



Curriculum Policy

2024-25

Date last reviewed | June 2024

Review period | Annually

Lead Reviewer(s) | Primary Vice Principal & Secondary Principal



***“Empowering today,
for a limitless tomorrow.”***



**Limitless
Learning**



**Limitless
Solutions**



**Limitless
Possibilities**

Introduction

All children at The Academy have a right to a broad, balanced and relevant education which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account. Our curriculum has breadth and balance throughout the areas of learning with a particular emphasis on mastering skills. The curriculum comprises all planned experiences to promote learning and personal growth and development of our students. It meets all statutory requirements of the National Curriculum for England and UAE Ministry of Education subjects for British schools.

Aims and Values

Our school curriculum is underpinned by our three pillars of:

- Harnessing cognitive science research and evidence-based approaches to teaching, **Limitless Learning** empowers students to thrive through a strong focus on knowledge acquisition, metacognition, and wellbeing.
- Cultivating leadership and collaboration, **Limitless Solutions** empowers students to improve their communities and the world around them through an emphasis on empathy, innovation, and finding answers to real world problems.
- Seizing on the diverse pathways and opportunities available, **Limitless Possibilities** empowers students to exceed their potential through enabling self-regulation, agency and reflexivity.

These pillars are what we hold central to our school. The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objective of educating children in the knowledge, skills and concepts that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives and become lifelong learners.

As a GEMS school, we aim to build a caring and supportive community where each individual is able to grow in a safe and secure environment. We recognise that each child is a unique individual with his/her own contribution to make to the life of the school and consequently we provide extensive opportunities through a broad, balanced and ever-evolving curriculum. We value the social and moral development of each student, as well as their intellectual and physical growth.

Through our Curriculum we aim to:



- Provide broad and balanced learning experiences
- Provide a creative approach to planning and delivery that will incorporate and embed key aspects of the National Curriculum for England and EYFS framework
- Build up children's confidence and motivation to learn through the use of a range of learning and teaching styles which are based on current research
- Embed key skills and attributes in order to prepare children for real-life and everyday situations
- Provide opportunities to apply knowledge and learning in practical ways
- Enable children to be creative and to develop their own thinking
- Develop social skills and encourage children to become more active citizens within the school community and beyond
- Enable children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others
- Provide enrichment opportunities where learning and teaching can take place beyond the classroom and encourage interest in new areas
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning



Organisation and Planning

We carefully design the curriculum to create cross-subject links and real-life experiences which will enrich learning for our diverse learners and empower them to make a difference in the world.

Every year group/subject has developed bespoke curriculum overviews which are reviewed and adapted annually by teachers and leaders to meet the requirements of the UK National Curriculum, KHDA expectations, our local context and, most importantly, the needs of our current students. These are shared annually with parents.

The UAE Vision

The UAE strives to maintain a safe and secure nation where fairness and justice contribute to a positive society. At The Academy, our curriculum upholds and promotes these values in many ways, including cross-curricular and real-life projects, the delivery of MSCS lessons and a carefully designed wellbeing curriculum. These values are embedded not only in our formal curriculum but also our hidden curriculum, school policies and ethos.

We contribute to Dubai's 2030 vision, placing importance on excellence and innovation. We ensure that our students have experience in working with exponential technologies to support and enhance their learning and our strong focus on sustainability empowers students to create solutions to real world problems.

Inclusion

The curriculum at The Academy is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, including Students of Determination, English Language Learners and More and Exceptionally Able students, then we do so only after the parents of the child have been consulted.

Primary Curriculum

Early Years Foundation Stage

In EYFS, we follow the newly revised Early Years Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, published in September 2021 by the DfES. This Framework specifies the requirement for learning and development in the Early Years and provides specific areas of learning we must cover in our curriculum.

These areas are:

Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language development



Specific areas of Learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

'Explore Time' is an important part of the daily timetable, allowing children to develop and consolidate skills in a range of ways across the curriculum.

We also offer Moral, Social and Cultural Studies and our bespoke GroWell programme in addition to other enrichment opportunities, such as WEK Dance to support learning and development in targeted areas of the curriculum.

Our Foundation Stage children benefit from specialist lessons in Arabic, Islamic, Music and Physical Education, including swimming.

Key Stages 1 and 2

The curriculum for KS1 and KS2 is dynamic, engaging and designed to meet the needs of all our pupils. All class lessons are based on the learning objectives in the National Curriculum for England or UAE MOE objectives. Teachers and curriculum teams continuously monitor and ensure that all objectives are taught throughout the year to ensure learning is meaningful and to increase opportunities for the application of knowledge, skills and understanding in real-life contexts. The expectation is outstanding progress in all areas of the curriculum based on children's unique starting points. We have a focus on mastery while making sure learning is built on strong foundations.

KS1 and KS2:

- English
- Maths
- Science
- Projects 4 Change Curriculum - Design & Technology, History, Geography, Art & Design, Social Enterprise (underpinned by the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals)
- Computing/Robotics/STEAM
- Moral, Social & Cultural Studies

We also offer a range of specialist subjects across KS1 and KS2:

- Arabic for native speakers and those learning Arabic
- Islamic Studies
- French (Year 2 – Year 6)
- Spanish (Year 2 – Year 6)
- PE
- Swimming
- Music
- Performing Arts (Y1 & Y6)



Whilst there will always be specific subject knowledge and skills which are taught and practised in isolation, our broad vision of the curriculum is based on the idea that knowledge and skills are most effectively built when they are placed in cross-curricular, real-life contexts and when they progressively build on prior learning. Our curriculum is carefully crafted in collaboration with subject leaders and teachers to ensure links and progression are clear across the Primary phase. In particular, our thematic Projects 4 Change allow students to gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge across many subject areas.

Secondary Curriculum

The Secondary School covers the ages of 11-18, and is split into three distinct stages, Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9), Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11) and Key Stage 5 (Years 12-13).

Key Stage 3

Key Stage 3 is where students break away from the majority of their learning being supported by one teacher, to subject specialists delivering the curriculum. It provides uninterrupted continuation from our Key Stage 2 programme and a very clear progression pathway for our Key Stage 4 courses, including GCSEs and IGCSEs. We place high value on our curriculum being balanced and stimulating, fostering an academic culture which encourages students to become independent enquirers and thinkers, learners who read widely, challenge and question.

We aim to develop character in our students by ensuring our provision, both curricular and extra-curricular, fully engages them in their learning and that students are confident in developing and applying a range of skills which will ensure they can further their knowledge and enthusiasm across the academic, artistic, cultural and sporting disciplines.

The following subjects are taught at Key Stage 3:

- English
- Mathematics
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Arabic for native speakers and those learning Arabic
- Islamic Studies
- Social Studies
- Moral Education
- Social Enterprise
- Geography
- History
- French
- Spanish
- Drama
- Music
- Physical Education



- Art
- Design Technology
- Computing

Key Stage 4

During Year 9, students have the opportunity to choose four option subjects to study at GCSE or IGCSE Level, alongside a number of core subjects. Unless special dispensation has been sought, all students must take the following compulsory subjects:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science – Triple or Combined pathway
- Moral, Social and Cultural Studies
- Physical Education (non-examined)
- Islamic Studies (For Muslim students only)
- Arabic B is taught to non-Muslims until the end of Year 10

Added to this, there are a range of options from which the students select four additional subjects to study. Those students who may commence their GCSE studies with a low level of English will get additional support through our English Language Learners (ELL) curriculum which is tailored specifically to each student's needs.

The option subjects include:

- Geography
- Business Studies
- Economics
- Enterprise
- Psychology
- History
- French
- Spanish
- Media Studies
- Physical Education
- Art
- Drama
- Music
- Design Technology - Product Design
- Design Technology - Textiles
- Economics



- Photography
- BTEC Level 2 Sport
- BTEC Level 2 Creative Media
- *ASDAN

*ASDAN is not a GCSE but still a recognised qualification. It will develop important skills in the world of work and employment. This, if chosen, will account for two GCSE options.

Key Stage 5

At Key Stage 5, students can select from a range of A Level and International A-Levels depending on their academic performance at Key Stage 4. All subjects have entry requirements on to the 'Gold Standard' of post 16 examinations and outlined in the Sixth Form course guidance brochure. Students will select either 3 or 4 qualifications from the following:

- A level Art and Design
- A Level Biology A Level Chemistry
- A Level Computing
- A Level Design and Technology
- A Level Drama and Theatre Studies
- A Level English Language
- A Level English Literature
- A level French
- A Level History
- A level Law
- A Level Media Studies
- A Level Music
- A Level PE
- A Level Photography
- A Level Physics
- A level Politics
- A Level Psychology
- A Level Spanish
- International A Level Business Studies
- International A Level Economics
- International A Level Geography
- International A Level Mathematics
- International A Level Sociology
- BTEC Level 3 Entrepreneurship
- BTEC Level 3 Applied Science
- BTEC Level 3 ICT
- BTEC Level 3 Sport
- BTEC Level 3 Performing Arts



In some instances, students may switch to an AS qualification at the end of year 1 if they are to leave the A Level programme early due to relocation. Students that do not meet our entry requirements are supported and signposted to other institutions with the GEMS organization.

The core A level curriculum is also complemented by our unique enrichment offer where students have the opportunity to develop their skills in a different context. Students can select from the following enrichment activities:

- Global Futures Curriculum
- Sports Leadership
- Peer Mentoring
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Extended Project
- Enriched Curriculum including life skills and a practical preparation for university programme
- Learning to Learn lecture series

Moral, Social, Cultural Education (MSCE) is also a statutory part of the curriculum and is taught in an imaginative way to help students become more globally aware and develop independent skills. This is combined with additional Careers guidance which is built into the tutorial programme.

It is also compulsory that students who have an Arabic passport study the MOE curriculum for Arabic and in the same way Muslim students will study the MOE curriculum for Islamic. Details of the main content and topics taught each term are provided for parents in the form of Year group specific curriculum overviews.

These are to be found on The Academy website.

Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers:

- All teaching staff are responsible for the planning and delivery of the curriculum on a day-to-day basis and for making cross-curricular links where appropriate. Staff make amendments to planning to optimise learning opportunities when they arise.
- Implementing the curriculum and monitoring students' progress through a range of assessment tools.
- Liaising with leaders to adapt and evolve the curriculum based on best practice, our school and local context and current students' needs

Head of Department/Phase:

- Provide direction for the subject. Set clear expectations of teaching and learning.
- Monitoring the development of the subject, including clear continuity and progression across phases of the school.
- Liaise with teachers to understand how the curriculum meets our learners needs in each subject area
- Ensuring that the subject supports the school vision and pillars.
- Support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to the subject.



- Contribute to the planning and implementation of professional development for their subject.
- Monitor the quality of teaching, learning and pupil progress in that subject area as per the QA calendar including the review of planning, student book work, lesson observations, homework, classroom displays and capturing student voice.
- Provide efficient resource management for the subject.
- Respond to next steps shared by senior leaders, review and inspection teams following learning walks and school visits, in line with Academy Improvement Plans.



It is the role of each subject leader to keep up to date with developments in their subject. They review the way the subject is taught in the school and plan for improvement. This development planning links to whole-school objectives. Alongside the Curriculum Coordinator, subject leaders review the curriculum plans for their subject, ensures that there is full coverage of the National Curriculum, and that progression is planned for.

ELT / Line Managers:

- Working with the Heads of Department to ensure that the curriculum is planned and implemented to ensure outstanding progress and attainment.
- Annual PD plan and implementation for all staff.
- Monitoring planning to ensure curriculum coverage.
- Carrying out book looks to ensure coverage, progression and cross-curricular links are optimised.
- Observing learning and teaching to ensure progress is being made and assessment, including feedback supports next steps in learning.
- Regular reviews of the curriculum through staff and pupil questionnaires and open dialogue.
- Formulating an action plan to move the school forward through the Academy Improvement Plan, taking into consideration feedback and next steps shared by leaders, review and inspection teams.
- Manage the resourcing budget.

Principal/CEO:

- Provide overall direction and management of the quality of curriculum provision offered to all learners.
- Ensure that finances are budgeted to purchase resources.
- Monitor review and improve the curriculum through the School Evaluation Form and Academy Improvement Plans.
- Observe and report on teaching, learning and progress/attainment.
- Focus on continuous improvement through self-review, performance management and professional development of all teachers.
- Provide professional development and support for Principals, Vice Principals, Assistant Principals and Curriculum leaders.

Monitoring and review

The quality of curriculum provision and the impact on student learning is monitored and improved through:

- Lesson observations and learning walks
- Analysis of student data
- Diagnostic and summative assessment results
- Moderation (internal, external and international)
- Teacher observations and performance management
- Teacher professional Development
- The school Self Evaluation Form
- Academy Improvement Plan and Post-Inspection Action Plan
- Policy and procedural review



- KHDA/DSIB inspections
- BSO inspections
- GEMS internal reviews/inspections and compliance visits
- KHDA compliance visits