



Learning & Teaching Policy

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Rationale

At Emirates International School Meadows (EISM), learning and teaching is at the heart of our work. We are committed to providing high-quality, inclusive and personalised learning that is challenging, engaging and purposeful. As an IB World School, learning develops knowledgeable, reflective and internationally minded students who demonstrate the IB Learner Profile and Approaches to Learning (ATLs), take increasing ownership of their learning and are prepared for future success.

Purpose

- To provide consistently high-quality learning that maximises progress and challenges every student.
- To establish clear, shared expectations for effective learning and teaching across EISM.
- To promote inclusive, inquiry-based and personalised practice aligned with IB philosophy.
- To provide a common language for professional dialogue, reflection, coaching and continuous improvement through the EISM Learning and Teaching Toolkit.

Principles of Effective Learning and Teaching

At EISM, teachers facilitate learning through purposeful inquiry, explicit teaching and responsive practice. Learning builds on prior knowledge, makes meaningful connections and provides appropriate challenges for all. Students are active participants who inquire, collaborate, think critically, reflect, respond to feedback and increasingly make choices about how they learn. Learning is designed to develop both knowledge and transferable skills, enabling students to make connections within and across subjects and apply their learning in authentic contexts. As students' progress through the school, they are supported to become increasingly independent, reflective and self-directed learners.

In the Primary Years Programme (PYP), including Early Learners, learning and teaching is developmentally appropriate, inquiry-led and responsive to children's interests, experiences and stages of development. In EY1 and EY2, purposeful play, exploration, talk, movement and carefully designed indoor and outdoor environments are central to learning. Adults observe, interact, question and model skilfully, using teachable moments and intentional experiences to extend language, thinking, curiosity, independence and self-regulation. Across the PYP, students build conceptual understanding through transdisciplinary inquiry, explicit teaching and meaningful opportunities for student agency, action and reflection. The balance of adult-guided and student-initiated learning evolves appropriately as students' progress through the Primary School.

In High School, learning and teaching is aligned with the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP), Diploma Programme (DP) and Career-related Programme (CP), developing students' subject knowledge, conceptual understanding, transferable skills and independence. Students are supported to take increasing ownership of their learning through inquiry, critical thinking, collaboration, reflection and purposeful application of knowledge. Learning prepares students for further study, employment and life beyond school, while developing the skills and attributes needed to become confident, responsible and lifelong learners. High-quality learning and teaching is underpinned by:

- Challenge and personalisation, with high expectations for every learner.
- Inquiry, conceptual understanding and meaningful local, UAE, global and real-life contexts.
- The IB Learner Profile and Approaches to Learning (ATLs), developed explicitly and authentically through learning and increasingly applied independently by students.
- Assessment for Learning that identifies starting points, checks understanding and informs timely adaptation and intervention.
- Effective questioning, modelling, dialogue, collaboration and metacognitive thinking.
- Students increasingly manage their own learning, make informed choices, set goals, monitor their progress and reflect on the strategies that support their success.
- Inclusive practice that anticipates and responds to the needs of all learners, including Students of Determination, EAL learners and more/exceptionally able students.
- Purposeful use of digital technology where it enhances learning, independence, creativity or feedback.
- Safe, respectful and stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments that celebrate learning and support independence.

The EISM Learning and Teaching Toolkit

The EISM Toolkit (see appendix 1) provides a shared language for highly effective practice across the school. The elements are interconnected and should be used responsively rather than as a checklist or fixed lesson structure.

The Toolkit applies across all phases but is interpreted in an age- and developmentally appropriate way. In EY1 and EY2, evidence of the Toolkit may be seen through purposeful play, sustained shared thinking, responsive adult interaction, exploration and the learning environment rather than through a formal lesson structure. Across the PYP, the Toolkit complements the PYP approaches to teaching and supports inquiry, conceptual understanding, agency and transdisciplinary learning.

In High School, the Toolkit complements the IB approaches to teaching across the MYP, DP and CP. It supports purposeful inquiry, conceptual understanding, disciplinary and interdisciplinary learning, and the progressive development of the Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills. As students move through High School, the Toolkit should increasingly promote intellectual challenge, critical and creative thinking, independence, student agency and the purposeful application of learning. In the DP and CP, this includes supporting students to engage with greater academic rigour, make connections across and beyond their subjects, manage increasingly complex learning demands and take greater responsibility for their own progress. The Toolkit is applied responsively within different subjects and programmes and does not prescribe a single lesson structure or teaching approach:

- Connect the Learning
- Lesson Transparency
- Challenge and personalisation
- Higher Order Questioning
- Timely Intervention
- Model Excellence
- Real Life Links
- Meta-cognition
- High Quality Product
- Collaborating

The Toolkit supports planning, professional dialogue, coaching and Monitoring, Evaluation and Review (MER). Its impact is ultimately evaluated through the quality of students' learning, progress, independence and ability to articulate their learning.

Assessment and Feedback

Secure knowledge of each student's starting point and progress is central to effective teaching. Teachers use formative and summative assessment to inform planning, adapt teaching and identify when intervention or extension is required. Assessment information is considered alongside professional judgement and student voice.

In Early Learners, assessment is primarily formative and is embedded naturally within learning through observation, interaction, conversation and review of children's learning and development. Evidence is used purposefully to identify next steps and inform responsive provision without interrupting the flow of play and inquiry. Across the PYP, assessment is integral to the learning process and includes opportunities for students to reflect on, document and communicate their learning in age-appropriate ways.

In High School, assessment reflects the requirements and principles of the MYP, DP and CP and combines ongoing formative assessment with appropriate summative assessment. Teachers use a range of evidence to establish students' starting points, monitor progress, identify misconceptions and adapt teaching, challenge and intervention accordingly. Assessment criteria and expectations are communicated clearly so that students understand the quality of work expected and can increasingly evaluate their own progress. As students move through the MYP and into the DP or CP, they are expected to take increasing responsibility for using assessment information, setting goals and responding purposefully to feedback. Assessment practice supports both strong academic outcomes and the development of independent, reflective and self-directed learners.

Feedback is timely, specific and purposeful. It may be verbal, written, peer- or self-generated and should help students understand what they have achieved, address misconceptions and identify meaningful next steps. Students are given opportunities to act on feedback, reflect on their learning and take increasing ownership of improvement.

Inclusive Practice and Personalisation

EISM is committed to inclusive learning. Teachers plan from ambitious expectations and adapt teaching, resources, scaffolds, grouping, questioning and levels of challenge in response to learners' strengths, needs and assessment information. Additional intervention is used where required and is planned to complement, not replace, high-quality classroom provision. Collaboration between teachers, Inclusion/EAL teams, support staff, students and families is central to removing barriers and maximising progress.

Climate for Learning

Learning environments should be safe, welcoming, purposeful and highly conducive to learning. Relationships are respectful and expectations are consistently high. Spaces and resources should promote curiosity, independence, collaboration and high-quality outcomes. Displays should support or celebrate current learning and reflect the diversity of the EISM community. Teachers are encouraged to be innovative, reflective and solution-driven, taking considered professional risks where these enhance learning.

For Early Learners, the environment is an active part of the learning process, environments should provide rich, accessible and flexible opportunities for play, exploration, communication, creativity, physical development and independence across indoor and outdoor spaces. Resources and routines should enable children to make choices, revisit learning and develop positive relationships and a strong sense of belonging. Across the PYP, learning environments should make inquiry and learning visible while promoting student voice, choice and ownership.

In High School, the climate for learning should reflect the increasing academic, social and personal independence expected through the MYP, DP and CP. Learning environments should promote purposeful inquiry, intellectual challenge, collaboration and focused independent learning, while enabling students to feel confident in questioning, contributing ideas, taking considered risks and learning from mistakes.

Classrooms should communicate high expectations for participation, organisation and the quality of learning, with resources and digital technology used purposefully to support increasingly sophisticated learning. Students should take increasing responsibility for contributing positively to the learning environment, managing themselves effectively and demonstrating the respectful, responsible and internationally minded behaviours expected of IB learners.

Roles and Responsibilities

The successful implementation of this policy is a shared responsibility across the school. Expectations apply from EY1 to Year 13 and should be interpreted appropriately according to students' age, stage of development, individual needs and IB programme.

Leaders and Year Group/Department Leaders will:

- Model and communicate consistently high expectations for learning and teaching across all phases and programmes.
- Set priorities aligned with the EISM School Improvement Plan and hold teams accountable for the quality of learning, progress, attainment, inclusion and student experience.
- Use MER, assessment information, student voice and other relevant evidence to evaluate the impact of learning and teaching, identify strengths and priorities, and determine professional development needs.
- Ensure the EISM Learning and Teaching Toolkit, IB Learner Profile and Approaches to Learning (ATLs) are embedded meaningfully and progressively across the school.
- Promote appropriate continuity and progression in learning and teaching from Early Learners through the PYP, MYP, DP and CP, while recognising the distinct pedagogical approaches and expectations of each phase and programme.
- Ensure that high expectations, challenge, personalisation, inclusion and student agency are evident for all learners.

- Support professional growth through feedback, coaching, collaboration, professional learning and the sharing of effective practice within and across phases.

Teachers will:

- Plan and facilitate ambitious, inclusive, engaging and purposeful learning, applying the EISM Learning and Teaching Toolkit in an age-, phase- and programme-appropriate way.
- Know their students well and use assessment, observation, professional judgement and knowledge of individual needs to personalise learning, provide appropriate challenge and respond promptly to misconceptions or barriers.
- Develop the IB Learner Profile and ATLs progressively, enabling students to inquire, think, communicate, collaborate, reflect and increasingly manage their own learning.
- Create safe, welcoming and stimulating climates for learning that promote belonging, curiosity, challenge, independence and high expectations.
- Use adults, learning environments, resources and digital technology purposefully to enhance learning.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for student voice, choice and agency, supporting students to take increasing ownership of their learning as appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Provide timely and purposeful feedback and opportunities for students to respond, reflect, refine and improve their learning.
- Use learning evidence to evaluate the impact of teaching and adapt subsequent learning accordingly.
- Communicate appropriately with families about learning, progress and how they can support their child's development.
- Engage positively with MER, professional dialogue, coaching and collaboration, taking responsibility for their own professional growth and contributing to the development of others.

Inclusion, EAL and support staff will:

Work collaboratively with teachers and leaders across all phases to remove barriers to learning, support agreed learning priorities and enable every student to participate, progress and achieve. They should know the intended learning and individual needs of the students they support and use questioning, scaffolding, modelling, feedback and appropriate intervention to move learning forward while promoting independence rather than creating dependency.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review (MER)

EISM uses MER to promote continuous improvement rather than isolated judgement. Learning and teaching at EISM is supported through the school's Monitoring, Evaluation and Review (MER) processes. MER provides opportunities for reflection, professional dialogue, feedback and the sharing of effective practice, with a focus on the impact of learning and teaching on students.

Evidence from MER, including learning visits and walks, student voice, review of planning and student work, assessment information and professional reflection, is used to identify strengths, inform professional learning and support continuous improvement. MER is developmental and contributes to school improvement priorities and professional growth.

Evidence is considered over time and may include:

- Professional dialogue, coaching and teacher reflection.
- Learning visits/walks and climate walks.
- Student voice, conferencing and learning conversations.
- Review of planning and student work.
- Formative and summative assessment information and progress analysis.
- Moderation and review of curriculum implementation.

Feedback from MER should be clear, developmental and acted upon. Leaders use patterns in evidence to inform professional learning, resourcing, intervention and school improvement priorities.

Links to Other Policies

Assessment,
Inclusion

Literacy
Behaviour
MER
Academic Integrity

Appendix 1: EISM Learning and Teaching Toolkit – At a glance

Toolkit Element	What this looks like in practice
Connect the Learning	Engage learners, activate prior knowledge and make connections to previous, current and future learning, building knowledge and skills progressively over time.
Lesson Transparency	Students understand the learning purpose, intended outcomes and how they can be successful.
Challenge & Personalisation	Ambitious learning is adapted responsively so all students are appropriately supported, challenged and extended, using knowledge of students, assessment information and observation to inform teaching.
Higher Order Questioning	Purposeful questioning, dialogue and thinking time deepen understanding and reasoning.
Timely Intervention	Assessment for Learning identifies misconceptions and enables immediate adaptation, feedback and support.
Model Excellence	Teacher and student modelling make quality, processes and expectations visible.
Real Life Links	Learning is contextualised through meaningful UAE, local, global and authentic connections. Learning should provide meaningful opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills beyond the classroom and make connections to future study, careers and life.
Meta-cognition	Students plan, monitor, articulate and reflect on their thinking and learning strategies, increasingly taking responsibility for their own learning.
High Quality Product	Students understand quality, purpose and audience and have time to refine and improve outcomes.
Collaborating	Structured collaboration enables students to co-construct knowledge, communicate and learn from others.

TEACHING & LEARNING TOOLKIT

REFLECTIVE Prompts



PROGRESS underpins each area of the Toolkit – almost all (90%+) students make **expected** progress?

1 CONNECT THE LEARNING

- How do I consistently spark curiosity and encourage inquiry within each lesson? (1.3.4, 3.1.3, 3.1.5, 4.1.1)
- Do I begin learning experiences by connecting to students' **prior knowledge** and experiences? (1.3.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 4.1.1)
- Are the **Assessment for Learning** strategies I use **effective** to plotting learning to optimize them? (3.2.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.5, 4.2.5)
- How am I intentionally linking learning to the **Learner Profile** attributes? (1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.5, 1.3.3, 3.1.5, 4.1.2)



2 LESSON TRANSPARENCY

- How well do I make the purpose of learning clear so students can take ownership and drive their own learning? (1.3.1, 1.3.2, 3.1.2, 3.2.5, 4.1.2)
- How well do students understand the "why" of their learning, not just the "what"? (1.3.1, 3.1.2, 3.2.5, 4.1.2)
- Am I encouraging students to self-reflect on their progress using success criteria? (1.3.1, 3.2.5, 3.2.1, 4.2.2)
- How am I supporting student agency by involving learners in shaping their learning journey? (1.3.1, 1.3.2, 3.1.4, 3.2.5)
- Do I provide students with opportunities to articulate what they are learning and how they will get there? (1.3.2, 3.1.3, 3.2.5, 4.1.2)



3 CHALLENGE & PERSONALISATION

- Do I routinely set ambitious learning expectations that challenge all learners to achieve beyond expectations? (1.3.4, 3.1.4, 3.1.5, 4.2.2)
- How effectively do I personalise learning using what I know about my students? (1.3.1, 3.1.4, 3.2.5, 4.2.2)
- Does the learning activities match success criteria and provide challenge for all? (1.3.4, 3.1.4, 3.2.4, 4.2.2)
- How do I use **data and observations** to respond to individual students while promoting independence? (1.3.1, 1.3.4, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 4.2.2)
- How am I nurturing students as risk-takers and encouraging them to embrace challenge? (1.3.4, 3.1.5, 4.2.2)



4 HIGHER ORDER QUESTIONING

- Do my questions encourage critical and creative thinking to deepen thinking? (1.3.4, 3.1.3, 3.1.5)
- Do I create an environment where all students remain actively engaged in discussions? (1.3.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.5)
- Am I fostering a culture of dialogue where students build on and challenge each other's thinking? (1.3.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.5)
- How am I encouraging students to generate their own questions and pursue inquiry pathways? (1.3.4, 3.1.5, 4.1.1)
- Do these discussions help develop international mindedness and multiple perspectives? (1.3.2, 1.3.3, 3.1.5, 4.3.2)



5 TIMELY INTERVENTION

- How often do I use **Assessment for Learning (AfL)** strategies to check understanding, adapt and move learning forwards? (3.2.1, 3.2.3, 3.2.4)
- Do I adapt my teaching responsively to support inquiry and progression for all learners? (3.2.4, 4.2.2)
- How effective is my timely feedback to students to ensure they accelerate progress? (3.2.4, 3.2.5, 4.1.2)
- How do I ensure misconceptions are seen as part of the learning journey and addressed constructively? (3.2.4, 3.2.5, 4.2.2)
- How am I guiding students toward becoming reflective learners? (1.3.4, 3.2.5, 4.1.2)



6 MODEL EXCELLENCE

- Am I routinely modelling high expectations and showing what success looks like? (1.3.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3)
- Do I use exemplars (WAGOLLs) that reflect authentic, globally relevant standards to inspire students? (1.3.2, 3.1.1, 4.2.3)
- Are students clear on high quality end product? (3.1.2, 4.2.2)
- How well do I balance teacher and peer modelling across my teaching? (3.1.2, 3.1.3, 1.3.2)
- Do I empower students to model excellence for each other? (1.3.2, 3.1.3, 4.2.3)



7 REAL LIFE LEARNING LINKS

- Am I embedding learning in meaningful, real-world contexts? (1.3.3, 3.1.2, 3.1.5, 4.1.1)
- Do I make connections to local, national, and global issues that foster international mindedness? (1.3.3, 3.1.5, 4.3.1)
- How often do I encourage students to connect learning to their own lives and communities? (1.3.3, 3.1.2, 4.1.1)
- Am I helping them see learning as purposeful and impactful beyond the classroom? (1.3.1, 1.3.3, 3.1.5, 4.1.1)
- How do I weave prior knowledge and experiences into new learning? (1.3.1, 3.1.2, 4.2.1)



8 META-COGNITIVE THINKING

- Am I nurturing independence by giving students ownership of their learning processes? (1.3.1, 1.3.4, 3.1.5, 3.2.5)
- How am I encouraging students to think about their own thinking and learning strategies? How do they articulate their learning? (1.3.4, 3.1.5, 3.2.5)
- Do I provide opportunities for students to reflect on how they learn, not just what they learn? (1.3.4, 3.2.5, 4.2.2)
- Am I helping students develop ATL skills (self-management, thinking skills, communication skills)? (1.3.1, 1.3.4, 3.1.5, 4.1.2)
- How do I empower students to become self-directed, lifelong learners? (1.3.4, 3.1.5, 4.1.2)



9 HIGH QUALITY AUTHENTIC PRODUCT

- Am I ensuring that the tasks set, result in outcomes that are purposeful and authentic? (1.3.3, 3.1.2, 3.1.4, 4.2.2)
- Do students understand who their audience is? Is it meaningful to the students? (1.3.3, 3.1.2, 4.1.3)
- Am I giving sufficient time for students to reflect, refine, and up-level their work? (3.1.4, 3.2.4, 4.2.2)
- How do I nurture pride, ownership, and creativity in what students produce? (1.3.1, 1.3.4, 3.1.5, 4.2.2)



10 COLLABORATING

- Are students consistently engaged with each other's active learning? (1.3.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.5) (1.3.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.5)
- How am I intentionally developing students' collaboration ATL skills? (1.3.2, 1.3.4, 3.1.5)
- Do I encourage collaboration that enhances inquiry rather than just dividing tasks? (1.3.2, 1.3.4, 3.1.5)
- Am I fostering a classroom culture where collaboration builds empathy, respect, and shared responsibility? (1.3.2, 1.3.3, 4.3.2)
- How do I help students connect collaboration to the **Learner Profile** attributes (e.g., communicators, caring, open-minded)? Can students articulate this? (1.3.2, 4.1.2, 4.3.2)



Every student **known**, every learning experience **challenging**, every day **excellent**.



EISM Teaching & Learning Toolkit- Reflective Prompts

Progress underpins each area of the Toolkit - almost all (90%+) students make **expected** progress?

Connect the Learning  - How do I consistently spark curiosity and encourage inquiry within each lesson? - Do I begin learning experiences by connecting to students' prior knowledge and experiences? - Am I intentional in finding out what my students know and building from there? - Are the Assessment for Learning strategies I use effective to pitch and drive the learning to optimise progress. - How am I intentionally linking learning to the Learner Profile attributes?	Lesson Transparency  - How well do I make the purpose of learning clear so students can take ownership and drive their own learning? - How well do students understand the "why" of their learning, not just the "what"? - Am I encouraging students to self-reflect on their progress using success criteria? - How am I supporting student agency by involving learners in shaping their learning journey? - Do I provide students with opportunities to articulate what they are learning and how they will get there?
Challenge and Personalisation  - Do I routinely set ambitious learning expectations that challenge all learners to achieve beyond expectations? - How effectively do I personalise learning using what I know about my students? - Does the learning activities match success criteria and provide challenge for all? - How do I use data and observation to respond to individual students while promoting independence? - How am I nurturing students as risk-takers and encouraging them to embrace challenge?	Higher Order Questioning  - Do my questions encourage critical and creative thinking to deepen thinking? - Do I create an environment where all students remain actively engaged in discussions? - Am I fostering a culture of dialogue where students build on and challenge each other's thinking? - How am I encouraging students to generate their own questions and pursue inquiry pathways? - Do these discussions help develop international mindedness and multiple perspectives?
Timely Intervention  - How often do I use Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies to check understanding, adapt and move learning forwards? - Do I adapt my teaching responsively to support inquiry and progression for all learners? - How effective is my timely feedback to students to ensure they accelerate progress? - How do I ensure misconceptions are seen as part of the learning journey and addressed constructively? - How am I guiding students toward becoming reflective learners?	Model Excellence  - Am I routinely modelling high expectations and showing what success looks like? - Do I use exemplars (WAGOLLs) that reflect authentic, globally relevant standards to inspire students? - Are students clear on high quality end product? - How well do I balance teacher and peer modelling across my teaching? - Do I empower students to model excellence for each other?
Real Life Learning Links  - Am I embedding learning in meaningful, real-world contexts? - Do I make connections to local, national, and global issues that foster international mindedness? - How often do I encourage students to connect learning to their own lives and communities? - Am I helping them see learning as purposeful and impactful beyond the classroom? - How do I weave prior knowledge and experiences into new learning?	Meta-cognitive Thinking  - Am I nurturing independence by giving students ownership of their learning processes? - How am I encouraging students to think about their own thinking and learning strategies? How do they articulate their learning? - Do I provide opportunities for students to reflect on how they learn, not just what they learn? - Am I helping students develop ATL skills (Self-management, Thinking skills, Communication skills)? - How do I empower students to become self-directed, lifelong learners?
High Quality Authentic Product  - Am I ensuring that the tasks set, result in outcomes that are purposeful and authentic? - Do students understand who their audience is? Is it meaningful to the students? - Am I giving sufficient time for students to reflect, refine, and up-level their work? - How do I nurture pride, ownership, and creativity in what students produce?	Collaborating  - Are students consistently engaged within each lesson- active learning? - How am I intentionally developing students' collaboration ATL skills? - Do I encourage collaboration that enhances inquiry rather than just dividing tasks? - Am I fostering a classroom culture where collaboration builds empathy, respect, and shared responsibility? - How do I help students connect collaboration to the Learner Profile attributes (e.g., communicators, caring, open-minded)? Can students articulate this?