

# Dubai Schools Curriculum Policy



مدارس دبي  
DUBAI SCHOOLS



## Policy Details

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## 1. Purpose

This policy establishes the principles and approach to curriculum design and implementation at Dubai Schools, in alignment with the School's Vision, Mission, Values, and the Dubai Government's Education 33 (E33) Strategy. It ensures a coherent, rigorous, and inclusive curriculum aligned with the New York Next Generation State Standards for English, Math, and Science, supporting high-quality outcomes for all students.

Through a whole-school approach, the curriculum provides a structured and consistent framework that is integral to teaching and learning. It is designed to ensure that all students have equitable access to high-quality learning experiences that are meaningful, engaging, and appropriately challenging.

The curriculum is designed to be:

- **Consistent, Challenging, and Culturally Responsive:** Reflecting the goals of Dubai Schools and the diverse context of our learning community, our curriculum offers high expectations and inclusivity from each student's academic starting point.
- **Balanced and Holistic:** We promote lifelong learning by addressing not only academic knowledge but also the social, emotional, and cultural development of each child.
- **Differentiated and Personalized:** Our approach tailors instruction through differentiation and curriculum adaptation to meet the unique needs of all learners, informed by data and professional observations, ensuring personalized pathways to success.
- **Focused on Maximizing Progress:** With a commitment to raising attainment, we emphasize consistent progress monitoring to help all students achieve their fullest potential.
- **Empowering Future-Ready Learners:** We support students to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors who are prepared to shape the future.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all students, teachers, and academic leaders across all grade levels and subject areas at Dubai Schools, and encompasses all subjects within the American curriculum aligned to the New York Next Generation State Standards, as well as UAE Ministry of Education (MOE) subjects.

It outlines expectations for curriculum design, implementation, adaptation, and review, ensuring consistency and alignment across all grade levels and subject areas. The policy applies to all stakeholders involved in curriculum delivery, including school leaders, middle leaders, teachers, and support staff.

The scope includes all aspects of teaching and learning related to curriculum planning, differentiation, inclusion, and enrichment, ensuring equitable access and high-quality learning experiences for all students.

### 3. The Dubai Schools Vision, Mission and Values

#### a. School Mission

Combining an inquisitive teaching approach and future-focused skillset delivery, we work hand-in-hand with the community to nurture students to become independent and empathetic learners. We offer an American education that is guided by Arabic principles and Islamic values, and fosters future-ready graduates, driven by pride and tolerance.

#### b. School Vision

Dubai Schools align with Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum's vision of a School Model that enriches Dubai's educational system by developing individuals who are both nationally rooted and globally competent.

#### c. School Values

##### **Future-ready:**

Equipping students with the necessary life skills to face future challenges, both national and global, with resilience, while encouraging them to be ambitious, self-directed learners.

##### **Trust & Empathy:**

Developing a home-school relationship based on trust and respect, while fostering a welcoming school environment in order for every student to flourish and every parent to feel reassured. Bringing empathy into our classrooms and embedding it as a core value.

##### **Collaboration & Inclusion:**

Working together with education partners, parents, and the wider community to achieve shared goals, making every member of the school community feel valued. Cultivating an inclusive culture that recognizes and honors an individual's strengths and abilities.

### **Cultural Preservation:**

A dynamic and forward-thinking learning system that is rooted in the Emirati culture. Guided by Arabic and Islamic values to further foster a culture of strong identity and tolerance, while maintaining a global outlook.

### **Academic Excellence:**

A strong international curriculum that prepares and inspires students to contribute positively towards the future in a caring and inclusive environment. High-quality innovative education will be delivered to equip students with essential problem solving, critical thinking, and life skills, so that they graduate with a thorough understanding of the world they will inhabit and lead in their future.

### **Dubai Schools' Curriculum**

We offer a broad and balanced American curriculum based on the New York State Education Department (NYSED) standards through the Next Generation Learning Standards, leading to an American High School Diploma. Our curriculum empowers and inspires students from diverse abilities and backgrounds, nurturing empathetic, self-driven individuals who embody responsibility, tolerance, and pride. Our goal is to cultivate the Leaders of Tomorrow through facilitating student experiences in the classroom that foster the qualities outlined in our Profile of a Graduate and align with our Dubai School Values; Future-ready, Trust & Empathy, Collaboration & Inclusion, Cultural Preservation and Academic Excellence.

Future-ready: Our graduates will be well-rounded and ambitious individuals, equipped with a broad range of transferable skills that can be applied in a rapidly changing and uncertain world.

They will be able to:

- communicate effectively in both Arabic and English
- identify their strengths and areas for ongoing development
- build diverse networks that support them both personally and professionally
- assess risk effectively and make informed decisions
- actively contribute to UAE's sustainable development

**Trust and Empathy:** Our students will be empathetic individuals, highly skilled in building and maintaining positive relationships.

They will be able to:

- relate well to others with emotional intelligence
- self-regulate themselves effectively
  - navigate conflicts with a solution-focused mindset
  - compromise without sacrificing their integrity

**Collaboration & Inclusion:** Our students will have secure values and beliefs and will be respectful and tolerant of others. They will be able to:

- work in partnership, and effectively contribute as part of a team
- take initiative and demonstrate leadership
- remain open-minded and demonstrate genuine kindness to others
- recognize the value of diversity in fostering new ideas and perspectives

**Cultural Preservation:** Our students will take pride in Emirati culture and heritage, align with the forward-thinking vision of the UAE, and demonstrate deep respect for Islamic values. They will be able to:

- articulate and apply key Islamic teachings and principles and values
- demonstrate a broad understanding of the world and the influential role of the UAE
- participate responsibly in economic, social, and cultural life and contribute meaningfully at a local, national and international level
- be actively engaged and empowered global citizens

**Academic Excellence:** Our graduates will be enthusiastic, motivated, lifelong learners, driven to achieve high standards of achievement, and open to new ideas and thinking. They will be able to:

- Use core literacy, communication, numeracy, and scientific skills effectively
- think creatively and innovate with impact
- reason, evaluate, and seek solutions to problems
- link and apply learning in new situations

## d. Key Definition(s)

**Curriculum** – Planned, standards-based learning ensuring progress, wellbeing, and future readiness.

**Curriculum Alignment** – Coherent alignment of standards, teaching, and assessment to secure progress.

**Curriculum Design** – Structured, relevant learning experiences promoting skills, knowledge, and understanding.

**Formative Assessment** – Ongoing assessment used to monitor progress and guide instruction.

**Summative Assessment** – Evaluation at the end of a unit or term to measure mastery of learning objectives.

**Differentiation** – Planned adaptation of teaching to meet diverse learning needs effectively.

**Curriculum Adaptation** – Adjustments ensuring access, challenge, and equity for all learners.

**Intervention** – Targeted, time-bound support accelerating progress for identified students.

**Student Attainment** – Achievement measured against grade-level expectations and curriculum standards.

**Student Progress** – Rate of improvement from starting points over time.

**Inclusion** – Ensuring all students access high-quality education and feel valued.

**Students of Determination (SEND)** – Learners requiring additional support or challenge to access learning.

**Vertical Alignment** – Sequenced learning progression across grade levels ensuring continuity.

**Horizontal Alignment** – Consistency of curriculum delivery within grade level or subject teams.

## e. Roles and Responsibilities

### Policy Governance and Accountability

**Policy Owner:** Associate Principals (Curriculum) / Cluster Director MoE Subjects  
Responsible for overall approval, strategic direction, and ensuring alignment with the school's Vision, Mission, and Values.

**Implementation Leads:** Associate Principals (Curriculum) / Phase Principals  
Responsible for the day-to-day implementation, monitoring consistency of practice, staff support, and ensuring the policy is embedded across the school.

### **Oversight:** Superintendent and Governors

Responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the policy, ensuring compliance with safeguarding and inclusion expectations, and reviewing impact on student outcomes and wellbeing.

Effective curriculum implementation is a shared responsibility across all levels of the school. Clear lines of accountability ensure that the curriculum is strategically aligned, coherently designed, consistently implemented and responsive to the academic, linguistic, cultural and developmental needs of all students.

### **Superintendents**

Superintendents hold overall accountability for the quality, implementation and impact of the curriculum within their school. Their responsibilities include:

- Providing strategic leadership for curriculum provision, ensuring alignment with the Dubai Schools Vision, Mission and Values, Taaleem expectations, regulatory requirements and school improvement priorities.
- Ensuring the curriculum meets the requirements of the New York State Education Department (NYSED) standards, UAE Ministry of Education requirements and relevant KHDA expectations.
- Ensuring the curriculum reflects the context of Dubai Schools, including Emirati culture, Arabic and Islamic values, UAE national priorities and the needs of the communities served.
- Establishing and communicating high expectations for curriculum quality, academic achievement, student progress and educational equity.
- Ensuring appropriate curriculum provision, adaptation and support for all learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs), Students of Determination (SoD), gifted and talented students and other identified groups.
- Ensuring appropriate leadership capacity, staffing, resources, professional development and structures are in place to support effective curriculum implementation.
- Holding senior and middle leaders accountable for the quality, consistency and impact of curriculum implementation.
- Evaluating curriculum effectiveness through student outcomes, internal and external assessment information, quality assurance evidence, stakeholder voice and other relevant performance measures.
- Ensuring curriculum priorities are appropriately reflected within school improvement planning, professional development and resource allocation.

- Reporting to the Director – Dubai Schools, governance structures and other relevant stakeholders on curriculum quality, implementation and impact, as appropriate.

### Phase Principals

Phase Principals are responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of the curriculum within their designated phase and for translating whole-school curriculum expectations into consistent practice. Their responsibilities include:

- Providing educational leadership for curriculum implementation, teaching, learning and student outcomes across their phase.
- Ensuring curriculum expectations, policies and agreed approaches are implemented consistently across grade levels and subject areas.
- Working closely with the Associate Principal – Curriculum (K–12) to ensure alignment, progression and coherence between the whole-school curriculum framework and phase-level implementation.
- Monitoring the quality of curriculum implementation through learning walks, lesson visits, planning reviews, student work, assessment information, student voice and other quality assurance activities.
- Holding Middle Leaders accountable for curriculum implementation, student progress and the effectiveness of agreed improvement actions.
- Ensuring curriculum provision is appropriately adapted to meet the needs of ELLs, Students of Determination, gifted and talented students and other identified groups.
- Using attainment, progress and other performance information to identify priorities, address variation and ensure appropriate intervention and challenge.
- Ensuring appropriate transition, progression and continuity within and between phases.
- Supporting the professional growth and development of Middle Leaders and teachers.
- Ensuring curriculum priorities are reflected within phase improvement planning and professional development.
- Working collaboratively with senior leaders, inclusion teams, assessment leaders and Middle Leaders to secure strong outcomes for all students.

### Associate Principal – Curriculum (K–12)

The Associate Principal – Curriculum (K–12) provides strategic and operational leadership for curriculum design, coherence, progression and implementation across the school. Their responsibilities include:

- Leading the development, review and continuous improvement of the K–12 curriculum framework.

- Ensuring curriculum design and documentation align with NYSED standards, UAE Ministry of Education requirements, KHDA expectations and the Dubai Schools educational model.
- Ensuring clear curriculum progression, sequencing and continuity across grades, phases and subject areas.
- Maintaining oversight of curriculum maps, scope and sequence documents, pacing guidance and other agreed curriculum documentation.
- Ensuring the curriculum is appropriately contextualized to reflect Emirati culture, UAE national identity, Arabic and Islamic values and relevant local and global contexts.
- Working with Phase Principals and Middle Leaders to ensure consistent and effective implementation of the agreed curriculum.
- Ensuring appropriate connections between curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and professional development.
- Leading the review of curriculum effectiveness using internal and external assessment information, quality assurance evidence, student work, stakeholder voice and other relevant evidence.
- Identifying curriculum strengths, gaps, duplication and areas requiring further development and coordinating appropriate improvement actions.
- Ensuring curriculum design provides appropriate access, adaptation, support and challenge for ELLs, Students of Determination, gifted and talented students and other identified groups.
- Supporting the development of interdisciplinary learning, literacy across the curriculum, academic language, critical thinking, inquiry, problem-solving and authentic application of learning.
- Providing curriculum leadership, guidance, coaching and professional development for Phase Principals, Middle Leaders and teachers.
- Facilitating collaboration and professional dialogue across phases and departments to strengthen K-12 coherence.
- Supporting curriculum-related preparation for KHDA inspection, accreditation and other external quality assurance processes.
- Advising the Superintendent on curriculum priorities, implementation, resources, risks and areas for development.

### **Middle Leaders – Heads of Department (HODs) and Grade Level Leaders (GLLs)**

Middle Leaders are responsible for translating whole-school curriculum expectations into high-quality and consistent practice within their subjects, departments or grade levels. Their responsibilities include:

- Leading curriculum implementation within their designated subject, department or grade level.

- Ensuring curriculum planning is aligned with agreed standards, scope and sequence, pacing expectations and whole-school curriculum requirements.
- Supporting the development and review of curriculum maps, units of learning, common assessments and supporting resources.
- Ensuring appropriate curriculum coverage, sequencing, progression and consistency across classes.
- Facilitating regular collaborative planning and review meetings focused on curriculum implementation, teaching, assessment and student progress.
- Supporting teachers in understanding curriculum standards and translating these into clear learning intentions, appropriate learning experiences and assessment opportunities.
- Monitoring the quality of curriculum implementation through planning, student work, assessment evidence, learning visits and professional dialogue.
- Using student attainment and progress information to identify gaps, variation and priorities for intervention, reteaching or extension.
- Ensuring appropriate adaptation, scaffolding and challenge for ELLs, Students of Determination, gifted and talented students and other identified groups.
- Supporting teachers with curriculum resources, instructional strategies and subject- or grade-specific guidance.
- Promoting consistent expectations for academic language, literacy, critical thinking, inquiry and application within their area of responsibility.
- Providing coaching, feedback and professional development to strengthen teacher knowledge and curriculum implementation.
- Identifying curriculum or implementation concerns and escalating these appropriately to Phase Principals and/or the Associate Principal – Curriculum.
- Contributing to school self-evaluation, improvement planning, inspection and accreditation processes relating to curriculum and student outcomes.
- Promoting collaboration within and across departments and grade levels to strengthen consistency and continuity of learning.

## Teachers

Teachers are responsible for translating the intended curriculum into high-quality learning experiences that enable all students to attain curriculum standards and make strong progress. Their responsibilities include:

- Developing secure knowledge of the curriculum standards, content, skills and progression expectations relevant to the grades and subjects they teach.
- Planning and delivering the agreed curriculum in accordance with school curriculum maps, scope and sequence documents and pacing expectations.

- Delivering high-quality, engaging and student-centered instruction that is appropriately challenging and responsive to students' starting points.
- Providing explicit instruction, modelling, guided practice and appropriate opportunities for independent application.
- Developing students' speaking, listening, reading, writing and academic vocabulary across the curriculum.
- Incorporating inquiry, critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, creativity and authentic real-world application where appropriate.
- Adapting teaching, resources and learning experiences to provide equitable curriculum access for ELLs, Students of Determination and other students requiring additional support.
- Providing appropriate depth, complexity and extension for gifted, talented and high-attaining students.
- Using formative and summative assessment effectively to identify students' understanding, misconceptions, attainment and progress.
- Using assessment evidence to adapt instruction, provide intervention, reteach concepts and extend learning.
- Providing students with timely, specific and constructive feedback that enables them to understand their progress and next steps.
- Maintaining accurate records of student attainment and progress and contributing to agreed assessment and reporting processes.
- Creating safe, inclusive, language-rich and culturally responsive learning environments characterized by high expectations for all students.
- Promoting student agency, independence, responsibility, collaboration and engagement in learning.
- Working collaboratively with colleagues through grade-level, departmental and cross-curricular planning and professional learning.
- Participating actively in professional development, coaching and professional learning communities.
- Reflecting on the impact of their teaching and using evidence, feedback and professional learning to continuously improve practice.
- Raising curriculum, progress or student-support concerns promptly through the appropriate leadership structures.

## f. What Makes Our Schools Unique

At Dubai Schools, our curriculum reflects the distinctive qualities that set us apart, ensuring a well-rounded, culturally responsive, and globally minded educational

experience. These unique elements strengthen our teaching and learning environment and enrich our students' academic and personal development.

### **Strategic Partnerships**

Our partnerships with Knowledge Fund (KF) and The Executive Council of Dubai (TEC) provide us with access to cutting-edge resources, innovative educational practices, and expert support. This collaboration enhances the quality of teaching, learning, and student outcomes, aligning with the broader goals of the Dubai Schools Project.

### **Range of Bilingual/Multilingual Learners (BML)**

Our student body represents a range of Bilingual/Multilingual Learners (BML). Our curriculum is designed to support language acquisition and proficiency, ensuring all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs), can excel academically.

### **Global Perspectives**

Our curriculum promotes an international outlook, preparing students to be responsible global citizens. Through cross-curricular learning, international themes, and real-world connections, students develop an understanding of different cultures, global issues, and interconnectedness.

### **Strong Links to Emirati Culture and Islamic Values**

We are dedicated to an international perspective while maintaining and enhancing strong ties to Emirati culture and Islamic values. Subjects like Arabic Language, Islamic Education, and UAE Social Studies provide students with a deep appreciation of local heritage, fostering respect, pride, and cultural identity.

### **Community Partnerships**

We actively foster partnerships with the local community, including businesses, cultural organizations, Higher Educations, and service providers. These collaborations provide students with real-world learning experiences, community service opportunities, and insights into local industries and traditions.

### **Innovative and Personalized Learning**

Our commitment to innovation and personalization ensures that every student receives an education suited to their needs, interests, and abilities. Through differentiation, extracurricular opportunities, and a flexible approach to learning, students are empowered to reach their full potential.

## Holistic Development

Our curriculum supports the development of not just academic skills but also social, emotional, and ethical growth. By integrating the principles of critical thinking, communication, research, and self-management, we nurture well-rounded individuals prepared for lifelong success. These unique aspects of Dubai Schools ensure that we provide a learning environment where students can thrive academically, socially, and personally. By combining global outlooks, local values, strategic partnerships, and personalized learning, we prepare our students to be confident learners, responsible citizens, and future leaders.

## g. Contexts for Learning

In addition to the New York Next Generation State Standards for English, Math, and Science, our curriculum incorporates subjects mandated by the UAE Ministry of Education (MOE), such as Arabic Language, Islamic Education, UAE Social Studies and Moral, Social, and Cultural Education (MSC). This integration ensures that students receive a comprehensive education that respects and reflects the cultural and national values of the UAE. We integrate subjects through cross-curricular learning to promote critical thinking, creativity, and real-world problem-solving.

Our students have multiple opportunities for personal achievement in addition to their academic day. These include extracurricular activities (ECAs), field trips, national and international competitions, creative arts, sports, and STEM and AI opportunities to enrich learning experiences. We foster a positive school culture and community where students develop respect, responsibility, and leadership skills. By maintaining these principles and learning contexts, we strive to nurture confident, capable learners who are ready for future academic and life challenges.

## h. Curriculum Design

At Dubai Schools, we follow a backward design model, focusing on desired end goals to ensure a coherent and meaningful curriculum. This approach reflects our identity as an American school while aligning with the aspirations of the UAE National Vision.

Our curriculum is designed to be innovative, relevant, and personalized, meeting the diverse

needs of all learners, including Bi and multi-lingual students (BMLs), students with Special Educational Needs (SEN), Gifted and Talented (G&T) students, and other more abled learners. Interventions are integrated into subject learning, with specific accommodations to help them engage in the curriculum while enhancing their language and learning abilities. Conceptual and interdisciplinary connections ensure that all students can apply knowledge to real-world situations, fostering a deeper understanding across subjects. Regular horizontal and vertical curriculum reviews support continued progress and align with local and national priorities and all learners are fully supported in their academic journeys.

## Core Principles of Curriculum Design

### 1. **Breadth and Depth:**

Our curriculum provides a broad range of subjects with deep, rigorous exploration of key concepts. Students engage in core subjects such as English, Math, Science, and UAE MOE subjects, alongside opportunities in Creative/Fine Arts, STEM, and Sports.

### 2. **Coherence:**

Using a spiral curriculum approach, key concepts and skills are revisited and expanded across grade levels. This ensures consistent progression and deeper understanding over time.

### 3. **Rigor:**

The curriculum challenges students through high expectations, critical thinking, and problem-solving, preparing them for academic success and future challenges.

### 4. **Relevance:**

Learning experiences are connected to real-world applications and the unique context of Dubai Schools. This relevance ensures that students can apply their knowledge and skills beyond the classroom, promoting lifelong learning.

### 5. **Horizontal and Vertical Alignment:**

Regular curriculum reviews ensure alignment across grade levels (vertical) and between subjects within the same grade (horizontal). This supports smooth transitions, consistent learning goals, and continued progress for all students.

### 6. **Personalization and Choice:**

Differentiation, curriculum adaptation, and a range of learning pathways offer students choice and personalized support. BMLs, SoD, G&T, and more abled students benefit from targeted interventions and accommodations tailored to their needs.

### 7. **Cultural Preservation and Sensitivity:**

Our curriculum integrates UAE MOE subjects and reflects the cultural backgrounds of our students. This ensures students develop their national identity, respect, and global awareness.

## Curriculum Adaptation

Our curriculum is thoughtfully designed to engage, challenge, and support every student, considering their academic, language, and learning needs, as well as their aspirations, and interests. Recognizing that almost all our students and BML's, we proactively adapt the curriculum to ensure equitable access and success for all. We use a variety of scaffolding techniques, differentiated materials, adaptive technology, and personalized learning strategies to empower students of all abilities and language proficiencies to achieve their personal and academic goals. These adaptations help students gradually build confidence and competence, ensuring that they can fully engage with the curriculum;

- Targeted Interventions that are tailored to address individual needs.
- Language support that builds vocabulary, comprehension, and language skills.
- Accommodations and modifications that adjust instructional delivery, resources, and assessment formats to align with students' learning profiles.

We also ensure that ELLs, SEND and Gifted and Talented students can actively participate and succeed by offering appropriate extracurricular activities (ECAs) that complement classroom learning, fostering curiosity, enjoyment, and engagement with the wider community. Our commitment to curriculum adaptation ensures that every student, regardless of their background or learning profile, has the tools and opportunities to be future-ready. By adapting our curriculum thoughtfully and responsively, Dubai Schools uphold their mission of nurturing independent, empathetic, and future-ready individuals who are prepared to contribute meaningfully to society.

## 9. Curriculum Framework

### Kindergarten (Phase 1)

#### *Arabic Curriculum (KG)*

In Kindergarten, the focus is on building a strong foundation for Arabic language acquisition through interactive, play-based activities. Students engage in songs, stories, and hands-on experiences that develop basic listening and speaking skills while fostering an early appreciation for Arabic culture.

#### *American Curriculum (KG)*

A hands-on, play-based curriculum emphasizes discovery, creativity, and social-emotional

development. Inquiry-based activities support both academic and personal

growth, preparing students for success in elementary education. At the heart of our program,

students engage in literacy-rich learning environments that foster early reading skills, including phonemic awareness, vocabulary building, and comprehension strategies. We prioritize oral language development through storytelling, conversation, and interactive read-aloud sessions, creating a strong foundation for future literacy achievement.

The approach to literacy extends beyond the classroom, encouraging a love for reading through shared reading experiences, independent exploration of books, and access to a variety of texts. Literacy is embedded across all subject areas, ensuring students are exposed to reading, writing, listening, and speaking opportunities throughout their daily activities. We also integrate UAE culture and heritage into these learning experiences, ensuring that students not only develop their academic skills but also a strong sense of cultural identity, respect for traditions, and an appreciation of Islamic values. This holistic approach nurtures curiosity, confidence, and a lifelong passion for learning, helping students become well-rounded, empathetic, and independent learners who can engage with the world around them through a strong literacy foundation.

## **Elementary (Grades 1-5, Phase 2)**

### *Arabic Curriculum (Grades 1-3)*

In Grades 1-3, Arab students embark on their formal Arabic language education, guided by the UAE National Curriculum for Arabic. Using Ministry of Education (MOE) prescribed textbooks as primary resources, students develop foundational skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Emphasis is placed on building a strong linguistic base while fostering a love for the Arabic language and culture.

### *Arabic Curriculum (Grades 4-5)*

In Grades 4-5, Arab students continue to deepen their Arabic proficiency through inquiry-based learning. Instruction focuses on enhancing reading comprehension, writing fluency, and effective communication skills. Lessons encourage independent thinking, creativity, and practical application of language skills, enabling students to connect with Arabic literature and cultural heritage in meaningful ways.

### *American Curriculum (Grades 1-5)*

Our cross-curricular approach integrates foundational skills in reading, writing, and math, allowing students to make meaningful connections across various subjects. By integrating these core skills with other disciplines, students develop a holistic understanding of their learning, reinforcing knowledge and enhancing their problem-solving abilities. This approach is designed to not only strengthen academic proficiency but also cultivate critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. Each lesson is carefully crafted to foster a deep appreciation of UAE culture, while simultaneously promoting global awareness. Students are encouraged to think critically about the world around them and understand their role in a global society. Through hands-on, creative experiences, students are able to apply their learning in real-world contexts, extending their education beyond the classroom. This active engagement helps to nurture a sense of responsibility, curiosity, and independence, empowering students to take ownership of their educational journey. Ultimately, this integrated approach ensures students become well-rounded individuals, capable of thriving in both local and global contexts.

### **Middle School (Grades 6–8, Phase 3)**

#### *Arabic Curriculum 6–8*

##### **Arab Students:**

In Grades 6–8, Arab students deepen their mastery of Arabic through advanced reading, writing, and communication tasks. Instruction emphasizes complex linguistic structures, literature analysis, and cultural studies, promoting critical thinking and a deeper connection to Arabic heritage.

##### **Non-Arab Students:**

Non-Arab students also follow the MOE-prescribed textbooks for Arabic as a foreign language. Through differentiated learning experiences, they develop their Arabic proficiency with a focus on practical language use and cultural understanding, enabling them to engage meaningfully with the language and Emirati culture.

#### *American Curriculum (Grades 6–8)*

Our inclusive curriculum, grounded in the New York Next Generation State Standards, is enriched with UAE cultural heritage and global connections, ensuring students gain a well-rounded and internationally relevant education. In Middle School, students explore a diverse range of core subjects and electives, allowing them to discover their strengths, passions, and potential career paths while preparing for the academic rigor of high school. The curriculum is designed to foster independent learning, critical thinking, and self-management skills, empowering students to take ownership of their education and adapt to the

challenges of the future. Through inquiry-based learning and problem-solving opportunities, students develop the resilience and adaptability necessary for success in a rapidly changing world. Learning is further enriched through special events, trips, and extracurricular activities, which extend beyond the classroom to provide real-world experiences that broaden students' horizons. Whether through cultural festivals, academic competitions, or community service, students are constantly encouraged to apply their knowledge in meaningful, hands-on ways, ensuring they are not only academically prepared but also socially responsible and globally aware.

#### *Required Minutes for Arabic and Islamic Studies:*

| Grade      | Timing for Arabic             | Timing for Islamic            |
|------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| KG         | At least 135 minutes per week | At least 45 minutes per week  |
| Grade 1-3  | At least 240 minutes per week | At least 120 minutes per week |
| Grade 4-6  | At least 200 minutes per week | At least 80 minutes per week  |
| Grades 7-8 | At least 160 minutes per week | At least 80 minutes per week  |

### **High School (Grades 9 to 12, Phase 4)**

The high school curriculum is delivered through the US Diploma framework and is aligned with both New York State Education Department (NYSED) standards and Ministry of Education (MOE) requirements.

The American Diploma is a broad, credit-based program designed to support a range of academic pathways. At Dubai Schools, students are required to complete a minimum of 27 credits over four years. The program is structured around coursework, continuous assessment, and completion of required instructional hours with credits awarded in alignment with the Carnegie Unit.

External assessment is primarily through Advanced Placement (AP) courses, which provide students with opportunities for rigorous, college-level study.

We believe that these options allow students to meet the requirements for a range of university programs and prepare them for success in post-secondary education. For more information about AP courses visit the [College Board website](#).

The program is designed to ensure alignment with Ministry of Education (MOE) requirements, enabling students to meet national standards while also achieving internationally recognized qualifications and equivalency for higher education pathways.

At the end of each academic year in high school, students are issued official academic transcripts and a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA), which documents their academic progress and achievement across the program. A final transcript is issued upon completion of Grade 12, along with the official school diploma.

### Key Features of the Diploma Program

- **Credit-based structure:** Students earn credits across core and elective subject areas.
- **Core curriculum requirements:** English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities, Arabic, Islamic Studies, UAE History and Electives.
- **Advanced coursework:** Advanced Placement (AP) courses are offered to provide academically rigorous, externally assessed learning opportunities that support university readiness.
- **Graduation requirements:** Successful completion of required core and elective credits, a Capstone/Seminar project, and mandated community service hours.
- **College and Career Readiness:** Our College and Career Counsellor support students in developing clear post-secondary pathways by providing structured guidance, career planning, and networking opportunities. This support is delivered through a range of weekly initiatives, including informational talks, newsletters, and individual coaching, commencing in Grade 9.

### Minimum Credit Distribution

- English – 4.0 credits
- Mathematics – 4.0 credits
- Science – 4.0 credits
- Social Studies (English) – 3.0 credits
- Arabic – 4.0 credits
- Islamic Studies – 2.0 credits
- Health and Physical Education – 2.0 credits
- Electives – 3.0 credits
- Capstone/Seminar – 0.5 credit
- UAE History / Pathway to Success – 0.5 credit

This structure ensures students graduate with a balanced academic foundation, meet UAE equivalency requirements, and are well-prepared for success in higher education and future careers globally.

## Preparing Future Leaders

In alignment with Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid's vision, Dubai Schools' curriculum prepares students to lead and innovate while maintaining strong roots in Emirati values and the Arabic language. Our students are equipped with the skills and mindset needed to navigate a globalized world, ensuring they are future-ready, globally competent, and nationally proud. Our long-term goal is for 75% of our graduates to attend higher education without the need for a foundational intervention course. To support this, Dubai Schools prioritizes Vision 2033 by ensuring that our students are college and career ready. Our students gain a deep understanding of their strengths, interests, and areas for development, helping them make informed decisions about their future career paths. We provide a variety of opportunities, including special events, field trips, and extracurricular activities, to expose students to new ideas, industries, and global perspectives. We build opportunities to develop both formal and informal networks that will support their career journeys, including mentorship programs, community partnerships, and industry connections. For more detailed information, refer to the Academic and Career Guidance Policy

## 10. Monitoring and Review

The Five-Year Curriculum Review Cycle will be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness, consistency of implementation, and alignment with the school's Vision, Mission, Values, and UAE Ministry of Education expectations.

### Monitoring of Impact

The school will evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum review cycle through the systematic analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, including:

- Student attainment and progress data across all phases and subjects
- Internal and external assessment outcomes and benchmarking data
- Curriculum alignment and coherence across grade levels and subject areas
- Vertical and horizontal curriculum progression and continuity
- Inclusion, adaptation, and intervention data for identified student groups
- Quality of teaching and learning evidence from observations, learning walks, and work scrutiny
- Resource evaluation and curriculum implementation effectiveness
- Stakeholder voice, including feedback from students, staff, and parents
- Compliance with mandatory UAE curriculum requirements and national priorities

This information will be used to identify strengths, areas for development, and priorities for continuous school improvement across both individual schools and the cluster.

## Reporting Processes

Curriculum review findings will be monitored collaboratively by the Curriculum Cluster Lead, Principals, Heads of Department (HODs), Subject Leaders, and teaching staff to ensure shared accountability and consistency across Dubai Schools.

Review outcomes and identified priorities will be discussed during curriculum and school improvement meetings, with a focus on:

- Student attainment and progress trends
- Curriculum effectiveness and alignment
- Assessment practices and intervention systems
- Inclusion and curriculum adaptation practices
- Resource allocation and professional development priorities
- Key findings and strategic recommendations will be reported to senior leadership and the Governing Board to support informed decision-making, accountability, and long-term curriculum planning.

## Review Cycle

The curriculum will undergo a formal review within a structured five-year cycle led by the Curriculum Cluster Lead in collaboration with Associate Principals Curriculum, Heads of Department (HODs), Subject Leaders, and teaching staff. The review process will ensure that the curriculum:

- Remains aligned with UAE Ministry of Education requirements and the UAE School Inspection Framework
- Reflects international best practice in curriculum design, assessment, and teaching and learning
- Supports high-quality outcomes for all students
- Promotes curriculum coherence, inclusion, and effective intervention practices
- Informs professional development, resource allocation, and strategic school improvement planning

## Early Review Triggers

An earlier curriculum review may be initiated where:

- There are significant changes to UAE Ministry of Education, KHDA, or regulatory requirements
- Student attainment or progress data identifies emerging concerns or underperformance
- Internal evaluation identifies gaps in curriculum alignment, assessment, or implementation
- Inspection findings or external reviews recommend curriculum refinement or improvement
- Stakeholder feedback identifies significant concerns regarding curriculum delivery, or student experiences and outcomes
- School improvement priorities or strategic developments require curriculum adaptation or redesign

### Five-Year Curriculum Review Cycle

| Academic Year | Subject Areas                                           | Focus Areas                                                                                              |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Year 1        | English & Arabic                                        | Literacy progression, reading comprehension, writing, vocabulary development, alignment to MoE standards |
| Year 2        | Mathematics                                             | Conceptual understanding, problem-solving, intervention impact, MAP attainment and growth                |
| Year 3        | Science & STEM                                          | Inquiry, practical application, assessment alignment, cross-curricular integration                       |
| Year 4        | Islamic Education, UAE Social Studies & Moral Education | MoE compliance, national identity, curriculum coverage, cultural integration                             |
| Year 5        | Electives, Innovation, Arts, PE, Technology & Wellbeing | Student engagement, future readiness, innovation,                                                        |

|  | Programs | enrichment opportunities |
|--|----------|--------------------------|
|--|----------|--------------------------|

## Annual Review Expectations

Regular curriculum review is essential to ensuring high-quality teaching and learning and improved student outcomes across Dubai Schools. Curriculum leaders and teachers engage in an ongoing cycle of review and reflective practice to ensure the curriculum remains aligned with KHDA and Ministry of Education expectations, while meeting the evolving needs of students and the school community. Following each assessment cycle, teachers and leaders review attainment and progress data, including analysis of external benchmarking assessments such as MAP and NGRT, to evaluate curriculum effectiveness and identify priorities for improvement.

Unit plans within Atlas are reviewed each semester to ensure prioritized standards are being taught with fidelity, and the yearly scope and sequence is treated as a living document, reviewed annually by teachers and school leaders. Weekly lesson plans are completed by teachers and reviewed by Instructional Coaches to support consistency and instructional quality. Curriculum reviews also include evaluation of curriculum adaptation for identified student groups, review of intervention effectiveness, alignment to school improvement priorities, and consideration of KHDA/MoE updates and requirements. Through this ongoing process, curriculum leaders and teachers work collaboratively to ensure strong vertical and horizontal alignment, continuous self-evaluation, and sustained school improvement, which are key expectations within the UAE School Inspection Framework.

## Assurances

### Dubai Schools ensures:

- Adequate instructional time aligns with KHDA, MOE, and student needs.
- Oversight of curriculum structure and delivery within sections.
- Long-term planning aligns with grade-level standards.
- Scope and sequence, medium-term, and unit plans are regularly monitored and reviewed.
- Assessment is appropriate for the grade, course, and curriculum standards, with consistency across assessments.
- Consistency in curriculum delivery, with all staff using unit plans and scope and sequence.
- Regular review of student performance data to inform timely curriculum adjustments.
- Full implementation of the school's curriculum according to policies.

## 11. Implementation Timeline

This policy shall be implemented within thirty (30) days from the Effective Date indicated on the cover page, allowing adequate time for communication, training, and adoption across all relevant Taaleem entities. Where any requirement in this policy is dependent on a system functionality, configuration, or tool that is not yet implemented, such requirement shall take effect only once the relevant functionality is operational. Until such time, existing processes shall continue to apply.

## 12. Non-Compliance

Non-compliance with any established corporate policies may result in disciplinary action.

## Version Control

| Version No. | Date       | Details of Change                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12          | April 2026 | Revised version – Developed to improve consistency of expectations across all Dubai Schools, as part of the Excel Anywhere Governance policy review framework. |

## Disclaimer:

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## Appendix

### 1 - Core Competencies

- [English Competencies](#)

- [Math Competencies](#)
- [Science Competencies](#)
- [Arabic Competencies](#)
- [Islamic Competencies](#)

## 2 – Policies

- [Dubai Schools Assessment Policy](#)
- Dubai Schools College and Career Policy
- Dubai Schools Language and Literacy Policy
- [Dubai Schools Inclusion Policy](#)
- Teaching and Learning Policy

## 4. Dubai Schools Core Attributes

- [DS Core Values.pdf](#)