المدرسة العالمية الأمريكية
UNIVERSAL AMERICAN SCHOOL
—
Al-Futtaim Education Foundation

VISION
FOREVER DRIVEN BY KNOWLEDGE, INSPIRED BY SUCCESS

MISSION
TO NURTURE AN INTERNATIONALLY MINDED COMMUNITY OF INTEGRITY AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

VALUES
RESPECT, INTEGRITY, COLLABORATION, EXCELLENCE

LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

Next Review Date:	1 March 2025
Owner:	Director
Author:	Academic Leadership Team
Policy Type:	Academic
Circulation:	External
Reviewed/Approved:	20 March 2024
Date Authorized:	1 October 2022
Authorized By:	ACOM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RATIONALE

Learning and teaching are at the center of our work at Universal American School. We are committed to maintaining a rigorous and continuous drive to be inclusive, accelerate learning and develop personalized education for all our learners. Our goal is to inspire our students to be engaged, reflective, inquisitive, and have the confidence and courage to exceed expectations. We challenge and prepare our learners for a successful future.

PURPOSE

- To provide high-quality education that maximizes progress and challenges our students to be the best they can be.
- To establish clear expectations for learning and teaching.
- To promote a consistent and coherent approach to learning and teaching across the school.
- To promote a wider community understanding of learning and teaching.

TEACHING FOR EFFECTIVE LEARNING

To make accelerated progress, personalized learning is at the heart of effective learning and teaching at UAS. Our learners are motivated through the IB Learner Profile attributes and IB Approaches to Learning to become independent learners and thinkers. They make connections across all areas of learning, thinking critically, and solving complex problems while taking risks and **learning** from their mistakes. Our community works together to ensure students reach and exceed their individual goals as well as making learners more culturally and globally aware that they are ready for success on whichever path they choose for their future.

We recognize the need to develop strategies that will allow all students to learn in ways that best suit them so that they will fulfill their potential. Many learning opportunities are made available to our students taking different learning styles into consideration. These include:

- Inquiring and problem solving
- Research
- Independent, Pair & Group work
- Asking and Answering Questions
- Use of ICT throughout the curriculum
- Field Trips & Outdoor Learning
- Creative & Design Tasks
- Debates, role-play, and Presentations
- Participation in Athletics & Physical Activities

We encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and engage in higher levels of metacognition/metacognitive strategies. This will help them throughout their lives by developing their resilience, self-awareness, reasoning, and problem-solving abilities.

Effective learning and teaching is characterized by the following features:

1. Quality learning and teaching
2. Goal setting and tracking
3. Focused assessment
4. Intervention
5. Inclusivity
6. The learning environment - inside and out
7. Curriculum organization
8. Digital technology
9. The extended curriculum

1. Quality Learning and teaching

This is characterized by:

- Highly focused lessons with clear objectives aligned to the adopted standards
- High expectations of student involvement and engagement with their learning
- Student-centered lessons and learning experiences
- Differentiation and personalization
- Teacher questioning, modelling, and explaining
- An emphasis on collaborative learning
- Praise and encouragement to motivate students further

2. Goal setting and tracking

- Individual students' progress is tracked. Strengths and areas for development are identified to inform planning and to implement intervention programs as appropriate.
- Summative data is collected and discussed formally with the faculty in student progress meetings. Formative data is ongoing and regularly discussed in department or grade level meetings.
- Student progress meetings are held to identify strengths or weaknesses in performance and/or identify PD requirements.
- Student voice is central to goal setting, action planning, and monitoring progress towards goals.
- Parents/guardians receive regular updates on their child's progress. Goals are shared so that parents/guardians can provide additional support at home.

- Student progress is monitored through data collection and focused lesson observations.

3. Assessment

Secure knowledge of each student's current progress is a core element of learning and teaching at UAS. Lesson planning is based on prior learning, knowledge of students' interests and needs and the adopted standards for learning (New York State Standards). Throughout the learning process, active assessment is required to ensure that the expected rate of progress is being made.

Fundamental to our formative assessment procedures is Assessment for Learning (AfL) and a range of AfL strategies are used in the classroom:
- Learning objectives are made explicit and shared with the students.
- Success criteria are agreed by the student and teacher.
- Self and peer assessment is used against the success criteria.
- Students are engaged in their learning and receive written and/or oral feedback on their progress.
- Students respond to feedback from teachers and peers.

4. Personalization

- It is expected all students at UAS will make expected progress through class-based teaching. However, some students may benefit from additional small group or 1:1 intervention programs to enable them to make the progress required to achieve their full potential.
- More able learners are supported through quality teaching as well as opportunities to take part in activities outside normal lessons.
- Some children will be identified for intervention or extension groups, delivered by a teacher during the class day or through recommended co-curricular activities.

5. Inclusivity

- We are a fully inclusive school. Support for all groups of learners is always planned to enable all students to maximize their learning.
- We include topics that are relevant and engaging to our students, aiming to have a culturally responsive curriculum with equitable learning opportunities for all students.

6. The Learning Environment

- The classroom environment sets the climate for learning, and an engaging classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.
- UAS provides an 'enabling environment', both indoors and outdoors for all children.
- All areas should be used to promote student learning and achievement.

7. Curriculum Organization

The UAS curriculum inspires and challenges all learners and prepares them for the future. UAS develops a coherent curriculum that builds on young people's experiences across all divisions and that helps all young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, and responsible citizens. Specifically, the curriculum helps young people to:

- Achieve high standards and make very good/outstanding progress.
- Enable those not achieving grade-level expectations to make significant progress and narrow the gap.
- Lead to qualifications that are of worth for entry to higher education and future employment.
- Fulfill local, national, and accreditation requirements.
- Enable students to fulfill their potential.
- Meet the needs of young people of all abilities at UAS.

8. Digital Technology

At UAS we enhance learning and teaching through the use of the highest quality digital technologies.

Teachers are required to plan for the use of technology when it is appropriate, it enhances learning and teaching, and positively impacts students' progress.

9. The Extended Curriculum

Helping students to discover and/or develop new interests is essential to personalized learning at UAS. During the school year, a range of activities are organized to enhance the curriculum including:

- special events
- trips
- visitors
- clubs
- a robust after-school activities program
- Week Without Walls program