

1. INTRODUCTION

The curriculum policy of Azhar Academy Girls School relates directly to the school's Mission Statement and objectives. The school is committed to the implementation of the National Curriculum, but at the same time recognises the need to pursue additional curriculum initiatives that can aid the individual pupil's development in a wide-ranging areas of learning: linguistics and literacy, mathematical, scientific, moral, physical, religious/spiritual, creative, social and technological. Supplementary curricula, such as the Aalimah & Islamic Studies ones, are incorporated into the school-day activities, to enrich the pupil's understanding and appreciation of her religion and its associated sciences, in a way that prepares her to effectively participate in and contribute to society without ever feeling the need to compromise her faith-based values or vice-versa.

2. MAIN PRINCIPLES

The students are at the heart of the educational process and must be encouraged to participate fully in the life of the school. All contributions, from all students, will be valued. It is felt that all students regardless of their age, ability and background should experience personal fulfillment through the 'entitlement curriculum'. The curriculum must display breadth, balance, relevance, differentiation, progression and continuity. Curricular continuity and progression are of particular concern; it is essential to recognise that Education is an 'on-going' process and students receive only a section of their education at our school. Every teacher must be conscious of the need to build suitable bridges between the secondary to tertiary phases. The curriculum of the school must be continuously evolving, forward looking and under constant review. The school will ensure that its statutory duties regarding the curriculum are carried out.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

a) Curriculum Structure

Students in Key Stage 3 & 4 currently study the following subjects:

Core Subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- ICT
- Physical Education
- Science

Foundation Subjects:

- Creative Arts (Art)
- Humanities (History, Citizenship and Religious Education)
- Modern Foreign Languages (French and Arabic)

Personal Development is also studied and includes Careers Information, Advice and Guidance and PSHE. Through PSHE, pupils are actively prepared for the responsibilities that arise through life, including those offered by family and the working environment, within a multi-cultural and technological society.

e) Curriculum Delivery and Entitlement (Teaching Groups)

In Year 7 students are set by ability across the year group. Initially, KS2 Teacher Assessment scores in English, Mathematics and Science are used to determine the groups. After the completion of entrance and internal testing (CATS and subject specific in English, Mathematics and Science) adjustments may be made to the sets. The lower-ability group usually does not pursue French, but extra focus and support is provided for them to get a better start to Arabic.

In Year 8 & 9, students are taught in ability groups based on Mathematics, Science and English as they progress from Year 7. There is some setting in MFL for most form groups. All other subjects are taught in mixed ability groups.

In Years 10 and 11, most core subjects are taught in the same ability groups, but arrangements are also made to teach students in 'sets'.

The same strategy underpins the Islamic/Aalimah Studies provision in the school.

To translate the mission statement into practice, particular attention is paid to the way in which students learn. It is the process of education, which is important - an environment must be created in which students are actively involved in the learning process and not 'passive recipients of information'. This has implications for the way in which we assess our students. Assessment must follow naturally and not dictate the curriculum and must involve all relevant participants, including the student.

Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) forms part of the curriculum and is delivered through Personal Development and subject contributions.

Students should be encouraged to participate fully in all activities. Students must be encouraged to present all work as neatly as possible. Work missed through absence should be made up as soon as possible.

Exemption from PE lessons is only acceptable on receipt of a note from a parent. If there is to be prolonged exemption then confirmation from a Doctor should be asked for.

4. EXTENDED CURRICULUM POLICY

There is an extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities available for all our students throughout the school, be it during the school day, in twilight sessions, and sometimes during evenings, weekends and during holiday periods.

There are a range of after-school clubs that take place every day of the week, except Fridays, open to students in all years. These also serve as booster-classes for KS4 students in subjects in which they require further support. The school also provides extensive sessions in some subjects during weekends for KS4 students.

We aim to develop a planned programme of curriculum days throughout the year for the next academic year offering focused, but extended, opportunities to students. This will enable students to benefit from outdoor activities, citizenship days, enterprise days and charity work. The support of a growing network of partners at a local, regional, national and international level will allow this programme to be offered to all students. We have already began some activities in this regard, but its full implementation requires extensive planning and resource-building.

Any extra-curricular activity/club should have clear, achievable aims and objectives, which are included in and/or complement the Scheme of Work.

a) Aims

- 1) To extend the curriculum beyond that offered in timetabled sessions:
 - Students can pursue work/targets over long periods of time not usually possible within a normal Scheme of Work (SoW).
 - Opportunity to undertake work not normally encountered within the routine timetable.
 - Opportunity to obtain extended individual support and guidance from subject teachers.
- 2) To allow practices for school teams/auditions/performances etc.
- 3) To allow non-specialist staff/parents/other with a particular talent to offer their experience and/or time to broaden and enrich the curriculum.
- 4) To allow students of different ages and abilities to interact.

b) Principles

- 1) The school is committed to offering a wide programme of enrichment wherever and whenever practicable considering the restraints of staff, cost and time.
- 2) The activities should be open to all students and must be organised with this in mind.
- 3) All activities must be organised with the safety of participants as a major consideration. It must comply with all relevant school policies. All staff engaged in activities must have full CRB clearance or be closely supervised by staff with full CRB clearance.
- 4) Students and staff should be aware of any itinerary, contingency plans, first aid facilities, emergency phone numbers, etc.
- 5) Non-teacher supervisors must be informed as to their role.
- 6) Parents must be fully informed of the nature of the activity and working conditions.

1. Aims of Whole School Approach

1. To raise standards of achievement for students of all abilities.
2. To improve the quality of teaching and learning that goes on in that school.
3. To highlight the central importance and priority given to teaching and learning.

2. Principles

Azhar Academy Girls School is committed to:

- The provision of high quality teaching and learning that enhances the achievement of pupils of all abilities across the curriculum.
- The provision of a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum which is relevant to the individual needs of the students and supports their academic, social, moral, spiritual, cultural and physical development.
- The development of academic, social, moral and cultural skills, which will support and enhance the learning and progress of students, incorporating the inclusion of Personal Learning and Thinking Skills and in furtherance of the Every Child Matters agenda.
- The development of values and attitudes, which will allow students to flourish, achieve and feel valued as well as empower and enrich them to fully participate in and effectively contribute to the British society.
- The provision of a range of academic, social, moral, spiritual and cultural experiences, which will allow all students to develop to their full potential.
- The importance of teachers using an effective range of teaching and learning strategies including the use of new technologies in the classroom.
- The involvement of students in their own learning, including the development of student awareness of the cognitive processes involved in learning.
- The provision of a system of assessment, recording and reporting, which informs and assists the teaching and learning that goes on in the school.
- The provision of high quality learning resources.
- The provision of an ethos guided by religious principles that serves to project teaching and learning as a 'sacred' activity.

- The provision of a caring, good-humoured and well-disciplined environment where effective learning can take place.
- The provision of an effective and well-organised system of student care to support the teaching and learning that goes on in the school.
- The provision of a system of learning support, which will allow all students to develop to their full potential.
- The provision of a high quality and relevant system of staff development to support and enhance the quality of teaching and learning that goes on in the school.
- The development of a strong partnership between home and school that can support, reinforce and enhance student learning.
- The development of links with local industry and the wider community to support, enhance and enrich student learning.
- The ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning in the school as part of the whole school quality assurance processes.

3. Elements of Whole School Approach

The Whole School approach to Teaching and Learning begins with the commitments enshrined in the School's Mission Statement. These commitments in turn are reflected in the future development and plans that are outlined in the School Improvement Plan.

The Whole School approach has a central commitment to high quality teaching and learning through a range of different elements listed below.

- A broad, balanced, differentiated and relevant curriculum
- Teaching and Learning resources and environment
- The development of a range of teaching and learning styles
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting systems
- Student Care System
- Home/School Liaison
- Learning Support
- Non Teaching Support
- Staff Development
- Quality Assurance Systems

Acting together, these elements help to provide students with the knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and experiences which allow them to develop to their full potential. Azhar Academy Girls School believes these different elements of the Whole School Approach together can encourage the development of literate, numerate, ICT capable and socially aware students who can be active participants in the society of the future. In all the elements identified, there is an emphasis on high expectations, student achievement and social, moral spiritual and cultural development.

4. Development of Teaching and Learning

a) Whole School Level

On a Whole School Level, the Senior Leadership Team has a crucial role to play, within the constraints of available resources, in:

- Creating the ethos/shared values and expectations that reinforce high quality teaching and learning (the work of the Curriculum and Teaching & Learning sub-committee);
- Writing, in consultation with the Staff, the School Development Plan with its emphasis on teaching and learning;
- Ensuring a broad, balanced, differentiated and relevant curriculum;
- Encouraging the development of effective teaching and learning styles;
- Ensuring an effective system of assessment, recording and reporting;
- Developing the role of learning and language support in the School;
- Ensuring an effective, flexible and responsible student care system;
- Encouraging the development of a relevant and responsive system of staff development
- Managing the monitoring and evaluation systems for teaching and learning.

b) Curriculum Area Level

Curriculum Areas have a policy on teaching and learning which reinforces and reflects the Whole School Policy and have a crucial role to play, within available resources, in:

- Reinforcing the school's shared values and expectations that support high quality teaching and learning;
- Writing the Team Plan with its emphasis on developing teaching and learning in line with the School Improvement Plan;
- Encouraging the development of high quality teaching and learning resources;
- Encouraging the development of effective teaching and learning styles;
- Contributing positively to an effective system of pastoral care;
- Encouraging and reinforcing the School's system of Staff Development;
- Developing a system of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning within the context of the whole school system.

This is currently under development.

c) Classroom Teaching Level

The classroom teacher has a crucial role to play in:

- Reinforcing the school's shared values and attitudes that support high quality teaching and learning;
- Following the guidelines set out in the Curriculum Area's Teaching and Learning Policy;
- Developing the use of L2L strategies, including Metacognition and effective AfL;
- Contributing to the developments outlined in the Team Development Plan with respect to teaching and learning;
- Developing high quality teaching and learning resources;
- Following the Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy Procedures;
- Contributing positively to an effective system of student care;
- Participating in staff development outlined in the School's Staff Development Plan;

- Contributing positively to the Curriculum Area system of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning.

d) Student Level

Students have an important role to play in:

- Reinforcing the values, attitudes and behaviour that promote effective learning;
- Evaluating and contributing positively to the development of learning styles;
- Contributing to the development of self assessment and evaluation, including AfL.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Quality of Teaching and Learning

To meet the commitment that Azhar Academy Girls School has to encourage high student achievement, it is necessary, at all levels of the school to monitor and evaluate the quality of the teaching and learning that goes on. Through the process of monitoring and evaluation, priorities for development and improvement can be identified and the quality of teaching and learning consequently enhanced.