

POLICY TITLE:	Curriculum Policy
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Applies to:	Al Karamah School and Training Institute - Abu Dhabi
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Author:	Senior Leadership Team
Ratified by:	Al Karamah Executive Leadership Team and Governing Body
Responsible signatory:	Principal
Outcome:	Al Karamah School seeks to promote a curriculum that is accessible to all our students, and which enables them to achieve as highly as possible and to experience academic as well as personal success.
Cross Reference:	

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Our overall aim is to be an Outstanding School in our practice and delivery of educational services.

- 1.1 We provide a whole school framework for effective teaching and learning that directly contributes to raising the achievements of all Students
- 1.2 We provide a rich, broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum which is aimed at providing learning targets relevant to the individual
- 1.2 The curriculum increases Student's knowledge, skills and understanding of the world around them and prepares Students for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life

All children have a right to a broad, balanced, and relevant education which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account. Students at Al Karamah School will have access to a highly personalised curriculum which takes account of the National Curriculum as well as being relevant to individual needs.

In addition, we focus on the core difficulties for autistic young learners, these include issues with rigid thinking, managing uncertainty and change, social interaction and understanding and managing emotions. These difficulties often arise from heightened anxiety.

At Al Karamah School, our curriculum involves academic learning, but our priority is to work on these core difficulties. Our priority is to support the social and emotional development of children with autism.

We take the view that academic achievement without appropriate social and emotional development leaves autistic children with a poor quality of life, as well as poor life chances. We therefore focus our work on the difficulties that lie at the heart of autism.

Many of our activities, projects and areas of study can readily be located within the framework of the National Curriculum but also the way that staff relate to students, the range of interactions between staff and students is what makes the school so different. Whilst we anticipate measured progress with the 'three R's', we view the real test of progress as the ability of our children to make and maintain meaningful relationships; to adapt their thinking and behaviour to everyday real-life challenges and to lead a happier and more fulfilling life.

Our aim is to deliver measurable outcomes that demonstrate, over time:

- Improved self-regulation (managing own emotions and behaviour)
- Improvement in coping with uncertainty and change (decreasing anxiety)
- Increased ability to make and sustain meaningful reciprocal relationships
- Increased independence
- Improved quality of life with reduced anxiety for students and their families

In planning and delivering a holistic curriculum, the school will endeavor to:

- Facilitate children's acquisition of knowledge, skills, qualifications, and qualities which will help them to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, and morally, so that they may become independent, responsible, useful, confident, and considerate members of the community.

- Create and maintain an exciting and stimulating learning environment in which students feel valued, safe, and able to learn.
- Enable all students to experience a sense of personal achievement by encouraging them to fulfil their potential in different areas relevant to their abilities, skills, and interests
- Make every effort to encourage parental awareness and involvement in the educational and emotional development of their child.
- Ensure that each child's education has continuity and progression which enables them to progress with confidence to the next stage of their lifelong learning in preparation for adult life.

Al Karamah School is a school that provides full-time education for Students of compulsory school age with autistic spectrum disorder (ASC), associated learning disabilities and complex needs. The curriculum is designed to support the individual needs of Students and provides a broad and balanced curriculum which:

- a) Engages Student's interest to encourage and motivate Students to want to learn
- b) Treats all Students with respect and dignity
- c) Listens to Student's voice and involves Students in planning and decision making, ensuring promotion of self-advocacy
- d) Provides differentiation in teaching and learning in relation to Student's specific needs
- e) Creates an exciting and stimulating learning environment
- f) Provides for the needs of individual Students of either gender, diagnosed with ASC/traits of ASC, and/or Asperger syndrome
- g) Provides a whole school approach and focus on learning achievement, where all staff have knowledge and understanding of ASC
- h) Uses a range of diagnostic tools, including therapeutic assessments to support development, planning and implementation of Student's learning programmes
- i) Ensures entry onto individualized learning programmes is based upon individual need and ability regardless of gender, race, disability, religion, or social group
- j) Provides subject matter appropriate for the cognitive age and aptitude of Students
- k) Plans and implements Individual Education Plans (IEPs)/ Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), encompassing specific Student targets directly linked to a student's statement / or reports (SEN)
- l) Holds flexibility in approach to timetabling, appropriate to individual need
- m) Rigorously monitors planning, teaching, learning and assessment to identify good/outstanding practice, as well as identifying areas of provision which need improvement
- n) Strengths and developmental areas identified from cross school analysis directly feeds into the school SEF/Development Plan
- o) The lower (Key Stage 1 - Key Stage 3) and higher school (Key Stage 4 - Post 16), are managed by senior managers, directly responsible to the Principal/Vice Principal
- p) Ensures that each curriculum area/areas of learning are coordinated by Subject Leaders responsible to ensure that the policy is implemented consistently, effectively and in consultation with senior managers/ Principal

- q) Close observance that the curriculum contributes to individual Student's wider well-being by ensuring that outcomes and principles from SMSC are fully met
- r) Enables students, where possible, to integrate into other special or mainstream primary, secondary, or tertiary provisions
- s) Identifies (14 years – 19 years) nationally accredited programmes/ examinations, where appropriate
- t) Ensure students are supported to communicate with the use of a variety of communication tools i.e., Makaton, PECS, objects of reference, verbal communication etc.
- u) Where appropriate, offers outreach extended services to support students to engage and achieve
- v) Provides training/professional development programmes for all staff
- w) Recognizes the crucial role parent/carers play, and encourages parental involvement in their child's educational process
- x) Supports the development of student's understanding of how to apply the basic principles of health, hygiene, and safety
- y) Reviews and revised cross school subject policies on a bi-annual basis

2. PROCEDURE AND PRACTICE

All students at Al Karamah School have a personalised timetable to support their individual needs, focusing on academic as well as social and emotional development. Students are taught on a 1:1, 1:2 or very small group basis depending on the activity and or pupil/grouping and considering students' needs as directed by their IEP.

The school curriculum follows a topic based /thematic approach which ensures that the 7 broad areas of learning (linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, and social, physical, aesthetic, and creative) are experienced throughout the academic year. English and Maths are both taught to all students as individual subjects in addition to being addressed through other curriculum areas (see separate policies).

The UAE National Curriculum is incorporated into the student's timetables and is adapted to ensure they can engage fully with the content.

The school day starts with a "Wake Up Shake Up" session, which has a physical and / or sensory approach to get students into the correct mindset for learning, and to remove barriers to learning.

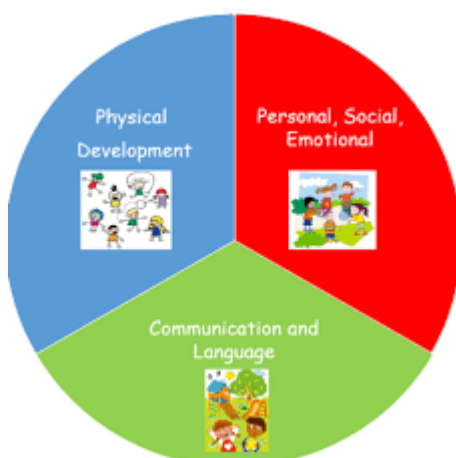
All staff plan and set out their own schemes of work, which can take account of National Curriculum materials based on objectives as identified through our assessment tool, Classroom Monitor. Planned schemes may use documents or commercial schemes / websites, adapted for use with individual students. The schemes of work set out the range of topics taught over the year and how they are incorporated into individual subjects. IEPs for each pupil are used to inform planning.

EYFS Curriculum (Tiny Sparkles)

In Tiny Sparkles we follow the Early Years Foundation Curriculum. This is based on 17 areas of learning with a focus on the PRIME AREAS:

- Communication and Language

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development



There are also 4 SPECIFIC AREAS of learning, seen below:

Areas of Learning and Development			
Prime Areas			
Personal, Social and Emotional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Making Relationships• Self-confidence and Self-awareness• Managing Feelings and Behaviour	Physical Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moving and Handling• Health and Self-care	Communication and Language <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listening and Attention• Understanding• Speaking	
Specific Areas			
Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading• Writing	Mathematics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Numbers• Shape, Space and Measure	Understanding the World <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People and Communities• The World• Technology	Expressive Arts and Design <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exploring and Using Media and Materials• Being Imaginative

Key Stage 1 and 2 Curriculum (Little Champions)

An activity-based learning approach (which primarily take on board guiding objectives) ensures that the following National Curriculum subjects are experienced at some stage during the academic year:

- Art
- Music

- Arabic
- Islamic Studies
- Social Studies
- Life Skills
- PE
- English
- Maths
- Science
- IT
- Cooking

Key Stage 3 Curriculum (Transition)

- English
- Maths
- Science
- Arabic
- Islamic Studies
- Social Studies
- IT
- Humanities
- Art
- Cookery
- PE

In KS4 and Post 14 (Explorers + AKTI), students have further opportunities to develop their own personal interests throughout the curriculum. We aim to give students opportunities to gain qualifications or accreditations that are not exam-based.

Staff make use of the ASDAN awards programmes, NOCN and BTEC vocational awards with older students in as many areas as possible to assist students to gain certification. This enables all students to gain accreditation which is recognized and appropriate to their own individual needs and helps to improve pupil self-esteem and confidence. Short courses are also available in independent living and employability as well as more personalised programmes such as hospitality and catering.

Work experience (on a regular weekly basis) will be set up in areas that have been identified by students of interest to them and which can be facilitated through school in partnership with external providers to develop both academic and developmental objectives.

The use of Functional Skills programmes helps prepare students through practical skills in English and Maths whilst providing individuals with essential knowledge, skills and understanding as well as practical experience that will enable them to operate confidently, effectively, and independently in taking their next steps for life after school. Students will be entered into Functional skills exams at levels determined by staff through their own assessments to ensure students leave school with a qualification relevant to their ability.

All **KS4** students have English, Maths, Arabic, Islamic Studies, Social Studies, IT, PE, Science and Humanities on their timetables, but all other sessions are personalised to take account of their needs.

Planning

- 3.1 Long Term Planning** indicates how content and skills within each Key Stage, subject and unit of study are covered. The long-term plans show clear links between subjects and build in progression, consolidation, and differentiation for Students across all curricula areas.

There is an agreed long-term plan (four year rolling programme) for each Key Stage indicating the topics to be taught each term. An overview of topics gives a broad outline and shows progression and continuity of topics/subjects taught across the school.

Long term plans can be reviewed within the following documents:

- Individual curriculum plans
- Individual Education Plans
- Individual Learning Plans including Life Skills and preparation For supported living
- Topic planning for KS 1-3
- Transition Challenge planning for KS4 and Post 14
- Individual subject planning for each class

- 3.2 Medium term planning** gives clear guidance on determined outcomes and provides information on teaching activities, strategies, resources, and identifies assessment and recording opportunities. Weekly Planning identified within medium-term planning separates learning objectives into weekly achievable targets and activities.

Medium term plans can be reviewed within the following documents:

- Individual Student curriculum files
- Topic planning for EYFS and KS 1-3
- Transition Challenge
- Individual subject planning for each class

The school uses established schemes of work to support and feed into Medium Term

- 3.3 Short Term Planning** sets out detailed intentions of teaching and learning in the classroom daily and identifies the activities and resources planned to be used within each session. Short term planning gives clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies used when teaching, as well as cross-curricula work, resources to be used and identifies extension activities linked to learning objectives. Short term plans can be reviewed within the following documents:

- Short term objectives for each Student included within their curriculum file
- Daily lesson plans for classes

- 3.4 Therapeutic staff**

All Students have access to support from a multi-disciplinary team of therapists including educational psychologists, Occupational Therapist and Speech and Language Therapists. The therapy team offer support across residential and educational services according to Student's assessment and learning objectives detailed within their learning plans. Attendance and participation in therapy sessions are carefully planned to ensure therapy targets are integrated within individual Student's learning plan.

3.5 Differentiation

Differentiation and timetabling flexibility are at the core of the school curriculum and is achieved by provision of a board range of curriculum tasks/activities closely and appropriately matched to the individual Student, in relation to specific educational needs (ref. 2.1 Principles, within the Curriculum Policy/Teaching and Learning Policy).

3.6 Homework

Homework is set as appropriate and may take a variety of forms dependent on individual Student's needs. Many young people with autistic spectrum disorder (ASC) may experience heightened anxiety if requested to generalise a learnt skill. Therefore, teachers, Students and parents/cares regularly liaise and mutually agree the suitability of setting homework.

3.7 Inclusion

All classes are supported by experienced, qualified teachers, who meet individual student's needs by ensuring learning is person centered and focused on individual Student's abilities and specific learning needs.

Identified outcomes from a broad range of assessments, including target achievement/progress within Student's IEP/ILP, enables teachers to set "next step" targets which reflect individual Student's skills, abilities, and potential.

All lessons are differentiated to enable personalized learning and many Students are supported across the educational day on a 1:1 basis by Learning Support Assistants.

As a school we highly value the diversity of staff and Students; all young people have equality of opportunity, access to the curriculum.

3.8 Extended Curricula Activities

A wide range of enrichment activities are offered to Students after school, delivering a broad range of opportunities for Students to further develop social and leisure skills alongside their peers. After school group activities have proven to be a significant contributory factor in raising Student's motivation and self-esteem.

3.9 Concerns and Complaints

Parents who have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum are invited to discuss the issue with their child's teacher in the first instance. If the issue is not resolved parents are requested to contact a senior manager or the principal to arrange to come into school for a 1:1 meeting (ref: Complaints Policy).

3.10 The Lower School Curriculum – EYFS- Key Stage 1 and 2

The school recognises that Students make the highest achievement when they can see clear links and reason for learning. The Lower School Curriculum promotes enjoyment for learning through purpose and relevance; Students are motivated to have a positive attitude towards themselves, others, and their environment.

We use the statutory guidelines from the National Curriculum as a basis to provide a firm foundation for long, medium- and short-term planning across Early Years, Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.

The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy are supplemented by a programme for English and Maths. The school has two Literacy and Maths Coordinators who provide additional 1:1 or group support as required.

Extension of curriculum tasks and activities beyond statutory requirements is achieved through regularly scheduled school visitors such as the fire service, police, local library, educational visits, visits into the local community, and theatrical productions by acting companies and Students, cultural weeks, zoological visits, geography field trips, themed assemblies etc. Many of these activities embrace the cultural diversity of the school and the local community and offer Students a broad range of motivational spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) learning opportunities.

3.11 The Higher School 14-19 Curriculum - Key Stage 3 to Post 16

Within Key Stage 3/4 and Post 16 the school offers life-long-learning programmes which reflect the needs, interests, and aspirations of the young person, to support young people to engage and achieve, build relationships, and access the wider community. The 14-19 curriculum prepares Students for their family home and develops work-related skills, as appropriate, to the individual.

3.12 The 14-19 Curriculum - Baseline Assessment

The process of Baseline Assessment collates multi-disciplinary information from a broad range of sources, including recognition of previous progress and learning achievement.

It produces an informed and clear analysis of where a young person is now, their ability and identifies specific support needs. This leads to the formation of long, medium- and short-term targets that underpin the development of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

The Baseline Assessment is a working document that changes in line with individual Student's growth and development. The Baseline Assessment ensures clear identification of specific learning needs for a three-to-five-year learning programme and provides a framework of support to feed into the individual learning programme (ILP) supporting a young person's transition into adult life.

3.13 The 14-19 Curriculum - Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is structured to develop an individualised, autism specific, learning programme relevant to assessed need. The ILP is derived from the Baseline Assessment. The assessed targets from the Baseline Assessment form the structure of the learning plan, specific to individual assessed needs.

The ILP details specific strategies for staff to support achievement of learning targets.

The 'Success Criteria' within the ILP framework specifies the frequency and level of task achievement i.e. "Over two terms the 'young person' will participate in a paired reading session, twice a week". The ILP provides a consistent framework for a structured staff approach when supporting young people's learning and achievement. The ILP is a working document with individual targets reviewed and revised, as appropriate within the ILP Progress Review every half term. The ILP is 'Person Centred' and ensures that the 'voice' of the student plays an integral part in the learning process. The ILP is monitored on a half termly basis to provide valid data to track individual and group achievement across Key Stage 4 and Post 16. The Baseline Assessment and ILP belong to the young person and provide a firm foundation and valuable resource for the young person when transitioning into adult services.

3.14 National Accreditation

As a school we value and ensure provision of a broad range of National Accredited programmes from Key Stage 4, dependent on individual Student's ability, achievement, aspiration, and expectations. Although the school is aware of the importance of gaining National Accredited qualifications, National Body expectations do not determine the curriculum. Entry onto all programmes of study is based upon ability, achievement and the appropriateness of the programme, Nationally Accredited programmes compliment, rather than supplement, individual Student's learning programmes.

3.15 The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Curriculum

The school recognizes that Student performance and wellbeing go together, and that Students only achieve when they feel safe and are healthy. The school contributes to each Student's well-being by ensuring students are:

- Healthy
- Staying Safe
- Enjoying and Achieving
- Making a Positive Contribution
- Achieving Economic Well- Being

Staff ensure that all Students are provided with Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural opportunities (SMSC) within the planned curriculum and through extended curricula events and experiences. Student's work and achievements within the curriculum are celebrated and displayed which plays a significant impact on the school environment and contributes to the positive ethos of the school.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Teaching staff plan and set out their own schemes of work, which can take account of National Curriculum/EYFS materials based on objectives as identified through our assessment tool, Classroom Monitor.

4.2 Assistant Headteachers and Senior Teachers monitor all staff planning which ensures students will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and subsequently experience all areas of learning.

5. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually