John, 2015). The integrative curriculum is a successful way to create interdisciplinary-based learning (Anderson, 2013).

The effectiveness of learning is affected by teachers' ability to impart knowledge. Teachers must have adequate knowledge in various subject areas and understand the values of character education. (Fu & Sibert, 2017). Similarly, because students' time in educational institutions is limited, parents must be equipped with the knowledge, particularly an understanding of character education, as educators at home and in the community (Arslan, 2021). The problem is a gap between the implementation of *adab* or characters taught in educational institutions and family environments. Families do not provide correct *adab* values. When the environment does not provide genuine character education value, it may negatively influence the generation.

Several studies on character education have been carried out. Zurqoni et al. (2018) examine the strategy and implementation of character education for senior and vocational high schools in Yogyakarta. Watson (2019) focuses on intellectual character education. Bates (2019) explained character education and the 'priority of recognition.' Paul et al. (2020) determine parents' perspectives on home-based character education activities. Rusydiyah and Matrapi (2020) researched character education in Indonesian Islamic boarding schools. Hart (2021) investigated the potential for participatory character education using MacIntyre ethics. Metcalfe and Moulin-Stožek (2021) attempted to see this from the perspective of religious education teachers on character education. McGrath et al. (2022) analyzed the prototype of expert opinion on the meaning of character education.

There is also much research on Kuttab Al Fatih, which has its own Makkiyah curriculum. Researchers have conducted many studies on the *Kuttab* curriculum on its implementation aspects (Saugi, 2020; Khoiriyah & Anshori, 2021; Zulia & Ambarwati, 2020), curriculum management (Pratiwi et al., 2019), *Kuttab* history (Suja'i, 2022), education management (Karisma et al., 2019), and character education in *Kuttab* (Ilham, 2020). Few studies look at the Kuttab curriculum from a multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, or transdisciplinary perspective. The difference between previous research and this research lies in the approach used in studying Kuttab Al Fatih's integrative curriculum in developing student character education. Thus, this study aims to develop an integrative curriculum model by analyzing the concepts and philosophical foundations of the curriculum institutions use.

METHODS

This research is explanatory with a case study approach. The object of the research was in Kuttab Al Fatih (KAF) Sidoarjo, Indonesia. The research data used were primary data from school principals and teachers as research informants. KAF represents Indonesia because it focuses more on character education "*Adab Sebelum Ilmu, Ilmu Sebelum Amal*." Education at KAF is the result of research on the history of the glory of Islam by Ashari (2012). KAF is an educational institution for children aged five to twelve years (Karisma et al., 2019). The concept of *kuttab* has a long history. Approximately 1500 years ago, it was an Islamic educational institution that developed at the beginning of Islamic civilization or during the time of the Prophet, the Companions, the Umayyads, and the Abbasids (Yaman & Gultom, 2017). This concept produced the best generation capable of leading Islam (Hafnidar et al., 2020).

Al Fatih is the name chosen by the institution. Behind the name is hope and aspiration, an award given to Mehmed Khoun, the seventh sultan of the Umayya (Jamsari et al., 2014). The greatness of his name is exemplary and inspiring. Mehmed Khoun, also known as Sultan Muhammad Al Fatih, managed to conquer Constantinople fort at the young age of 22 (Isa & Sidek, 2014). Data collection was done through observation, interviews, and documentation. The instruments used in this study were questionnaires and interviews. The respondents to this study were school principals and KAF teachers, totaling 23 teachers and one head of Kuttab. The questionnaire consisted of a series of questions posed to respondents using a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. Data analysis was carried out descriptively by giving meaning to the data, and conclusions were drawn from these meanings. The indicators of this study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Indicators of the Transdisciplinary Curriculum Model

Curriculum Model	Indicator
Transdisciplinary integration	The curriculum is structured to develop several disciplines in the context of the Sirah Nabawiyah. There are no independent disciplines; everything is integrated. Contextual-based learning concept Learners integrate their knowledge and abilities. The curriculum focuses on the interests and talents of students. Learning is carried out on a project or portfolio basis.

Table 2 Question Instruments

Indicator	Questionnaire Instruments
Curriculum Preparation	I have got a manual for applying the concept of Sirah Nabawiyah-based learning Learning materials are arranged in order and continuously.
Knowledge Integration	I master the material in the Nature Module and relate it to other disciplines (for example: mathematics, Indonesian, science, and social studies) I associate learning Mathematics with the Sirah Nabawiyah
Contextual-based learning	I relate learning materials to the realities of everyday life I give stories about the apostles, friends, and previous scholars in each Kuttat Activity Plan
Student ability	The Kuttat Activity Plan states competency targets that students must master. I provide challenging problems to arouse students' interest in answering or giving opinions.
Curriculum Content	I value students' respective abilities. The teacher stimulates the interests and talents of students by motivating the apostles, friends, and previous scholars.
Project or portfolio-based learning	I introduce students to the object that will be discussed or made into a project in learning I give worksheets to students

The instrument developed was validated by credible experts ([Turrado-Sevilla & Cantón-Mayo, 2022](#)), consisting of university professors, researchers, and policy experts. Experts suggest completing the instrument's contents related to the relevance, scope, and sequence. Experts were contacted personally by telephone or email to explain the purpose of the study. The process of data processing and questionnaire replies from the head of the *kuttat* and the teachers were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as the percentage of frequency and mean and qualitative data starting from the stages of checking, organizing, checking the validity of the findings, the presence of researchers, in-depth observation, and triangulation ([Birhan et al., 2021](#)).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of data analysis related to the Sirah Nabawiyah-based integrative curriculum at the Kuttat Al Fatih Institute (KAF) were considered good. The following are data showing the results of the study.

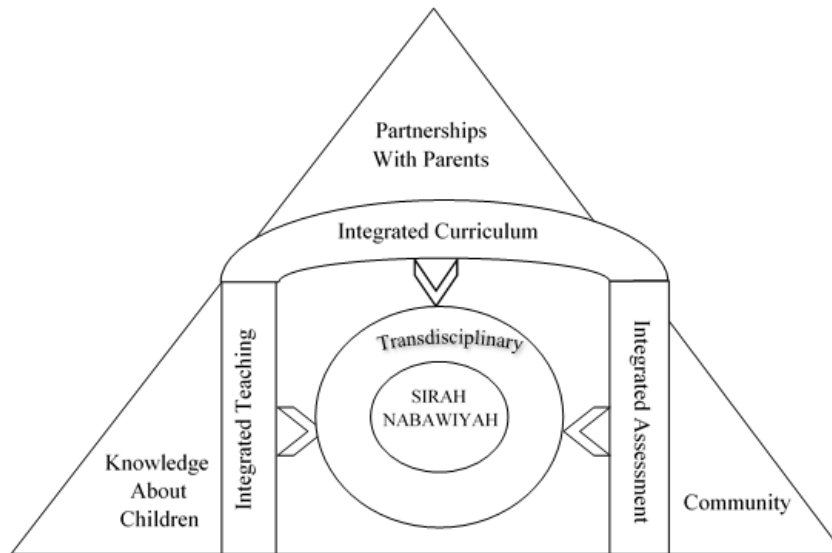


Figure 1. Integrated Curriculum Model

Figure 1 shows an integrative curriculum model developed at KAF. To achieve the success of a curriculum, it is also necessary to have a partnership with students' parents, knowledge about child development, and a supportive community with a shared vision. The concept of an equilateral triangle means that knowledge about children, partnerships with parents, and the community have the same role in supporting the integration of the Sirah Nabawiyah-based curriculum.

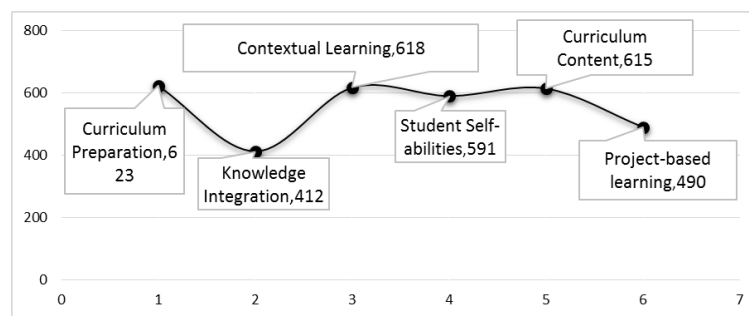


Figure 2. Results of Integrative Curriculum

The integrative curriculum at KAF has a good score on each indicator. A good percentage is evident in curriculum preparation, the contextual nature of learning, the relationship between the curriculum and the students' abilities, curriculum content, and project-based learning. As for the integration of science with a more sloping curve, among other indicators, the percentage of 412 has reached a fairly good level. The data from the second indicator are in Figure 3.

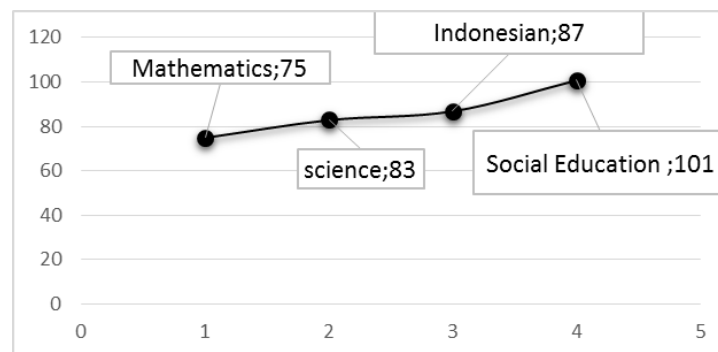


Figure 3. Results of Knowledge Integration

There are four integrated disciplines. Integration of social education sciences based on Sirah Nabawiyah occupies the highest percentage. At the same time, in mathematics, the teacher has made maximum efforts to

integrate it with Sirah Nabawiyah so that the percentage of 75 is in the category of fairly good integration. For this reason, transdisciplinary integration becomes the philosophical foundation for curriculum development at KAF. The transdisciplinary approach leads to the merging of two or more disciplines of different scientific clusters (Junevicius et al., 2021).

Table 3 Results of Each Integrative Curriculum Indicator

Indicator	N	Mean	SD
Curriculum Preparation	23	27.09	2.109
Knowledge Integration	23	22.26	4,892
Contextual Learning	23	26.87	2,833
Student Ability	23	25.70	3.169
Curriculum Content	23	26.74	2,340
Project-Based Learning	23	21.30	2,344

Based on the calculation, the mean is higher than the standard deviation, indicating that the standard deviation value means the more similar the values on the items are, the more accurate the mean is (Altman & Bland, 2005). Kuttat Al-Fatih seeks to realize Kuttat in the glorious era of Islam to be revived (Yaman & Gultom, 2017). Current developments also demand changes. Likewise, KAF continues to develop according to the needs of the times. Therefore, KAF is not entirely the same as *kuttat* in classical times (Saugi, 2020). KAF is an alternative level of education for kindergarten through elementary school. It has a different concept from educational institutions developed in Indonesia before. KAF does not use the government's curriculum but instead develops a curriculum based on Sirah Nabawiyah (Karisma et al., 2019; Sofanudin et al., 2021).

KAF Curriculum

Holism characterizes the KAF integrative curriculum. It means that one science is observed and studied from several disciplines simultaneously, not from a fragmented perspective. It is intended to train students to understand phenomena from all sides. Thus, the learning process is felt to be more meaningful for students (Wai-Cook, 2022). In preparing the curriculum, KAF pays attention to sequence. By studying the Qur'an and hadiths and seeing the life of the apostle through the Sirah, it can be seen in detail from beginning to end how the best generations were present and succeeded in bringing glory based on *adab* values or good morals and faith (Karisma et al., 2019). Abdullah Nurul Azmi, the head of KAF, stated this in an interview:

"In the history of the Prophet's da'wah, there are two phases: Makkah and Medina. The Makkah phase strengthened the foundation. The Islamic education curriculum that is suitable for early childhood is the Makkah phase curriculum. Tawhid and the development of character education are the main bases. Therefore, in preparing the curriculum based on the Sirah Nabawiyah, KAF pays attention to the order of teaching according to the Sirah."

In addition, the KAF curriculum is also structured continuously between materials and levels of education. The materials are also given according to age, as stated by Ahmad, the manager of KAF.

"The material is arranged continuously and complements each other to achieve the goal. The faith lessons from the Initial Kuttat 1 class are repeated in the Initial Kuttat 2. It is not literally repeated, but the theme is similar. The material is deepened, and the students' understanding is strengthened and ensured according to what was taught. Because there are seven levels in KAF, the material is arranged continuously. Starting from studying the natural module, the human module, and the tadabbur module."

From the explanation, it can be concluded that the preparation of the KAF curriculum has Sirah Nabawiyah basis, compiled based on the history of the Apostle in preaching and educating friends, taking into account scope and sequence, and arranged thematically in a learning module, namely the nature module, the human module, and the *tadabbur* module. The KAF curriculum based on the Sirah Nabawiyah is supported by Yudo and Salahuddin (2020). The KAF Education Institute's main goal is to raise an intelligent generation from a young age using a curriculum based on the Sirah that worked well in the past.

Knowledge Integration

A transdisciplinary approach provides a holistic experience for students regarding cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development (Gürkan, 2021; Amin & Ahmad, 2022). There is an integration of religious, social, and scientific knowledge in the scientific content at KAF. To equip millennial children with 21st-century competencies, KAF designed a holistic curriculum to teach students the necessary knowledge and skills. KAF only provides faith subjects and the Quran, so the teachers are familiarly called the "Faith Teachers" and the

"Quran Teachers." In faith lessons, there are sub-discussions related to mathematics, Indonesian, science, and social science subjects so that religion, science, and social sciences are well connected. In the document study conducted by the researcher, there are student worksheets related to Mathematics, Indonesian, Science, and Social Sciences related to Sirah Nabawiyah and the values of monotheism.

10. Quraysh people are traveling in winter and summer, who created winter and summer?

- a. Quraysh people
- b. Prophet
- c. Allah Ta'ala

Figure 4. Example of Science Exam Question for Energy Theme

11. Circle the vowels in the names of shabat

a	b	u	b	a	k	a	r						
u	m	a	r	b	i	n	k	h	a	t	t	a	b

Figure 5. Example of Indonesian Exam Question

In the interview, KAF Manager Abdullah Ibn Ahmad said:

"One of the goals of the KAF curriculum is to provide a sense of authenticity in learning. So that in every lesson, both Mathematics, Indonesian, Science, and Social Sciences, faith is always inserted, character development and Sirah Nabawiyah values are inserted."

Wai-Cook (2022) shows that the success of 21st-century teaching and learning must be framed in a holistic curriculum that includes two programs: multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary courses. KAF is already on the verge of developing and implementing a transdisciplinary approach.

Contextual-Based Learning

The lessons given at KAF are not only delivered theoretically. The teacher is also active in providing practices and relating them to real-world situations in daily activities and the world of children. Contextual learning can help students be actively involved in learning and train critical and creative thinking skills, understand an issue and solve problems (Rafsanjani et al., 2022; Welerubun et al., 2022; Zukin & Firdaus, 2022; Samo et al., 2018). Luluk Puji Hatuti, a Qonuni class teacher, explained in an interview:

"I teach a Qonuni 4 class with eleven and twelve years old students. In the learning process, I often relate the material to events we experience daily, and from these events, we try to transfer ibrah to the children. In this way, students respond actively, which is easy to practice in everyday life. Hence, we deliver the material not entirely based on the textbook, but we develop and relate it to the real phenomena of students".

Classical *kuttab* learning is usually carried out in mosques (Karisma et al., 2019). However, at KAF, which has its building, the teachers try to add something new through an experiential approach with *outing classes*. Students are invited to visit certain places at the beginning of the learning theme's opening to better give a concrete picture before learning the concept. An outing class provides basic skills and expertise to develop children's creativity. In this way, teachers can train and see how children's affective development is going (Akbari & Salahuddin, 2020).

For this reason, contextual-based learning becomes a holistic educational process to motivate students and understand the meaning of the subject they are studying (Sulistiyo et al., 2021) by linking the material to their daily lives, personally, socially, and culturally so that knowledge and the skills transferred by the teacher can be applied flexibly in everyday life. Contextual-based learning is supported by the research of Susanti et al. (2020) and Komalasari (2012). Adapting to 21st-century developments requires a curriculum that produces strong students who can sustain life. Therefore, the suitability of the learning plan is the key to the success of students living in society and facing the challenges of globalization. In this case, it is necessary to have insight into the variety in the surrounding environment so that students can develop further in the future to face competition per the times.

Project or portfolio-based learning

The learning method at KAF is not much different from that at schools. There is the delivery of material from the teacher, questions and answers, stories, and others. However, when learning about etiquette or character, the KAF class starts with a reminder that the students are ready and calm and should keep their etiquette when they study. Besides the previously mentioned method, there is a project-based learning model for learning the Faith curriculum at KAF. The method used is flexible according to the material being taught, using learning tools according to the characteristics of the material. The materials taught are under the theme in the Kuttab Activity Plan. As stated by Aliyah Abdul Mutholib, teacher Qonuni:

"In some of the materials, we use a project-based learning model. The students are happy because they are actively involved in learning. I introduce students to objects that will be discussed or made into projects in learning. We also provide worksheets to measure students' understanding after the teacher explains. These worksheets will later become references in the assessment process."

In line with Cummings and Yur-Austin (2022), project-based learning has important implications for stimulating meaningful engagement for students, increasing creativity and innovation, fostering students' enthusiasm for projects, and fostering their natural creativity. It also grows collaborative and communication skills (Sirisrimangkorn, 2021).

Character Education Development

Ana Kumalasari, the faith teacher, said, "A teacher must be an idol for students so that students continue to strive to set a good example because they will imitate everything the teacher does." Based on this statement, the key to teaching character is the teacher's sincerity in setting a student role model. Sincerity in education is manifested by being a good role model, and this kindness needs to be done continuously to become a habit.

Learning materials are presented in a simple, meaningful, and easy-to-understand way in class, as stated by Edi Hariyanto:

"Storytelling is a compelling method in instilling character education for students, stories about the Prophet, and the shabiyah friends. The Prophet Muhammad also applies the storytelling method to strengthen the companions' faith. The students were thrilled when they were told the story. Stories can provide motivation and advice. Storytelling is a true event that happened in the Sirah Nabawiyah. Telling stories and storytelling are different. If storytelling is still very possible, it is only fictitious stories."

In addition, there is also the participation of students' parents. When parents register their children at KAF, they must attend an interview. In the interview, the Kuttab Manager Team explained the education system implemented in Kuttab, including how parents would participate in the education process. Parents can decide whether they will continue the registration process or not. They must accept and participate in the educational process when they decide to continue. As stated by Siti Jazilah Qonuni, Quran teacher, during an interview:

"Character education at KAF is used as the main teaching method and is included in the curriculum so that kuttab's attention to character development is prioritized. Adab or character before science. Schooling children in KAF requires being ready to commit to the rules that the kuttab has made, paying attention, and actively educating children. Study with parents when at home and with teachers when at KAF. If the student's parents violate the commitments that have been agreed upon, KAF firmly provides consequences."

As for character education control, when students are at home, parents are given a sheet called BBO (*Belajar Bersama Orangtua*) twice a month. It was given to control character development and communicate the lessons in *kuttab* so that teaching at home is harmonized with what Kuttab has given to students. From the explanation, it can be concluded that in the development of character education, there are several programs and efforts made: (1) exemplary teachers and parents and good habits; (2) storytelling method; (3) Active participation of parents; (4) Parenting Nabawiyah activities.

A study by Hafnidar et al. (2020) shows that the character development of KAF students is well-formed due to the cooperation of all parties in the KAF environment, including students, teachers, parents, and the management team, foundation management, and cleaning service. The character forms include being civilized to teachers, parents, friends, and the environment around students, understanding etiquette in science meetings, eating etiquette, and other things that are done in daily activities. A good personality includes being obedient, responsible, disciplined, and honest. Students are accustomed to idolizing the apostle and his companions. Nor are they introduced to fictional characters, such as Superman and Wonder Woman.

From the differences and similarities of previous research journals, the novelty of this research is on aspects of an integrative curriculum with a transdisciplinary philosophical foundation that has not been studied in journals related to Kuttab Al Fatih specifically. Moreover, in the broader scope, previous researchers have not

discussed the integrative curriculum based on the Sirah Nabawiyah. This study found something new about how to study learning materials at KAF using the transdisciplinary integrative curriculum model.

CONCLUSION

The Sirah Nabawiyah-based integrative curriculum shows good results in developing children's character education. This success cannot be separated from the full support of students' parents and all parties in the KAF environment. Teachers guide students at school, and parents actively pay attention to developments and guide children at home. Teachers and parents continuously upgrade their knowledge according to KAF schedules. The integration of knowledge has been carried out optimally and continues to be improved, especially in mathematics. The teacher is reasonably competent in linking the Sirah Nabawiyah in teaching and learning science, social studies, and Indonesian. Transdisciplinary integration is the philosophical foundation of the development of the KAF curriculum.

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