



# **The Apple International School, Dubai**

## **Teaching and Learning Policy**

## **Rationale and Scope of the Policy**

The Apple International school aims to inspire lifelong learning delivered by inspirational teachers. Innovation in our teaching and learning is founded on current and exciting educational research. Being forward thinking based on sound pedagogy and educational philosophical reasoning is our goal so that our teaching and learning can be a platform for well purposed change but not just for change's sake. This policy communicates how all members of the AIS family contribute to ensure Teaching and Learning is at the core of the school and how an ethos is established so that an organic approach is created. Our staff have exceptional knowledge and a deep understanding of where students are at in their learning journey. The students at AIS develop genuine awareness of their learning and know how to progress to the next steps. To support this, our parents have access to key information regarding their child(ren) which enables relationships between parents, staff, and students to be strong and to ensure that learning journeys are enhanced and supported at every opportunity.

**Overview of the policy:** The policy includes the guidelines and an overview of the teaching and learning practices in Apple International School. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Assessment, curriculum, Inclusion, EYFS framework and homework policies. Greater depth will be found in the long-term plans, short term plans, lesson plans, lesson observation forms etc. This policy reflects the teaching and learning practices expected from the KHDA inspection framework, EYFS framework, English National curriculum programme of study, and Ministry of Education ( MOE) for subjects like Arabic A/B, Islamic A/B, MSC.

## **Aim:**

The aims of this document are to set out a clear set of high expectations and a common approach to an ethos of teaching and learning at AIS so that teachers, parents/guardians, and students are all aware of and can work towards the highest possible standards of education. It is planned in such a way as to ensure that whilst teaching staff are encouraged to adopt a style of their own and are not expected to teach in any specific way, that high standards are always met and therefore, so are the best outcomes for the students.

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.

At AIS we believe that **effective learning** takes place when:

- Students 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.

- Students 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 students' ability range, irrespective of social class, race, religion, or gender.
- Students develop the skills of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving, creativity and innovation.

### **Planning and implementation of learning activities**

For effective learning to take place, the school expects staff to ensure the following. They are to:

- Have strong subject knowledge of the subject that they are teaching. Do effective prior preparation and planning resulting in a purposeful, well prepared teaching plan.
- Learning plans have clear learning objectives based on what, why and how and a success criteria based on Bloom's taxonomy. Plan lessons which are directly linked to the schemes of learning and the examination syllabus.
- Set out and share differentiated learning outcomes based on CAT 4 data, NGRT data and staff assessment of students and student needs which are categorized as working towards expectation (WTE), Meeting expectations (ME) and exceeding expectation (EE).
- Share the learning plan with the students so that they can have the ownership of their learning.
- Provide secure assessment for learning strategies, linking to subject specific learning skills and Assessment Objectives.
- Use of the link between good teaching and good learning to set the expectations among students.
- The rubrics of the learning skills chosen by the AIS to be used to develop the learning among students.
- Ensure good relationships are established through creating a positive learning environment (use of rewards and consequences) and through understanding the needs and abilities of each student.
- Employ a range of learning opportunities to ensure appropriate pace and challenge (and therefore progress).
- Have expectations which are high, but attainable, for the whole ability range.
- Involve effective use of questioning to probe students' knowledge and understanding and to challenge their thinking.
- Provide mini plenaries throughout the lesson to consolidate learning against the outcomes.
- Ensure cross-curricular links are established, particularly students' literacy skills.
- Ensure displays are up to date and support the ethos and culture of learning.
- Provide opportunities for independent learning and resilience development.
- Ensure excellent behaviour management and behaviour for learning.
- Incorporate elements of visual, auditory, reading, and kinesthetic (VARK) learning.

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

- High expectations and achievements of most students in most subjects.
- Good or rapid progress of most students 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.

## **Planning**

**There are three main planning stages:**

### **Long-term planning:**

Our long term planning is based on the Age Related Expectations (ARE)

- English National Curriculum/MOE for subjects like Arabic A/B, Islamic StudiesA/B, MSC
- NAP

Long-term planning involves outline planning of how to cover the curriculum framework for a particular stage across the school year. Long-term planning involves making decisions as a school and in the context of AIS's overall curriculum plan.

**Medium term planning:** It includes thinking about timing of learning, including considering holidays, school events and educational visits, and outside activities that need to happen at suitable times of the year access to resources, including considering whether resources are available or need to be purchased balanced coverage of each strand in the curriculum framework any concepts and skills that the learners might need more time to develop. Medium term planning involves more detailed planning of the teaching sequence of learning objectives in each term. An estimate of how long the learners will need to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills is used to decide the duration of the teaching of each concept. It also involves IEPs and BMIP for SOD.

### **Short term planning:**

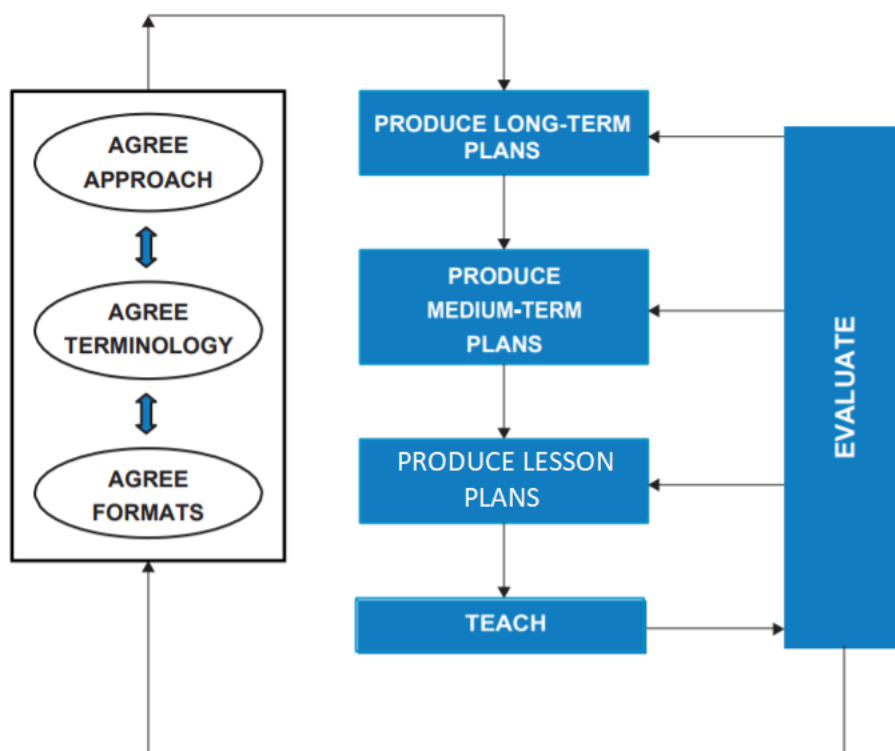
**Short term planning:** Short term plan further breaks down the medium term plan into the weekly distribution of subtopics/concepts/objectives which helps in making the daily lesson plan. It is a robust document and subject to modifications based on the reviews of completion of topics/ needing further reinforcements etc.

**Learning Plan:** Learning plans are led by the learning objectives, or parts of learning objectives, that is focused on in the lesson. A learning plan provides essential information for all adults involved in the teaching, considers the learning needs of all learners to create an inclusive learning environment provides outlines of resources, timings, and teaching and differentiated learning activities. It also involves the reflection on what went well and what needs to be improved with respect to the teachers and learner point of view. This informs the teachers about the further lessons and also the short-term plan.

Learning plan roster is shared with all teachers in the year group by the HODs/coordinators in advance. The learning plans are discussed with the subject leader and uploaded onto the school's One drive folder on a weekly basis. The teachers are expected to customize the plans according to the needs of their class.

Complete planning files and samples of associated work are monitored by Subject leaders and Coordinators/HODs.

The following diagram shows the stages of collaborative planning at the Apple International school.



## THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Successful classrooms are calm, welcoming, stimulating environments where high value is placed on learning. The visual environment at AIS is very important and displays work which is interactive, representative of all students and all ability levels. Displays reflect the taught curriculum and is changed regularly to sustain interest and discussion.

There is a **calm environment** when:

- Students are on task.
- The learning environment is inspiring with vocabulary walls, students assessed work etc.
- 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 and cyber safety policy.
- Classroom support staff work in a similar way to the teacher.
- Resources are relevant to the 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 organized 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 is grouped according to curriculum subject.
- Book corners are comfortable and attractive.

- Labels and posters are used wherever possible/appropriate to reflect the language diversity in the school.
- Students are involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources.

## **ORGANISATION of the learning environment**

The learning environment is managed in such a way as to facilitate different styles of learning. Opportunities are 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 are planned for, including, where appropriate, the outside areas, to ensure opportunities for a range of practical activities, which develops appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding.

## **PUPIL GROUPINGS**

- Students' tables is organized into groups of 2 /4 students in order to promote a learning environment that promotes and facilitates collaboration.
- Students are given the opportunity to work in mixed ability groups.
- Students are given the opportunity to work in different groups and, from time to time, with different students.
- Groupings, together with their ability, is 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.

## **Covid-19 protocols:**

AIS ensures that all the guidelines given in the Covid-19 protocols by KHDA, DHA and MOE are followed.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

At AIS 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 the 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 and BMIPs. We have high expectations of all students, and we believe that their work should always be of the highest possible standard.

## **INTERVENTION**

Formative and summative assessments inform the teacher which groups of students require intervention. These intervention strategies are 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 students with low attainments

## **DIFFERENTIATION**

We always have the highest possible expectations of individual learners, and to help them demonstrate what they can do, understand and achieve, teachers differentiate the learning tasks according to individual needs by:

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

## **Curriculum**

The curriculum at AIS inspires and challenges all learners and prepare them for the future. The School's aim is to develop a coherent curriculum that builds on young people's experiences across all the phases and that helps all young people to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

Specifically, the curriculum at AIS helps young people to:

- Achieve high standards and make very good/outstanding progress.
- Enable those not achieving age-related expectations to narrow the gap and catch up with their peers.
- Leads to qualifications that are of worth for employers and for entry to higher education.
- Fulfill statutory requirements.
- Enable students to fulfill their potential.
- Meet the needs of young people of all abilities at AIS.

## **STAFF TRAINING**

Staff reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and the SMT/SLT 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 Improvement Plan and Appraisals process.
- Conduct CPDs based on TNA based on pedagogy, lesson observation feedback, classroom behaviour management, operational needs etc.
- Technological updates, information and knowledge of good practices.
- Encourage colleagues to support each other and share expertise and specialist skills and knowledge.
- Familiarize about the requirements of the ENC/ MOE and the EYFS Curriculum as well the requirements of National Agenda parameters.
- 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.

## **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 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/drop-ins
- students' books scrutiny
- displaying work throughout school and discussing quality
- internal moderation of students' work
- external moderation of students' work
- discussion with students
- subject leaders monitoring in planning.

## **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, therefore, review this policy every year.

**ASCENT:** ASCENT stands for 'All Students Creatively Engaged in New-age Teaching'. Once every month we engage in this cycle of structured and graduated system of reflecting on the teaching learning practices in order to bring about improvements in them. The ASCENT cycle focuses on the following elements:

- Student achievement
- Teaching practices
- Inclusion
- Parent communication
- Technology integration / DL effectively managed through technology
- Innovation
- Extra miles



- Regularity and punctuality
- Timely submissions

We have condensed this cycle to ensure it is more impactful and allows for effective feedback time. Hence, now it is conducted once a term. The cycle for the second term is given as a sample:

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Cycle</b>	
<b>September</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Peer and self-evaluation. Teachers can compare if their self-assessment is resonating with that of their peers.</b></li> </ul>
<b>September - October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Model lessons/team teaching will be delivered in each department to demonstrate the elements of Good to Outstanding lessons.</b></li> <li>• <b>Mentoring and coaching of teachers will be done based on the areas identified via drop-ins and lesson observation feedbacks.</b></li> <li>• <b>Scrutiny of the Student's work and feedbacks.</b></li> </ul>
<b>October-November</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Formal lesson observations and work scrutiny</b></li> </ul>
<b>January</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Peer and self-evaluation. Teachers can compare if their self-assessment is resonating with that of their peers and the formal lesson observation feedback.</b></li> </ul>
<b>January-February</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Model lessons/team teaching will be delivered in each department to demonstrate the elements of Good to Outstanding lessons.</b></li> <li>• <b>Mentoring and coaching of teachers will be done based on the areas identified via drop-ins and lesson observation feedback.</b></li> <li>• <b>Scrutiny of the Student's work and feedback.</b></li> </ul>
<b>February</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Formal lesson observations and work scrutiny</b></li> </ul>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle</b>	
<b>April</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Peer and self-evaluation. Teachers can compare if their self-assessment is resonating with that of their peers and the formal lesson observation feedback.</b></li> </ul>
<b>April-May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Model lessons/team teaching will be delivered in each department to demonstrate the elements of Good to Outstanding lessons.</b></li> <li>• <b>Mentoring and coaching of teachers will be done based on the areas identified via drop-ins and lesson observation feedbacks.</b></li> <li>• <b>Scrutiny of the Student's work and feedbacks.</b></li> </ul>
<b>May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Formal lesson observations and work scrutiny</b></li> </ul>

## **Parents/guardians**

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/guardians that outline such information as special events in the school and key dates.
- sending the weekly learning outcomes of all the subjects for the next week that outlines the topics that the students will be studying and the sets the expectations from them.
- 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 the homework policy of 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
- By conducting coffee mornings with parents of different year levels and addressing the concerns.
- Use the parent forum platforms to share the school's initiatives and achievements and also welcome valuable feedbacks and suggestions from the parent community that will help in improving the school's teaching and learning.

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.

## **THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS**

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. 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.

Below is a table which elaborates on what outstanding teaching and learning looks like at Apple International School, in line with the KHDA inspection framework currently in place.

Teaching	Planning	The best planning will show clear evidence of well-planned course content that ensures structured progression (4.1.2). Individual lessons will be imaginative, with time and resources being used creatively to enable all groups of students to learn successfully (3.1.2). Such planning will also show clear evidence of expert subject knowledge and pedagogy (3.1.1).
	Delivery	The best teaching will develop knowledge, skills and understanding (4.1.1) and nurture interests and aspirations. In the best lessons, teachers will have high expectations of all groups of students and therefore provide very challenging work and excellent support (3.1.4) including highly appropriate SEN / G&T intervention (5.2.4). Ongoing opportunities (including homework) for students to become resourceful, innovative and creative will be embedded as routine (2.3.3).
Learning	Learning Skills / AO	Evidence of the highest quality learning taking place will be identified when students demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding above curriculum standards (1.1.3) and make better than expected progress in relation to appropriate learning objectives (1.2.2). The best use of 'Learning Skills' / AO will embed critical thinking and problem-solving skills as intrinsic features of learning (1.3.4) so that students consistently make meaningful connections (1.3.3). The best questioning will challenge students' thinking and promote insightful responses, and teachers will engage in dialogue to involve students in insightful discussions and reflection (3.1.1).
	Environment	The best learning environment will enable students to focus well (1.3.2) and interact and collaborate very effectively (1.3.2). Interactions between pupils / pupils and teachers will be very respectful and considerate (2.1.3) including consistent and fair use of praise, sanctions and rewards following the agreed systems and policies (5.2.1).
Progress	Assessment	The best measures of students' academic progress will be through internal assessment that is coherent, consistent and provides valid, reliable and comprehensive information (3.2.1). The most skilful and effective use of assessment information will influence teaching in order to optimise the progress of all groups of students (3.2.4) and will be rigorous enough to enable accurate identification of students with SEN / who are G&T (5.2.3).
	Feedback	The best feedback to students will be comprehensive and constructive showing in-depth knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of individuals (3.2.5) with written reports being equally comprehensive in conveying achievements, areas for improvement and next steps in learning (6.3.3).

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Executive Principal

The Apple International School, Dubai

Enacted and enforced: The 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2014

Reviewed Annually

Last date of Review: The 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2025

