



The Oxford School, Dubai

Teaching and Learning Policy – 2017-18

1. AIMS

Through our teaching we aim to:

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress.
- Relentlessly drive improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Develop and apply a wide range of key skills which will enable students to grow into resilient, independent and positive citizens.
- Provide quality learning consistently across our school.
- Teach effectively setting high expectations to enable students to learn efficiently and make sustained progress.
- Learn from each other, through the adoption of a collaborative, enquiry based approach to teaching and learning, where good practice is shared.
- Create a positive learning environment that fosters students' self-esteem and confidence which encourages students to respect the ideas and attitudes of others.

2. OUR UNDERSTANDING

At Oxford's we believe that **effective learning** takes place when:

- Pupils feel valued as individuals and are actively involved in the learning process.
- Students are made aware of what is being learnt and how it will impact their future and the wider development of skills.
- Classroom relationships are built on mutual tolerance and respect.
- Pupils are encouraged by all teachers in the classroom and are given opportunities to enjoy a genuine sense of achievement.
- There is a common awareness that high standards of self-discipline and order are expected.
- Lessons are well planned, prepared, structured and make effective use of the time available.
- Tasks and resources are appropriate to pupils' ability range, irrespective of social class, race, religion or gender.
- Home and school work together successfully.

For **effective teaching** to take place there are a number of factors that we feel are necessary:

- Effective prior preparation and planning resulting in a purposeful, well prepared teaching plan.
- Lessons must have clear learning objectives and outcomes.
- Lessons deliver the school curriculum, including appropriate cross-curricular issues.
- A clear link to previous and future learning.
- Timely interventions and mini-plenaries to clarify misconceptions, secure knowledge and deepen learning further.
- Plenaries which could happen at any time during the lesson and prepare the child for the next stage of learning.

- Carefully-planned differentiated activities to match the learning needs of all students.
- Teacher modelling through effective use of 'teacher talk' time.
- Imaginative and well-judged teaching strategies that enthuse students and engage them in the learning.
- High expectations which challenge but do not defeat pupils.
- Pace of Learning and Teaching commensurate with capabilities.
- Basic skills embedded across the curriculum.
- Good questioning that encourages reflection and challenges students further.
- Positive relationships based on mutual respect.
- Opportunities for independent learning and resilience development.
- Excellent behaviour management and behaviour for learning.
- Elements of visual, auditory, reading and kinesthetic (VARK) learning.
- Sensitive informal (verbal) assessment of pupil adjusts teaching content to their needs; learning reinforced by supportive marking and discussion of work.

Good **indicators of raised achievement** across the school are:

- High expectations and achievements of most pupils in most subjects.
- Good or rapid progress of most pupils in most subjects.
- Consistently good standards in each year group achieved across most subjects.
- Skills in speaking and listening, reading, writing and in practical and expressive activities are high and contribute effectively to the standards reached.

3. Planning

Planning is to be shared with all teachers in the year group and uploaded onto the school system on a weekly basis.

Complete planning files and samples of associated work are monitored by Subject leaders and Co-ordinators and Year group in-charges.

Long Term Planning

Our long term planning is based on:

- The Cambridge curriculum
- Skills-based Schemes of Work

Short Term Planning

Our short term planning is based on

- our skills-based schemes of work in line with the Cambridge Curriculum
- weekly and monthly planning completed by individual teachers in all subjects
- IEPs for SEND, Gifted and talented.

4. THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Successful classrooms are calm, welcoming, stimulating environments where high value is placed on learning.

The visual environment is very important and should display work which is interactive, representative of all students and all ability levels. Displays should reflect the taught curriculum and be changed regularly to sustain interest and discussion.

There is a **calm environment** when:

- Students are on task.
- Students are aware of acceptable noise levels for classwork and teachers help to maintain this by example.
- Students are taught to tidy up after themselves.
- Students understand the key elements of our Behaviour Policy.
- Classroom support staff work in a similar way to the teacher.
- Resources are relevant to the particular subject, ready before the lesson, organised and stored properly and carefully used and put away after use by the students and/or teachers.

The room is **well organised** when:

- Resources are clearly labelled and easily accessible
- There is a clear furniture layout which considers both Health & Safety and maximises learning.
- The room is kept tidy.
- Resources in each area will be grouped according to curriculum subject.
- Book corners will be comfortable and attractive.
- Labels and posters should be used wherever possible/appropriate to reflect the language diversity in the school.
- Areas for imaginative play will change regularly, in order to give opportunities for a range of play and role-play which will contribute to learning in a purposeful manner.
- Pupils will be involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources.

5. ORGANISATION

The learning environment will be managed in such a way as to facilitate different styles of learning. Opportunities will be made for:

- whole class teaching
- group work, organised according to appropriate criteria (i.e. ability, mixed ability, friendship, etc)
- one to one teaching
- conferencing
- collaborative learning in pairs or groups
- independent learning

All areas of the learning environment will be planned for, including, where appropriate, the outside areas, in order to ensure opportunities for a range of practical activities, which will develop appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding.

6. PUPIL GROUPINGS

- Students' tables should be organised into groups of 4 or 5 students in order to promote a learning environment that promotes and facilitates collaboration.
- Pupils should be given the opportunity to work in mixed ability groups.
- Pupils should be given the opportunity to work in different groups and, from time to time, with different pupils.
- Groupings, together with their ability, should be included in the teachers' Planning and Assessment folder.
- Students may sit in groups, though the work may be completed individually or they may need to work co-operatively.
- Teaching students to work co-operatively (collaborative group work) needs to be developed and each teacher needs to plan opportunities for this as well as age-appropriate strategies to develop their skills even further.

7. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At Oxford we base our teaching on our knowledge of the students' level of attainment. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of the students. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for students with special educational needs and disabilities we give due regard to information and targets contained in the student's IEPs. We have high expectations of all students and we believe that their work should always be of the highest possible standard.

8. INTERVENTION

Formative and summative assessments inform the teacher which groups of students require intervention. These intervention strategies will be ongoing for a term before they are reviewed to assess their impact.

These interventions include:

- Classroom interactions
- Small group work to address specific needs
- Intense work for pupils with low attainments

9. DIFFERENTIATION

So that we always have the highest possible expectations of individual learners and so they can demonstrate what they can do, understand and achieve, teachers will differentiate the curriculum according to individual needs by:

- pace
- content
- task
- relevance
- resources
- extension
- autonomy
- outcome

- teacher/adult support

10. STAFF TRAINING

Staff reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We continuously support our teachers and support staff in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.

We organize staff training to;

- Support priorities identified in the School Development Plan and Appraisals process.
- Network contacts, information and knowledge of good practice.
- Encourage colleagues to support each other and share expertise and specialist skills and knowledge.
- To familiarize about the requirements of the Cambridge Curriculum and the EYFS Curriculum.
- Promote knowledge of current trends in education, share philosophy and commonality of practice.
- Provide a forum for school's self-evaluation and provide the skill to do this.
- Enable all staff to develop the skills required to support the students in their learning.

11. EVALUATING TEACHING AND LEARNING

We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all. This process is linked to DSIB criteria for teaching and learning in order to provide a clear picture of the quality and consistency of practice across school. The evaluation of teaching and learning is carried out through:

- classroom observations
- Learning Walks
- students' books scrutiny
- displaying work throughout school and discussing quality
- internal moderation of pupils' work
- external moderation of pupils' work
- discussion with pupils
- subject leaders monitoring planning

12. MONITORING AND REVIEW

We monitor and review the school's teaching and learning policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives and research, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will therefore, review this policy every year.

13. THE ROLE OF PARENTS AND CARERS

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping students to learn. We inform parents about what and how their students are learning by:

- holding Orientation meetings and workshops to explain our strategies for teaching key areas of the curriculum and how they can support their students at home.

- sending regular notifications to parents/carers that outline such information as special events in the school and key dates.
- sending at the beginning of each month a Year Group bimonthly syllabus that outlines the topics that the students will be studying.
- sending out Reports to parents three times a year in which we explain the progress made by each child and what they have been learning at school.
- expecting parents to read with their students or to hear them read.
- sharing a homework policy for the school.
- being available to talk to parents at mutually convenient times.
- informing individual parents at parents' meetings about their child's achievements and progress
- We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their students and the school in implementing school policies.

We would therefore like parents to:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance and punctuality record possible.
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school.
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school.
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general.
- fulfill the requirements set out in our parent-school contract.

14. THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular, they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment
- ensure that staff development and appraisals policies promote good quality teaching
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include reports from subject leaders, the Headteacher's reports to governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

This Policy is reviewed by the Senior Management Team. It will be next reviewed in August 2018.