



## Teaching and Learning Policy

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**Revised/Amended:** September 2016, September 2017

**Next review:** May 2018

		
CEO/Board		Principal
		
Head of Primary School	Head of Secondary School	Other relevant staff

**Distribution List:**

- CEO/ Board
- Principal
- Section Heads
- Academic Staff
- Parents



## Teaching and Learning Policy

### School Vision, Mission and Core Values

#### Our Vision

Providing world-class education

#### Our Mission

To empower students with a holistic, rigorous and international education for success in an ever changing world

#### Core Values

Achievement | Collaboration | Innovation | Integrity | Respect | Responsibility

### Introduction

At RIS, we believe in lifelong learning. We want learning to be a rewarding experience for everyone and recognise that the best teaching and learning experiences can help children to lead happy and fulfilling lives. Through our teaching, we aim to equip children with skills, knowledge and understanding to fulfil their intellectual and personal potential so they are enabled to make choices about their career and creative pathways.

This policy outlines our agreed view of children's entitlement and how we intend to support and encourage learning. It provides a framework of expectations to inform and reflect planning, provision and evaluation of teaching and learning at Raffles International School.

### Aims

At our school we will provide rich, relevant and varied learning experiences which allow children to develop their skills, interests and abilities to achieve, be proud and succeed together.

Through our teaching we aim to:

- nurture students who are confident in working with information and ideas – their own and those of others, responsible for themselves, responsible to and respectful of others, reflective as learners, developing their ability to learn, be innovative and equipped for new and future challenges, engaged intellectually and socially, ready to make a difference
- develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in the core and foundation subjects;
- focus on children's attainment and progress;
- enable children to become confident and independent students;
- develop children as resourceful, resilient learners;
- foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with others - both peers and adults;



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- develop the highest standards of behaviour and conduct;
- develop children's self-respect and self-awareness and encourage them to show positive attitudes and respect towards the ideas and feelings of others regardless of race, culture or religion
- enable children to understand, feel valued within, and make a positive contribution to this community;
- help children grow into reliable, independent-thinking and global citizens;
- help children be proud of their own work and recognise the achievements of others.

### **Effective learning**

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop pedagogies and student's learning skills to enable all children to learn in ways that suit them.

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways including:

- investigation, and problem solving, and critical thinking;
- open-ended tasks;
- research and finding out, with independent access to relevant resources;
- group work, paired work and independent work;
- effective questioning; presentation and drama; use of ICT;
- fieldwork and off-site visits;
- creative activities, designing and making;
- use of multi-media, visual and aural stimulus; participation in athletic and/or physical activity; homework;
- after school clubs;
- guest visitors and performers.

### **Early Years**

The principles we follow in our Early Years to develop a secure and structured curriculum to provide outstanding teaching and learning are stated below:

1. Each child is a unique child: Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured. Montessori material will be introduced to each child by the teacher to encourage and develop their own unique learning plane.
2. Caring: Teachers will set a caring and nurturing environment to promote the best from each child. Goals will be set for each child every fortnight, and will be monitored by the teachers who will provide opportunities to stimulate the learner and keep them engaged to grow into their interests, which will develop their love of learning.
3. Positive relationships: Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person. The teacher in the Early Years will meet parents regularly to update them on progress and attainment through 'Drop-In Day' meetings.





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4. Enabling environments: The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. A carefully prepared environment is set by the Montessori teachers, ensuring that children's developmental needs are met. Students will be taught to respect the material and their learning environment to provide a structure and order to their learning.
5. Learning and Development: Children develop and learn at different rates, and in all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected. Children are active learners and will learn from the environment, which will offer developmentally appropriate stimuli. Learning is guided by the children's developmental needs, and flourishes when the children are given time and space to observe, explore, and investigate the environment and engage with it. Early Years teachers will play an active part in engaging children with the environment. They facilitate the child's need to learn, not only from them, but also from peers and by themselves.

Our teaching will focus on providing opportunities for students to investigate, critically question and apply their knowledge and understanding using an increasing range of skills. The children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding in each area of the curriculum, so that they can reach the highest level of personal achievement.

The Cambridge curriculum overview sets out aims and objectives and details what is to be taught to each year group in each curriculum area. It is used to meet the MTP (medium term plan) overview which each year group sets out in the RIS daily lesson plan.

This policy seeks to enable staff to evaluate the quality of learning and teaching in their classroom and is referenced on the MTP. It informs and reflects planning and provision at Raffles International School.

#### **Primary and Secondary:**

- In Years 1 to 11, students work towards appropriate Cambridge Curriculum expectations. Coherent sequences of lessons are planned to address key aspects of learning. Teachers use their assessments of children's progress and attainment to inform lesson planning. They have high expectations and use 'top-down' planning to ensure the highest ability students are challenged during lessons.
- The core elements of Formative Assessment are evident in lessons at Raffles International School, as only through effective formative assessment can the necessary adaptations be made to the ongoing teaching process to ensure optimal learning. These elements are – Clearly stated *learning* objectives; effective peer and self-assessment through the use of well understood success criteria; effective and regular feedback – both verbal and written; and high level questioning that is planned in advance, targeted to students' ability levels and provides students *time to think*.
- Lessons have clear learning objectives that are shared with students and regularly referenced.(based on Blooms taxonomy)
- Success criteria are displayed to support expectations and independence.



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- Tasks are set appropriate to each pupil's level of ability, including higher attaining students. Students are expected to work independently and be productive.
- Learning is reviewed within the lesson (mini plenary) or at the end of lessons as appropriate.
- Lessons can be reshaped according to the teacher's assessment of students' needs.
- Students receive prompt and regular developmental feedback which enables them to reflect upon their performance and take actions to improve.
- Teachers respond to students' work with marking which informs students of their successes and indicates clearly weekly next steps needed to secure improvement.
- Students are valued as unique individuals, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We strive to meet the needs of all our students, and to ensure that all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion are met.
- When planning work for students with special educational needs, due regard is given to information and targets contained within their IEPs/PEPs. Teachers modify learning and teaching as appropriate for any pupil with specific learning needs as well as additional planning for EAL and G+T students.
- CRAs are deployed as effectively as possible to work both inside and outside of the classroom with individual students or small groups, depending upon the nature of the work.
- Where appropriate, CRAs assist teachers in the teaching and learning taking place in the classrooms.
- Classrooms are attractive, safe environments which celebrate and support students' learning. Displays should reflect the core subjects along with topics being studied currently. A stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high quality work.
- Educational off-site visits are planned to support and enrich the curriculum. A strict set of procedures is adhered to when undertaking off-site visits as outlined in our Educational Off-Site Visits policy.

**Students views on effective lessons:**

- 1) Lessons must be interactive
- 2) Lessons should provide all students with challenge
- 3) Lesson should allow students a range of resources to support their learning
- 4) Lessons should involve the use of technology
- 5) Lessons should promote critical thinking





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**All teachers are required to incorporate the following elements in their teaching:**

1. Teachers create a safe and supportive learning environment where students feel confident to take risks.
2. All learning spaces are exciting and stimulating
3. Lesson planning is clearly focused upon deep learning with high expectations
4. Students are clear of the intended learning how it is of benefit to them and what it will look like when they are successful
5. Differentiation is driven by assessment and tailors learning to the individual needs of students
6. Activities are planned to encourage independent work and collaboration, with students taking the lead
7. New technology is used to enhance learning both within and outside school
8. Questioning is carefully planned and designed to ensure that all students are engaged and challenged to think
9. All adults encourage students to develop their English language skills in writing, speaking and reading
10. A range of assessment techniques, including marking of student work is used to provide quality feedback to students which is effective in moving them on to their next steps of learning
11. There is a clear quality agenda that promotes critical thinking and richness of task
12. Praise and reward are intrinsic features.

These steps are clearly displayed in every classroom and children have access to a child friendly version so all stakeholders are clear on the key elements.

**Monitoring and Review**

We believe that teaching should be conducted in an atmosphere of trust, respect and honesty. We link our appraisal process with the DSIB criteria and this policy for teaching and learning in order to provide a clear and consistent expectation of the quality of practice across school. This policy, along with Teachers' Standards, students' standards of progress and attainment linked to the KHDA criteria for teaching and learning provides a basis for staff to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their classroom and across the school.

When evaluating teaching and learning in school, we make use of:

- classroom observation;
- data analysis;
- analysis of students' work, next step marking and teachers' feedback;
- planning scrutiny;
- moderating and discussing the quality of students' work with colleagues;
- learning walks;
- pupil interviews;
- feedback from parents and wider stakeholder surveys
- Student feedback; student survey/meet the principal sessions

All of our teachers are expected to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and help shape their own professional development plan. Along with school self-evaluation and appraisal, this informs a programme of CPD to address staff needs, with in-house expertise (Leaders of Learning) as well as external providers/Group School improvement partner is used to support professional development.



SLMT and middle leadership observe lessons on a weekly basis focusing on our schools recommendations from KHDA and our school priorities. Feedback is given and areas of development are listed on how to improve. We support our teachers in increasing their knowledge and skills, so that they can continue to develop their practice and ensure they contribute to improving the school's provision and overall vision as stated in the UAE National Agenda.

### **RIS curriculum review**

The high level of quality of our curriculum is essential to ensure our students are provided with the learning skills, knowledge and understanding required for success in their future endeavours. At RIS we review our curriculum on a regular basis (termly). The Attainment and progress data are analysed. All Subject curriculum is to be reviewed termly.

These reviews ensure our curriculum is suitable, challenging and engaging. Additionally we review our curriculum on a 'needs' basis. We use results from standardised tests to adapt particular strand delivery in our curriculum. In the academic year of 2015/2016 we reviewed and modified the following curricula-

- Learning skills – mapped into formative assessment
- Personal, Social and Health Education
- Social Studies topics
- Curriculum links to Internationalism

### **Role of the Principal/SLMT and CEO Board**

Senior leaders and Board are responsible for school effectiveness and efficiency. They should:

- drive improvements to teaching and learning;
- monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies in raising student attainment;
- ensure that staff development and appraisal policies promote good quality teaching; support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations.
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;

### **Role of Parents/Guardians**

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

- being available whenever possible for informal discussions at the beginning and end of the school day;
- holding Parent teacher conferences ;
- arranging presentations or meetings to explain specific developments;
- publishing documents and updates on the school website;



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- inviting parents to classroom, phase or curriculum events and performances.
- implementation of ISAMS and the parent portal
- Weekly chronicle
- Six-weekly curriculum information plan
- Edmodo

We believe that parents have a responsibility to support their children and the school in the implementation of school policies.

We would like parents to:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- ensure that their child is equipped for school and prepared to participate in educational activities;
- 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;
- support school in the promotion of positive and appropriate behaviour; fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.
- Review of exercise books sent home every week- signing and giving valuable comments

#### **Racial Equality and Equal Opportunities Statement**

All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals. RIS is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential.

#### **Accessibility of policy documents**

Hard copies of school policies are available for parents from the school office. A copy of each policy can also be accessed online via the school website <http://www.rafflesis.com/home>

#### **Review**

We acknowledge that this policy and our understanding of learning need to be reflective and open to new research in order for our teaching and learning to be successful. In the first instance, the SLMT and the Heads of Department/ Year Coordinators will be responsible for the monitoring and review of this Policy on an annual basis, though; any deficiencies or weaknesses in Teaching and Learning policy will be remedied without delay. They will ascertain the views of teaching staff and representatives from the Student Council and thereafter provide recommendations to the Principal. Any suggested amendments will be presented to the CEO and Advisory Council.