



GEMS Winchester School Dubai



Curriculum Policy

Person(s) Responsible: Executive Heads of Primary & Secondary

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1. Introduction

At WSD, Learning is an enjoyable, lifelong process through which everybody can achieve their potential and exceed their expectations. We will challenge and support our students to do their very best by providing an extensive range of learning experiences that exceed the statutory requirements, ensuring that each learner has access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

In this way, we aim to nurture and develop each individual socially, emotionally, academically and physically, thus preparing them to make a positive contribution to society. Rich opportunities for innovation and enterprise are provided to students wherever possible.

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2. Aims of the Curriculum

Our Curriculum:

- Is delivered in English (except Arabic A and Islamic A classes) and provides opportunities for reading, writing and speaking in English.
- Promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.
- Identifies, nurtures and harnesses every child's unique talents and potential, enabling them to develop as confident, resilient, and inquiring learners. Alongside subject knowledge and understanding, learning skills must be developed in all lessons.
- Personalises learning at every opportunity to ensure pupils are always well-supported and guided, while also enabling them to develop skills in specific areas of interest stemming from a broad curriculum offer.
- Understands the needs of our students by utilising insightful data, such as CAT4, ABT, and NGRT, and uses this information to ensure lessons can be delivered where all students make good progress.
- Ensures that our students are well-prepared for NAP tests (TIMSS, PISA) and GL PTs, and that our Curriculum provides opportunities to plug any gaps identified in students' skills and knowledge.
- Ensures innovative and dynamic Learning takes place, including cross-curricular opportunities that are deliberately planned to enrich students' experiences.
- Creates a curriculum where the transition of students between years and key stages is seamless due to careful planning. This includes preparing our students for the working world and university after they leave us. Primary and Secondary work closely together to ensure this happens.
- Ensures that high expectations and standards are the norm, and that students are consistently encouraged to strive for excellence. Challenging work should always be available and should be built into SoWs.
- Ensures the Curriculum is regularly reviewed and kept up to date with changes in the English National Curriculum and those from the Ministry of Education. Identifying strengths and weaknesses within our teaching and results helps to shape the Curriculum.
- Ensures statutory requirements of the English National Curriculum and the Ministry of Education are met, providing our students with a varied curriculum that offers opportunities in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, social, physical, aesthetic and creative education, alongside strong core values. This includes providing dedicated lessons for UAE Social Studies and Moral Education.
- Literacy, Numeracy, Speaking and Listening, Enterprise, Digital Learning and UAE Social Awareness permeate across all subjects to further develop pupil understanding and enhance skills in these areas.

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3. Procedures

The quality of life and learning within our school is of paramount importance, and we endeavour to provide a curriculum that extends beyond the one outlined in the National Curriculum. It is a combination of the broad and balanced range of subject areas that make up the National Curriculum, along with the personal, moral, and social skills and attitudes that enable students to mature into well-educated, balanced individuals. Through a broad and balanced curriculum, we aim to provide every student with the opportunities to learn, be challenged and to succeed.

Through the English National Curriculum, we teach English, Mathematics, Science, Digital Learning (ICT), History, Geography, Art, Music, Drama, French and Physical Education (PE). Online programmes and subscriptions support our teaching and learning, providing further challenging content. We also deliver aspects of social, moral, spiritual and cultural education through an integrated approach as well as discrete lessons.

Within the school, we provide an atmosphere of encouragement, acceptance, respect for achievements and sensitivity to individual needs. Each classroom fosters a climate of warmth and support, where self-confidence and self-esteem can flourish, and where all students feel valued and are encouraged to make mistakes as they learn, without fear of criticism.

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4. The Curriculum in Different Phases

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The Foundation Stage at WSD provides a strong foundation in the Early Years for children between the ages of three and five. Children learn best through a balance of child-initiated play, set-up through continuous provision, and adult-guided small group activities. The children also have access to outdoor areas, which enhance and develop the areas outlined in the EYFS Framework.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework is broken down into seven areas of learning and development, which are:

- Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)
- Communication and Language (C+L)
- Physical Development (PD)
- Literacy (L)
- Mathematics (M)
- Understanding the World (UTW)
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

As children progress from FS1 to FS2, a greater emphasis is placed on learning skills that will support and prepare them for Year One.

In the Early Years at WSD we provide:

- Quality and consistency between the classes
- A secure foundation through learning opportunities which cater to the needs of the children
- Partnership working between parents and teachers
- Equality of opportunity to support children of all backgrounds

Primary Phase

At WSD, we believe that it is essential to make learning meaningful, challenging and memorable for children.

From Years 1 to 6, we teach the National Curriculum for England, and provide children with opportunities to work on their own, in pairs and in groups. Within lessons, we value the importance of talk and collaboration as a tool for learning and invest time in this across all subject areas. At WSD, we give high priority to teaching the fundamentals of Reading, Writing, Maths, Science and the Ministry of Education subjects, to ensure children acquire the basic skills for learning and life in the 21st Century. We also offer a range of specialist lessons, taught by a subject-specific teacher, in Creative Arts (Music and Art), Physical Education (P.E.), French, ICT/Computing, and Music.

We have embedded a thematic curriculum in Years 1 to 6, which promotes high-quality learning through engaging topics that are sequenced to provide a clear progression in skills and knowledge equipping children for the next stage in their education. The chosen topics and Curriculum are also underpinned by key texts which link English and Humanities lessons.

In addition to the above, it is also important to us to provide a broad range of exciting, relevant, and creative opportunities that enrich our children's learning, including Hook Days, trips, in-school visitors, and outdoor learning opportunities, as well as inter-school and UAE-wide competitions. We also offer a range of Extra-Curricular Activities (ECAs) through our Enrichment Programme, enabling children to participate in learning experiences that may not always fit into the Curriculum, while developing their character, confidence, and creative skills. Across the three terms, children will have the opportunity to access academic, creative and sporting Enrichments.

Secondary Phase

The curriculum in Secondary is end-goal focused with students following the English National Curriculum through iGCSEs, A-levels and Level 2 and Level 3 BTECs; thus, the curriculum is back-mapped from Key-stage 5 to Key-stage 3. Secondary allows specialisation based on student aspiration with additional vocational pathways in Key-stages 4 and 5. Students are exposed to the full range of curricular options in Key-stage 3, with specialisation in Year 10 onward through GCSEs, A-levels and BTEC.

For students in Key Stage 4 and 5 we have introduced more flexible pathways to meet the needs of a much wider range of students. Level 2 BTEC programmes (for Key-stage 4) in Business, Sport and Information Technology and Level 3 BTEC programmes (for Key-stage 5) in Business, Travel and Tourism, Creative Media, Sport and Information Technology are suited to students who prefer learning in a more vocational way. Our bespoke pathways for students help students transferring from other curriculums to achieve equivalency.

Enrichment is a feature of our curriculum, led by students' needs and interests. There is an additional focus on STEAM which strengthens cross-curricular links and knowledge transfer, and builds on students' previous achievements. Students have increasing opportunities in the curriculum to develop their innovation skills, through augmented reality within core subjects, as well as through our STEAM lab and VR bus. Innovation and enterprise are embedded within our curriculum, for example Key-stage 3 students create STEM Projects with recycled material or have the chance to participate in competitions like the Global Innovation Challenge.

The Performing Arts adds an additional area of specialism for students, one that we plan to grow with time. Our performing arts programme provides opportunities for students to develop their drama and public-speaking-skills -skills.

Students are prepared well for the next phase of education within school and beyond.

Key Stage 4 Options

Outside of our option blocks, all students have lessons in Moral Education and Social Studies, in line with Ministry of Education (MOE) requirements. For general fitness, all students will have one lesson of Physical Education per week. All Muslim students attend Islamic Studies lessons while Non-Muslims attend Personal, Social & Health Education.

- All students study Mathematics in KS4 and teachers decide whether the higher or foundation course is more suitable
- All students study English Language in KS4 and teachers decide whether the first language or second language course is more suitable. English Literature is taught alongside English Language in top-sets in Year 10 and as an option-subject, contained within the option blocks, in Year 11.
- All students study Science in Option Block 1 and 2. Teachers, parents and students discuss to ensure students are placed on the correct course; Triple Science or Double Science. Double Science is reviewed at the end of Y10 with some students moving to Single Science if in their best interest. Any student taking Biology & Chemistry Triple Science must choose Physics (Block 3).
- Physical Education (PE) in Option Block 5 is a iGCSE examination subject which is separate to the non-examined PE lesson that all students do for general fitness

Year 10 Option Blocks

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6
Combined Science	Combined Science	BTEC Business	BTEC Business	BTEC IT	BTEC IT
Biology	Chemistry	Physics	Psychology	Computer Science	Business Studies
		Business Studies Media Studies Computer Science	Media Studies Accounting Drama IT Economics Art History Travel & Tourism	Accounting Economics French ICT Geography BTEC Sport	Psychology Art Global Perspectives

Year 11 Option Blocks

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4	Block 5	Block 6
Biology Double Science P.E. Art Travel & Tourism Accounting	Chemistry Double Science French Economics Psychology Media Studies	Physics Business Studies Drama Sociology Computer Science ICT	Biology Double Science History Computer Science Global Perspectives Psychology	Chemistry Double Science Geography Economics ICT Art	Physics Travel & Tourism English Literature P.E. Business Studies Additional English

Key Stage 5 Options

Outside of our option blocks, all students have lessons in Moral Education in line with Ministry of Education (MOE) requirements. For general fitness, all students will have one lesson of Physical Education per week. All Muslim students attend Arabic and Islamic Studies lessons.

Year 12 Option Blocks

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Maths G. Perspectives Psychology Physics BTEC Media BTEC Study	Biology Chemistry Business Studies Economics Computer Science BTEC IT BTEC Study	Biology Chemistry ICT English Literature Accounting BTEC Travel BTEC Study	Maths Physics Art French Business Studies Psychology BTEC Sport BTEC Business BTEC Study

Year 13 Option Blocks

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Maths G. Perspectives Psychology Physics BTEC Media BTEC Study	Biology Chemistry Business Studies Economics Computer Science BTEC IT BTEC Study	Biology Chemistry ICT English Literature Accounting BTEC Travel BTEC Study	Maths Physics Art French Business Studies Psychology BTEC Sport BTEC Business BTEC Study

Ministry of Education Subjects

A key focus in our curriculum is Arabic, Islamic Education, UAE Social Studies and Moral Education (or Moral, Social & Cultural). All requirements from the KHDA must be strictly adhered to with all students embracing the language and culture. Social Studies and Moral curriculum align with our PSHE curriculum, allowing the Emirati and world culture to be explored through learning enquiry themes.

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5. Curriculum Mapping

Each department in the school is expected to map and track the Curriculum as it pertains to its subject. The member of Senior Leadership in charge of Curriculum issues a mapping document designed to record and present the Curriculum for a particular subject as it relates to the context of WSD. The document is designed to:

- Act as a statement of what Curriculum looks like in their subject – a vision/mission of ‘this is what Science looks like at WSD’
- Create an overview of the subject from FS to KS5 to provide a comprehensive picture of the subject and its interconnectedness of the subject from a whole-school perspective.

The Curriculum Map document is made up of six sections:

- Curriculum Overview, including a statement focused on the difference between understanding, knowledge and skills and why they are integral in the subject.
- The Primary Curriculum Handbook provides an overview of the different topics and key areas of focus within each subject, giving parents and students a clear understanding of what will be taught and the skills that will be developed throughout the year.
- Five-year Curriculum Plan, including the student work that will be deep-marked – what is it, how will we do it, and what will it look like?
- Assessment, including how formative and summative assessment is used in the subject, feedback, and the interwoven nature of the objectives, as well as how a subject assesses and how it is mapped.
- Teaching and Learning, and how the teaching and learning policy is realised in practice in the subject
- Support, including how groups of students are supported in the subject
- Resources

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6. Curriculum Coverage

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Blended Learning focuses on the seven key areas of learning for EYFS (Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts & Design, Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social & Emotional Development). A strong emphasis is placed on Phonics due to the large number of EAL students.

Primary Phase

Table of coverage shown in minutes of learning per week:

Year-group	FS1	FS2	1	2	3	4	5	6
English			240	240	240	240	240	240
English reading			120	90	100	100	60	60
Maths			240	240	240	240	300	300
Mental Maths			0	0	60	60	40	40
Science			120	120	120	120	120	120
Moral Education and UAE Social Studies			0	80	80	80	80	80
Humanities			40	40	40	40	40	40
Arabic	60	200	200	240	240	240	240	240
Islamic Studies/PSHE	0	90	120	120	120	120	120	120
PE	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Computing			60	60	60	60	60	60
Assembly			20	20	40	40	20	20
ECA			40	40	40	40	40	40
SPAG			0	0	0	0	0	0
Handwriting			0	0	20	20	0	0
Phonics			140	170	0	0	0	0
Creative Arts Music/Art	30	30	60	60	60	60	60	60
French			0	0	0	0	60	60
Information Assembly (Morning)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
STEAM lesson		30						
Extended Learning			0	0	20	20	0	0
			1640	1640	1640	1640	1640	1640

The Secondary Phase table can be found on the next page.

Secondary Phase

Table of coverage shown in minutes of learning per week:

Year-group	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Assembly	55	55	55			55	55
MSC	55	55	55	55		55	55
Enrichment	55	55	55				
Arabic	220	165	165	165	165	165	165
Drama	55	55	55				
Art	55	55	55				
Computing	110	110	110				
English	220	275	220	220	165		
Sustainability	55	55	55				
Humanities	110	110	110				
Islamic	110	110	110	110	110	110	110
Maths	220	220	275	220	275		
MFL	110	110	110				
P.E.	110	110	110	55	55	55	55
Science	220	220	220				
Option A	0	0	0	110	165	330	330
Option B	0	0	0	165	165	330	330
Option C	0	0	0	165	165	330	330
Option D	0	0	0	165	165	330	330
Option E	0	0	0	165	165		
Option F	0	0	0	165	165		
	1760	1760	1760	1760	1760	1760	1760

NB: The table below shows how we are meeting the MSC requirements

Year Group	Minutes required	Lessons to deliver it	Notes
7-9	80	MSC Lessons + 1 integrated lesson	Form tutors will need to have one form time a week when students complete the textbook for the integrated lesson.
10	80	Form + XL (60 mins) Wellbeing (25 mins)	This will be completely run by form tutors. 1 extended learning every 4 weeks will be an assembly – if possible it can be linked to an MSC topic
11	40	Wellbeing (25 mins) + 1 Form Time (15 mins)	Form teachers will take full responsibility for the delivery.
12-13	40	1 MSC Lesson per week.	Form teachers will take full responsibility for the delivery.

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7. Responsibilities

The Executive Leadership Team will ensure that:

- All statutory elements of the Curriculum, as well as those subjects the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives that reflect the aims of WSD and indicate how the needs of individual students will be met. This will include how the subject will be taught and assessed, as well as the use of language (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), and the use of digital technology.
- The amount of time allocated for teaching the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team, through monitoring of planning and timetables. All students can access the curriculum through effective and appropriately resourced differentiated activities. Where appropriate, the individual needs of some students are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from the National Curriculum.
- The Curriculum is designed to reflect our local community and the opportunities within our local area. The Curriculum will also ensure that all aspects of community cohesion are addressed.
- The procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements, and students and their parents receive information to show how much progress the students are making, how they compare with national expectations, and what is required to help them improve.
- There is evidence of Literacy, Numeracy, Enterprise, Digital Learning, and UAE Social Awareness during observations, learning walks, book looks, and reviews of schemes of work. This should be recorded using various proformas, and copies should be kept as evidence.

Senior and Middle Leadership will ensure that:

- Termly audits will be conducted to track curriculum coverage and ensure continuity and progression for students throughout the school.
- The school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.
- The subjects for which they are responsible are led and managed effectively to enable the successful delivery of the whole curriculum, utilising quality resources.
- Subject/Phase Leaders keep up to date with National Curriculum changes and ensure this is reflected in SoWs. It is essential that reviews take place, as we continually strive to improve both the content and the delivery of our teaching.
- Leaders of Literacy, Numeracy, Enterprise, Digital Learning, and UAE Social Awareness should support other subject areas in ways that enable them to embed other key areas into their subject. This should also be monitored with the sharing of good practices taking place.

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8. Arrangements for Quality Assurance

Tracking and Monitoring Student Outcome Data

The Senior Leadership Team will review termly reports and annual updates covering the following information:

- The standards reached by individuals, groups and cohorts in English, Maths, Science, Islamic and Arabic at Primary School
- The standards reached by individuals, groups and cohorts in all subjects in Secondary.
- The number of students for whom the Curriculum was disapplied on Educational/SEN grounds:
 - The arrangements which were made
 - How students and parents were informed
 - How progress was monitored
 - The progress made by those students
- The evidence of the impact of the Curriculum on achievement and enjoyment. This will include the opinion of students through the student council.
- The views of staff about the action required to improve achievement.
- The nature of any parental complaints.

Quality Assurance of the Quality of Teaching

At WSD, we regularly conduct Quality Assurance (QA) processes to ensure leaders and teachers are clear on what we are doing well, as well as what we need to improve further. At WSD, we use a range of different processes to conduct our QA, which are outlined below:

Process	Explanation	Grading System
Formal Lesson Observations	Each teacher will receive a minimum of 3 full lesson observations a year, which usually take place in the Autumn Term and the Summer Term.	KHDA Grading (Outstanding, Very Good, Good, Acceptable, Weak or Very Weak)
Step-Lab Drop-Ins	Middle Leaders and SLT will conduct regular 'drop-ins (approx. 1 period a week) that last no more than 7 minutes per drop-in, to review teaching practice against the WSD Teaching Principles.	No formal grading, only formative comments. If the observation gives cause for concern, this should be highlighted.
Book Scrutiny	Middle Leaders and SLT will conduct regular book scrutiny to assure the quality and quantity of student work, as well as ensuring our feedback policy is being followed.	Yes/No/Needs Development

Verbal feedback will be provided to staff within 24 hours of any QA process, with the expectation that all QA processes will also be recorded as appropriate within 24 hours of the observation, allowing Middle and Senior Leaders to review patterns and trends for their teams.

To ensure the QA takes place, a calendar will be created to guide the QA processes. Each half-term, the Vice Principal with responsibilities for QA will produce a summary of the outcomes of MER across the school, allowing Middle and Senior Leaders to review what is going well and what needs further improvement.

The school will use the results of our QA to inform accurate self-evaluation statements and guide future professional learning and development.

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9. Relationship to Other Policies

The school policy on the curriculum embraces WSD's aims and ethos, reflected in its policies and procedures. Key policies which are explicitly linked are:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Learning & Teaching Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Health and Safety Policies
- Appraisal & Performance Management
- Inclusion Policy

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