

## TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

POLICY FOR	Teaching and Learning
PERSON RESPONSIBLE	Heads of Teaching, Learning and Assessment
REVIEW DATE	June 2025
REVIEWED BY	TLA Team
APPROVED DATE	June 2025
APPROVED BY	ELT
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW	May 2026
RELATED POLICIES	Assessment Policy, Academic Honesty Policy, Inclusion Policy, Gifted & Talented Policy,

Executive Principal / CEO .....



## 1. Rationale

At The Westminster School, we believe that:

- Learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone and enable children to make expected or accelerated progress.
- High quality teaching and learning experiences support children to be able to lead happy and rewarding lives, now and in the future.
- We integrate development of a range of key skills, attributes and attitudes into our learning so that students can play an increasingly useful and positive role in society and make informed choices about their lives both now and in the future.

## 2. National Standards

This policy is based on the following DSIB Inspection Framework Performance Standards Indicators:

- 1.3 Learning Skills
- 3.1 Teaching for effective learning.

## 3. Aims

At our school, we provide rich, relevant and varied learning experiences which allow children to develop their skills, interests and abilities to achieve, be proud and succeed together.

Through our teaching, we aim to:

- nurture students who are confident in working with information and ideas — their own and those of others, responsible for themselves, responsible to and respectful of others, reflective as learners, developing their ability to learn, be innovative and equipped for new and future challenges, engaged intellectually and socially, ready to make a difference
- provide students with the skills, knowledge and understanding to make informed choices and equip them fully for adult life.
- ensure that all students have equal access to a broad balanced curriculum to achieve their full potential.
- focus on students' attainment and progress
- develop students as resourceful, resilient and responsible learners.

## 4. Effective learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways, and we recognize the need to develop pedagogies and students' learning skills to enable all children to learn in ways that suit them.

We provide a variety of student-centered learning opportunities that encourage active engagement, metacognitive development, and the thoughtful integration of AI tools to support and extend learning, including:

- Encouraging investigation, problem-solving, and critical thinking, where students take ownership of their learning and reflect on the strategies they use to approach and solve problems.
- Designing open-ended tasks that promote creativity, self-direction, and the ability to evaluate multiple approaches and outcomes.
- Supporting independent research and inquiry, with access to relevant resources—including AI-powered tools—that empower learners to personalize their learning pathways and reflect on information critically.
- Facilitating group work, paired work, and independent tasks, allowing students to collaborate, communicate, and reflect on their roles and contributions in different learning contexts.

- Using effective questioning, presentations, role-play, and digital technologies to encourage students to articulate their thinking, assess their understanding, and build confidence in expressing ideas.
- Organizing field and off-site visits to connect learning with real-world experiences, encouraging reflective thinking and the application of knowledge beyond the classroom.
- Offering creative activities that invite students to explore ideas, take risks, and reflect on their creative processes and choices.
- Integrating multimedia, visual and aural stimuli, and physical activities, recognizing diverse learning preferences and promoting reflection on how students learn best.
- Designing homework tasks that extend learning, build independence, and encourage self-assessment and goal setting.
- Inviting guest speakers and performers to enrich the learning environment and prompt students to question, reflect, and connect new insights to their own experiences.

## 5. Four-part lesson for effective teaching and learning

- Every lesson is expected to comprise of four prominent parts such as the Starter, Development, Differentiation and Plenary. Below are the expected attributes of teachers and learners during the four parts of the lesson. Assessment data from internal and external assessments to be used effectively to provide appropriate support.
- Teachers create a safe, supportive, and student-centered learning environment where students feel confident to take risks, reflect on their learning, and actively participate in shaping their educational journey.
- All learning spaces are stimulating and engaging, designed to inspire curiosity and independence, while supporting diverse learning needs and preferences.
- Lesson planning is focused on deep, meaningful learning, with high expectations that encourage learners to think critically and monitor their own progress.
- Students are clearly informed of the intended learning goals, how these goals are relevant to them, and what success looks like—supporting metacognitive awareness and personal accountability.
- Differentiation is guided by continuous assessment, using insights to tailor learning experiences to individual needs, promoting equity and engagement for all learners.
- Activities are carefully designed to foster student autonomy, enabling learners to take the lead through independent inquiry, collaborative problem-solving, and reflective decision-making.
- AI and other emerging technologies are integrated purposefully to enhance learning inside and outside the classroom, offering adaptive support, personalized resources, and opportunities for students to track and reflect on their learning journey.
- Strategic questioning is used to deepen understanding, stimulate higher-order thinking, and encourage students to articulate and evaluate their own thinking processes.
- All adults actively support the development of English language skills—in writing, speaking, listening, and reading—within meaningful and student-relevant contexts.
- A range of assessment for learning strategies, including AI-supported feedback and teacher marking, is used to provide timely, specific, and actionable guidance that helps students understand their next steps and take responsibility for improvement.
- There is a clear quality agenda that emphasizes critical thinking, reflection, and task richness, ensuring all learners are cognitively engaged and challenged.
- Praise and recognition are used purposefully to reinforce effort, progress, and reflective learning, helping students build confidence and resilience.

## 6. Four-part lesson for effective teaching and learning

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### Teach Like a GEM (TLAG):

At GEMS Education, world-class teaching requires all staff to understand the mechanisms of the mind – how we think, learn, and remember. Teach Like a GEM defines and supports excellence in classroom practice across all GEMS schools. It is grounded in the work of leading educational thinkers, drawing heavily on Daniel Willingham’s research on cognitive science, Barak Rosenshine’s Principles of Instruction, Doug Lemov’s Teach Like a Champion techniques, and the pioneering work of Jim Knight in instructional coaching. The lessons at TWS will adapt the Teach Like a GEM (TLAG) techniques as required.

#### GEMS Essentials: Structuring Learning for Impact



Do Now  
(retrieval practice)



Learning Outcomes



To Know



I Do, We Do, You Do  
(guided practice)



Affirmative Checking



Exit Ticket

#### GEMS Talk: Fostering a Culture of Discourse



Turn and Talk



Show Call



Show Me



Everybody Writes



Cold Call



Right is Right



Stretch It



Habits of Discussion

#### GEMS Culture: Optimising Learning Opportunities



What To Do  
(directions)



Whole Class Reset



Teacher Radar

## 7. Distance Learning Provision

During **Distance or Blended learning**, we aim continuity of learning for our students at home through online platforms by ensuring

- a. The balance of learning methods is appropriate for online learning and for students' needs
- b. Resource requirements for completing activities at home are reasonable and easily accessible.
- c. Teachers collaborate so that students' workloads are manageable
- d. Students are allowed flexibility with their time management and assignment deadlines to accommodate home circumstances.
- e. Essential content is covered in identified key subjects
- f. Provision of a balance of opportunities for academic and non-academic experiences

## 8. Monitoring and Review

We believe that teaching should be conducted in an atmosphere of trust, respect and honesty. We link our appraisal process with the DSIB criteria and this policy for teaching and learning in order to provide a clear and consistent expectation of the quality of practice across school.

When evaluating teaching and learning in school, we make use of:

- classroom observation.
- data analysis.
- analysis of students' work,
- planning scrutiny.
- moderating and discussing the quality of students' work with colleagues.
- learning walks.
- announced observations
- feedback from parents and wider stakeholder surveys
- Student feedback
- internal reviews

All our teachers are expected to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and help shape their own professional development plan. Along with school self-evaluation and appraisal, this informs a programme of PLD to address staff needs, with in-house expertise as well as external providers.

The SLT and MLT observe lessons regularly focusing on our school's recommendations from DSIB and our school priorities, feedback is given, and areas of development are listed on how to improve. We support our teachers in increasing their knowledge and skills, so that they can continue to develop their practice and ensure they contribute to improving the school's provision and overall vision as stated in the National Agenda.

## 9. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if needed.