

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 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. Teach Like a GEM (TLAG):

At TWS, teaching and learning is aligned with 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 Playbook is one of the 4 components of TLAG and features **18 techniques**, organised into three categories: GEMS Essentials, GEMS Talk, and GEMS Culture.



5. Effective Teaching and Learning

- Lessons incorporate the 6 GEMS Essentials fusing in the techniques of GEMS Talks and GEMS Culture.
- Learning spaces are stimulating, inclusive, and designed to promote curiosity, independence, and diverse learning needs.
- Planning focuses on deep, meaningful learning with high expectations that build critical thinking and self-monitoring.
- Students receive clear learning goals, relevance, and success criteria to strengthen metacognition and ownership.
- Differentiation is informed by continuous assessment to ensure equitable access and engagement for all learners.
- Activities promote autonomy through inquiry, collaboration, problem-solving, and reflective decision-making.
- AI and emerging technologies are used purposefully to personalise learning and extend opportunities beyond the classroom.
- Strategic questioning deepens understanding and encourages higher-order thinking and self-reflection.
- All adults support the development of English language skills across reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- Assessment for learning strategies—including timely feedback—guide students in understanding next steps and improving performance.
- A strong quality agenda ensures cognitive challenge, critical thinking, and rich learning tasks.
- Praise and recognition reinforce effort, progress, and reflective learning, building confidence and resilience.
- A variety of student-centred learning experiences—creative tasks, inquiry, research, group work, real-world connections, and guest interactions—support diverse learning preferences and promote active engagement.

6. 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

7. 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.

8. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if needed.