



## American Academy Junior School, Larnaca

### Teaching and Learning Policy 2015 / 2016

#### Teaching and Learning Philosophy Document

##### Policy objectives

- To implement the school's mission and promote a shared vision and definition of learning
- To focus all professional, school and community activity on the process of effective learning
- To promote a consistent pedagogy and logical curriculum that will enable progression and personalised learning
- To guarantee learning as a process of exploration and discovery, awe and wonder

##### The Learning Process

Teaching and Learning will be a co-constructive process between learners and teachers at the School. Pupils will be encouraged to ask questions and think critically. Opportunities will be provided for independent learning. Pupils will be valued as individuals and respecting their beliefs and thoughts. Pupils will be expected to show a similar respect for their peers, teachers, families and the wider community. Teachers will engage in collaborative planning to enable high quality and enjoyable learning at a subject and year level. The School will endeavor to provide pupils with a holistic education combining Learning Skills with a focus on the following areas:

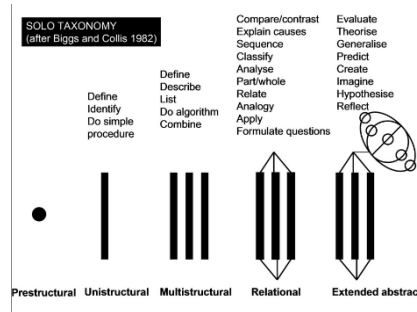
- Team Workers
- Self- Managers
- Reflective Learners
- Independent Enquirers
- Effective Participators
- Creative Thinkers

The School will provide independent learning and research opportunities in line with very best that modern educational methodology. There will be an expectation that each teacher and curriculum area manager will regularly review and update their own syllabus content and reflect on their teaching methodology. Professional development and training will be provided for all staff both throughout the school year. This will ensure the highly qualified, well-informed and well-trained staff will be at the forefront of latest practice.

The Learning process involves the acquisition of new skills, concepts and knowledge by pupils as they progress through the Early Years (and beyond). Learning happens

when pupils have the courage to think creatively, take risks, make mistakes and reflect on their experience.

Learning new concepts and skills can be broadly seen as happening in a three stage process:



Teachers will use these stages to assess children's understanding of taught concepts.

### Independent Learning

The School will aim to promote independent learning. Pupils become increasingly independent as learners when they develop and master new skills, concepts and knowledge, at the appropriate level, in order to solve problems, conduct research, undertake inquiry and coach their peers. The ability both to frame and then answer relevant questions is a sign of a truly independent learner.

### Learning styles, experience and abilities

The School recognises Learning is most memorable and effective when pupils are emotionally engaged and secure. It also recognises that all pupils have unique potential and different needs. Their experience, capacity, ability and preferred learning styles will differ. Every effort will be made to encourage individual pupils in respect of these principles.

### Progression and self-awareness

Learning can only happen when pupils' progress beyond what they already know. Pupils of all ages will be encouraged to identify their own learning needs, strengths and weaknesses and what they need to do in order to make progress.

### Assessment and tracking /Continuity in assessment

The school believes 'Continuity of assessment' promotes continuity in learning. The staff will be made aware of the importance of the consideration previous pupil assessment and outcomes as they teach. All data from formative and summative internal and external assessments will be stored to enable the tracking of pupil progress and the promotion of effective learning.

### Assessment for and assessment of learning

The School will conduct regular assessments that are both formative (**for** learning) and summative (**of** learning). Both are essential, and involve a range of formal and informal methodologies, some of which are subject specific.

### Objective assessment

In EYFS the School will assess and track pupils' learning by reference to the Early Learning Goals. They will also carry out baseline tests (Aspects and Baseline) to

assess starting points for individual learning and monitor progress. In Grades 1 to 6 we will use CEM Tests (PIPs) and standardized tests to monitor attainment and value added performance.

#### Measuring school performance

The main purpose of assessment is to promote learning and to assist the school in measuring its effectiveness. Further external benchmarking using internationally recognized standardised testing will be used to validate internal procedures.

#### Developing consistent school pedagogy

The teaching, and how it is we planned, will reflect what the school's belief about learning and particularly, what makes learning effective. Teaching will also take into account the way we assess pupil progress and will be matched to the curriculum design. In the words of Sir John Jones, we want "lessons to flow". The provision of targeted CPD will impact significantly on this aspect of professional development.

#### Planning for learning

Outstanding learning is facilitated by great teaching, which depends on careful planning. Programmes of study, curriculum units and lessons will be planned from the learning objective/s. These will always be explicitly articulated for the sake of both learner and teacher. The central planning question will be not "what will the pupils do?" but "what will the pupils learn?" Planned learning objectives should be differentiated, describing what all, most and some of the pupils will be able to do. They also lead to anticipated needs for extension and support. Lesson plans will reflect this approach. Lesson plans will be inspected as part of quality assurance. Teachers will share learning objectives (WALT) with pupils at the beginning of lessons. The focus will be on 'new learning'.

#### Differentiation and personalised approaches

The school's pedagogy will take full account of individual pupil differences. Teachers will establish the range of pupil abilities and learning styles in their classes and organise their teaching accordingly. Over time, teachers will form an opinion of the preferred styles of their pupils, adjust the way they teach to suit different classes and will offer reinforcement or extended challenge as appropriate.

#### Pace

Teaching at the right pace is one of the keys to effective learning. While reinforcement and practice are always necessary, teachers need to be constantly ready to move forward to maintain the pace of learning, both in individual lessons and through a unit of work. However, they must not be afraid to take time exploring ideas raised by the pupils as they respond to teaching. Time to reflect and to process is extremely important.

#### Promoting continuity in learning

As an international school the staff will strive to minimise negative impact of sudden changes in pupil circumstance, particularly on joining and leaving the school.

### The use of ICT

All pupils will have opportunities to use ICT as an integrated tool for learning throughout the curriculum. The School will make best use of ICT in its teaching from FS1 onwards. It will also endeavour to use the very latest digital technologies to enhance pupil learning. It is envisaged all pupils will have some access to ICT devices at home and extremely likely that iPad or similar technology will be a norm for use within the school.

### Staff responsibilities Teaching & Learning

Quality teaching and learning will be in line with the school's teaching and learning policy as stated. Teachers will engage in a range of professional learning groups that will enable them to participate in whole school dialogue. They will effectively demonstrate a range of pedagogical approaches to include collaboration, assessment, effective use of ICT, and differentiation. These will enable teachers to design learning opportunities that cater for all learning styles, interest and abilities and impact significantly on raising pupil achievement."

### The Head

The Head will ensure that 'Teaching and Learning Policy' is continually developed in consultation with the staff prior to presentation to the AA Board. The Head approves any changes required by the policy and reviews all areas of the written curriculum with the Senior Leadership Team. The Head will review and oversee the implementation of the policy, identify changes and development and the consequent needs for new resources and CPD.

The Head will:

- Ensure the school has a properly documented written curriculum that meets the requirements of our strategic planning.
- Work with key staff and team leaders as programmes of study are reviewed to ensure proper horizontal and vertical alignment and continuity.

### Department Leaders and Curriculum Teams

Department Leaders in collaboration with curriculum teams will lead the review and design of all aspects of the curriculum for which they are responsible, assigning curriculum responsibilities to their team members. They will ensure proper implementation in the classroom and full alignment.

### Teaching Staff

All staff will use the policy to guide their planning and teaching, will contribute to curriculum design and writing and take part in all relevant training to ensure the policy's effective implementation.

### Learning support staff

All staff including Learning Support Staff will use the policy to guide their work in support of learning at the school.