

# Curriculum Policy

### Introduction and Curriculum Statement

The Liwa International School for Girls curriculum reflects the values, needs, vision and mission. It is based on the ethos and aims of the team and is clearly understood by those working within it. It is, also, shared with other professionals who work closely with the students i.e. parents and carers. The curriculum, whilst based on USA (Californian) curriculum requirements, is greatly influenced by the attitudes, aspirations and expectations of, the pupils themselves, their parents and carers. The following is a description of our curriculum, its rationale and how it is delivered to the students.

Liwa International School for Girls has as its principle aim:

**To provide equal access to high quality education for all children and young people, enabling them to progress and achieve their potential.**

This ethos is present in all of our policies and practices, including the delivery of the curriculum.

### Context and Rationale.

#### **Aims and Intentions**

Liwa International School for Girls seeks to support the pupils by offering a curriculum that is broad and balanced and appropriate to the pupils' ages, abilities and aptitudes. Our curriculum includes the various extra-curricular activities that are organised in order to enrich the children's experience as well as the 'hidden curriculum' – what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. Our curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning and that enable personal growth and development. We want children to grow into positive, responsible people who can work and co-operate with others, while at the same time developing their knowledge and skills in order to achieve their true potential. Accordingly, Liwa International School for Girls provides an educational environment which is caring, friendly, well-structured, positive and academically challenging to each individual pupil.

#### **Values**

Below are the main values of our school, upon which we have based our curriculum. These are not in any order of importance as all these values are of equal importance to us.

- We value children's uniqueness, we listen to the views of individual children, and we promote respect for other cultures.
- We value the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth.
- We value the importance of each person in our community, and we organise our curriculum to promote inclusion, co-operation and understanding among all members of our community.
- We value the rights enjoyed by each person in our society. We respect each child in our school for who they are, and we treat them with fairness and honesty. We want to enable each person to be successful, and we provide equal opportunities for all our pupils.
- We will strive to meet the needs of all our children.
- We value our environment, and we want to teach our pupils, through our curriculum, how we

## Curriculum Policy

should take care of the world, not only for ourselves, but also for future generations.

### Aims

The aims of our school curriculum are:

- to enable all children to learn, and develop their skills, to the best of their ability;
- to enable all children to become fluent Arabic and English speakers, readers and writers;
- to promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school, and
- acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning;
- to motivate pupils by arousing a sense of curiosity and wonder;
- to teach children the skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT;
- to enable children to be creative and to develop their own thinking;
- to teach children about the developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time;
- to appreciate and value the contribution made by all ethnic groups in our multi-cultural society;
- to be aware of the importance of their own positive contribution to society and their responsibilities
- as members of a local community and a global society;
- to teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development, and to distinguish right from wrong;
- to help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all;
- to enable children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to live and work cooperatively with others;

### Practices and procedures

#### Organisation and planning

We plan our curriculum in three phases. We agree a long-term plan for each subject. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each term, and to which groups of children. We review this long-term plan on an annual basis at the end of the Summer term.

Through our medium-term plans we give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies for each topic. Each subject has schemes of work through which are articulated the areas of study. We also use the Californian (USA curriculum) benchmarks and objectives for much of our medium-term planning in subjects.

Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly and daily basis. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson.

In the Kindergarten, we adopt an inter-disciplinary topic approach to ensure integrated curriculum planning. We plan the curriculum carefully, so that there is coherent and full coverage of all aspects of the early learning goals. We ensure that there is planned progression in all curriculum areas and this is based on children's interests and the continual evaluation and evolution of medium term plans.

## Curriculum Policy

### ICT across the curriculum

ICT is used to support both teaching and learning across the curriculum. Teachers curriculum planning takes place using online curriculum planning tools, which allow access to centrally held resources, including lesson plans, short term plans and associated resources. In addition, the curriculum online planning tool allows homework to be set and assessed online, providing instant feedback to students and parents via an online portal.

All students are provided with individual technology (tablet or laptop) to support their learning and controlled online access, allows them to access lessons, homework's and assessment for learning data both locally and at home.

Teachers are supported to develop the curriculum online through departmental level professional development, which focuses on practical activities within ICT, which can be used to support the delivery of the learning objectives from the curriculum, as opposed to the use of 'one off' activities or resources dictating lesson objectives.

### Curriculum Policy Guidance

The School plans the schemes of work with reference to the Californian curriculum. We aim to deliver a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum to prepare our pupils for transfer to the next phase of their life.

Pupils entering the Primary department come mainly from our kindergarten. All pupils commence their Grade 1 year in September. The aim of the curriculum is to ensure equal access to the learning objectives whilst also taking account of previous learning experiences and individual rates of development. Students study Arabic, Islamic Studies, English, Math, Science, ICT, Geography, History, French, Music, Art, Physical Education and Games. All subjects are taught with appropriate levels of differentiation and extension.

### Extra-Curricular Activities

The School offers a wide and varied programme of extracurricular activities, with a particular focus on the Arts and community outreach work:

The extracurricular activities are designed to support and extend the curriculum and will be devised and reviewed in conjunction with student participation and management. They will include the following:

- **Student leadership** (leading, managing and implementing student leadership activities across the school, including reading partner programmes, school prefects system, teacher-student curriculum reviews, parents evenings, school performances)
- **Community outreach services** (school visits, special need centre partnerships, caring for the elderly, support for the environment, bake sales and lunches etc)
- **Art Club** (Termly themes planned and developed in conjunction with student interests, including fashion design, photography, digital art, the classics etc and culminating in termly exhibitions or shows.)
- **Technology Club**
- **Other Academic Clubs**
- **School visits** (Science Festival, Water Park, ADNEC, Exhibitions, B.B.Q, Safari, Theatre, Build a bear, Fun city ...etc.)
- **Other activities** (UAE National Day Celebration, Eid Al Adha Celebration, Awareness campaigns, Competitions between classes, Live Healthy Week, Green Week, Concert & Graduation Ceremony)

## Curriculum Policy

Information regarding all extra-curricular activities offered by the school will be mailed to parents and guardians. This communication will include a statement of purpose and schedule of meetings and activities as appropriate. The staff supervisor will maintain a current membership roster of each club and will ensure that parents are kept informed regarding events and activities.

A current file for all extra-curricular activities is maintained in the school office.

### The Curriculum and Inclusion

The curriculum is designed to be accessed by all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to modify some children's access to the curriculum, in order to meet their needs, then we do this only after their parents have been consulted.

If children have **special needs**, our school does all it can to meet the individual's needs, and we comply with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice. If a child displays signs of having special needs or LDD, then his/her teacher makes an assessment of this need in consultation with the SENCO. In most instances the teacher is able to provide the resources and educational opportunities that meet the child's needs, within normal class organisation. If a child's need is more severe, we consider the child for consideration of Tier 2 or Tier 3 support and we involve the appropriate external agencies in making an assessment. We always provide additional resources and support for children with special needs where possible.

The school provides an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for each of the children who are on the Special Needs Register. This sets out the nature of the special need, and outlines how the school will aim to address it. The IEP also sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals.

Additionally, the school identifies students who are gifted and talented and ensures that each child has an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) which is regularly monitored and reviewed.

### The Kindergarten

The curriculum that we teach in our kindergarten classes meets the requirements set out in the Californian State curriculum and focuses on the Early Learning Goals, as set out in these documents, and on developing children's skills and experiences.

Our school fully supports the principle that young children learn through play, and by engaging in well-planned and structured activities. We are well aware that all children need the support of both the parents and the teachers to make good progress in school. We strive to build positive links with the parents of each child, by keeping them informed about how the children are being taught, and how well each child is progressing.

### Grades 1 to 12 Key skills

The following skills have been identified as key skills in Liwa International School curriculum:

- Communication (speaking and listening)
- Application of number
- Information technology
- Working with others
- Improving one's own learning and performance
- Application of thinking skills

## Curriculum Policy

- Problem-solving.

In our curriculum planning we emphasize these skills, so that the children's progress in all of these areas can be identified and monitored. Teachers in all subject areas seek to contribute to a child's progress in these skills because we believe that all children need to make good progress in these areas if they are to develop their true potential. Therefore, the Grade 1 to 12 curriculum has to:

- Provide a curriculum which is challenging, interesting, enjoyable and active, fostering a desire to learn and achieve.
- Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- Work with others to achieve a continuity and progression in their learning experiences according to need.

The Curriculum provided emphasises

- The key requirements of the Californian Curriculum to the end of Grade 12
- The requirements of the Foundation Stage
- Assessment as an integral part of the process in order to set relevant and realistic, but challenging, goals for individuals (SMART targets)
- The key skills of Communication, including Literacy, Numeracy and Information and Communication Technology in both Arabic and English
- The value placed upon cross-curricular elements
- An emphasis on a Personal Development Programme to encompass broader aspects
- A continuation of the creative arts
- Respect and support for learners aspirations and those of their families
- Monitoring and evaluation procedures for individuals (pupils and teachers) and the whole curriculum as part of our improvement process
- Accountability, in which meaningful records will be kept and passed on to appropriate colleagues
- Long, medium and short term (lesson) plans and Individual Education or Advanced Learning Plans for pupils
- An understanding of standards and processes
- The performance management process and continuing professional development
- The self review process and action planning

Learners are encouraged to manage their own learning and make informed choices. Their experiences prior to admission to Liwa International School are taken into account. Liwa International School has an effective curriculum where the features

- build on prior learning and experiences where possible
- use formative assessment techniques (Assessment for Learning) to enhance assessment for individual learning
- create opportunities to experience success and achievement in order to build self esteem and confidence
- enable learners to identify their own strengths and preferred learning styles
- encompass a range of teaching styles, which are multi-sensory, active and interesting
- rely on effective communication and information from the pupil's own school
- use a variety of contexts to reinforce and consolidate learning in meaningful ways that reinforce and internalise the learning

## Curriculum Policy

- recognise the influence of a range of learning environments

### Breadth of the Curriculum

Pupils are therefore given a broad range of experiences within the time available, which will enable them to

- Socialise with other pupils and adults
- Communicate effectively with others for a variety of reasons
- Manipulate number and understand mathematical concepts
- Gain an understanding of the world

### Balance

The curriculum should accord with individual interests, aptitudes, abilities and the developmental stage of each learner as well as the individual learning targets agreed with the pupil's own school. This means that the balance of the curriculum will not be the same for each learner.

### Relevance

Each learner should see the curriculum as being relevant to both present needs and future expectations. These perceptions are formed as a result of a continuing dialogue between pupil, teachers (especially the SENCO) and parent/carer. All grade 12 students take part in Careers Education and Guidance. Other professionals also have an important part to play.

### Differentiation

All children and young people, but especially pupils with additional needs require a curriculum which is differentiated according to age, ability, interest, attitude, learning style and health.

People learn in many different ways and use many different thought processes and patterns of memory. These will be observed during the initial assessment period and planned for when planning teaching and learning sessions. Learning styles are to be documented on lesson plans to help the teacher take account of this important element of personalised learning. Lessons will reflect a range of teaching styles in order to cater for different pupils within a group and staff will have the opportunity to attend training on this area as part of a rolling programme of Continuing Professional Development.

### Continuity

All learners succeed when their new learning experiences are continuous and related to previous learning. The curriculum allows individuals to progress confidently from one step to the next, each step being finely judged and monitored for success. Success for our pupils is measured in small steps and depends in a large part on their emotional state as well as their physical health. Information on a pupil's current levels of achievement enables targets to be identified and discussed with the students.

Factors, based on examples of good practice and successful integration processes, which are likely to lead to successful continuity and progression for pupils

- Effective communication within the school re learning materials and assessment information
- Individual Learning Plans with individual learning, social and integration targets,
- Positive engagement by the pupil and parents/carers in the learning, social and integration targets and an effective trusting partnership between the two
- Effective strategies for assessment and re-assessment

## Curriculum Policy

- Knowledge of Curriculum expectations for subjects being taught
- Effective monitoring of individual progress and continuity of learning
- Carefully maintained records of achievement and progress and reports of progress to parents.
- An expectation that all Liwa staff will take part in continuing professional development to cover all phases of education
- Dedicated time for curriculum leaders to reflect on curriculum issues, meet with colleagues and develop subject areas as set out in each curriculum action plan and monitoring timetable
- Time for the team to consolidate recent curriculum changes, monitor and evaluate and make decisions for the future
- A commitment by staff to curriculum areas, which include long term, medium term and short term plans.

We therefore aim to create an overarching learning environment composed of inter-related, stimulating, creative and active experiences as well as addressing individual objectives which, alone, can lead to a dry and sterile learning environment

### The Role of the Head of Subject / Subject Co-Ordinator

The role of the Head of Subject or the coordinator is to:

- provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject;
- Support and advice colleagues on issues related to the subject;
- monitor pupils' progress in that subject area;
- provide efficient resource management for the subject.
- have an awareness of the schemes of work from Kindergarten to Grade 12
- Report to the senior leadership team on the strengths and weakness of the subject and the strategies for improvement

It is the role of each middle leader to keep up to date with developments in their subject, at Both international, national and local level. They review the way the subject is taught in the school, and plan for improvement. This development planning links to whole-school objectives. Each Subject Co-ordinator reviews the curriculum plans for the subject and sees that progression is planned into schemes of work.

### Monitoring and Review

The Teachers and the Heads of Subject are responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the curriculum. Within their department, they monitor the weekly lesson plans, ensuring that all classes are taught the full requirements of the agreed schemes of work, and that all lessons have appropriate learning objectives.

Heads of Subject and the SMT monitor the way the subjects are delivered throughout the school. They examine long-term and medium-term planning, and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used. Subject co-ordinators also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

- This policy is monitored by the Senior Management .