Teaching and

Learning Policy

School Vision

Empower learners to contribute to the global community through innovation, exploration, and citizenship.

School Mission

DMES cultivates reflective scholars, bold innovators and passionate leaders equipped with the content knowledge, skillset, and ethics to make a positive contribution to society. The learning environment prepares students for lives of meaning and purpose emphasizing academic excellence, high expectations, and enthusiasm for life. Our school emphasizes the development of a character loyal to GOD and country identified by integrity through self-discipline and tolerance.

Through our authentic programs, conducive learning environment, and strong partnerships with families and the wider community, our learners experience rich language acquisition, appreciation for diversity, and become lifelong learners.

Core Values

- Citizenship
- Respect
- Leadership
- Responsibility
- Tolerance
- Commitment
- Excellence
- High Expectation

Teaching and Learning Policy

1.0 Primary Value

The primary value underpinned in this policy is nurturing the passion for life-long learning as a pathway for successful achievements and high aspirations for the future.

2.0 Rationale

At DMES, the importance of instilling the value of life-long learning and the belief that learning should be rewarding and enjoyable are reinforced through the existing teaching and learning practices. The teaching and learning policy is intended to demonstrate our commitment to upholding high standards for teaching and learning in all phases and subject areas. DMES strives to cultivate a purposeful, supportive, and stimulating learning environment that promotes the total wellbeing of all students.

The policy articulates the teaching and learning structure as compelled by the school's mission, vision, and core values. It articulates that students are entitled to high-quality education and that they are at the center of learning. Being student-focused in practice, it promotes authentic learning whereby students are exposed to real-life situations.

Students shall experience various learning opportunities to cater to their abilities, interests, and learning styles. The compelling drive that embodies the teaching and learning programs in DMES is the value of life-long learning. We recognize that students deepen their knowledge and skills through real-world experiences in their everyday learning encounters. Our learning programs are outlined with enriched opportunities and experiences to make learning a rewarding and enjoyable experience for the students. Shaping individual student personalities and empowering students to achieve their maximum potential is at the epicenter of the teaching journey. To meet the demands of 21st-century learning, we seek to provide teaching and learning experiences that are future-focused, challenging, and innovative to build the foundation for happiness and success in life.

3.0 Purpose

This policy outlines the school's general view on teaching and learning process and establishes the procedures to achieve excellence in education at DMES. It serves as a guide for class teachers, teaching assistants and homeroom teachers about the procedures and processes to adhere to. To create a high-quality learning environment that facilitates the implementation of lessons and supports differentiation, the organization of the classroom and the instructional resources are planned accordingly. The purposeful and stimulating learning climate shall promote:

- Respect, tolerance, and global-mindedness in all areas of teaching and learning.
- Equality and inclusivity for the diverse student body.
- Increased levels of proficiency in literacy, numeracy, science, and information technology.
- Student engagement and motivation towards continuous improvement and growth.
- Creativity, critical thinking, communication, entrepreneurship, innovation towards the academic, personal and social development of students.
- 21st-century teaching and learning by utilizing inquiry-based and blended learning approaches.
- Collaboration, learner proactivity, and self-reflection through authentic classroom tasks and experiences.
- Responsible and safe use of technology and other learning resources to reinforce self-discipline and learner accountability

4.0 Aims

At DMES, we aim to:

- Promote high standards for teaching for effective learning aligned with the local, national and international curriculum standards.
- Ensure instructional practices integrate cross-curricular connections across

all subjects and real-world applications

- Deliver a broad and balanced curriculum that provides enriched learning opportunities for all groups of learners (Emirati students, students of determination, gifted and talented students, English language learners).

- Ensure increased attainment and progress in core subject areas across the different phases/cycles in school, with a particular focus on Emirati students.

- Raise levels of student achievement and development by ensuring adequate provision of learning opportunities and delivering refined teaching practices.

- Promote an atmosphere of respect, trust, responsibility, and collaboration to optimize student engagement and involvement.

- Provide avenues for students to further develop their 21st-century learning skills through the integration of trends in pedagogical approaches and learning technologies.

- Demonstrate the teachers' commitment to upholding agreed standards of teaching and learning in school

5.0 Definitions

5.1 **Learning**[1]: The process of gaining skills, experience, knowledge, and understanding through study and exposure to good teaching. May also be applied to the collective skills, experience, knowledge, and understanding gained from good teaching.

5.2 **Teaching**[2]: All activities undertaken by the teacher aimed at enhancing students' learning, including imparting information, developing students' understanding, skills, attitudes, and behavior.

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[1] UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, page 125

[2] UAE School Inspection Framework 2015-2016, page 128

6.0 Learning Environment and Climate

The learning environment shall promote a positive culture of learning. This environment shall be characterized by:

- Organizing and managing the classroom and other facilities to ensure the students' health, safety, and wellbeing.

- Establishing high expectations for students and providing varied opportunities for academic support and challenge.

- Utilizing a range of strategies and learning activities based on learning objectives and outcomes.

- Promoting student leadership and engagement throughout the course of the lesson.

- Establishing routines and systems to manage student behavior and facilitate learning effectively.

- Valuing students' contributions and seeing mistakes as a learning opportunity.

- Creating a purposeful and stimulating environment for students to promote student achievement and personal enjoyment in learning

- Utilizing various learning approaches and ICT resources that support the provision of authentic and inquiry-based learning

- Supporting the development of students' academic, physical, social, moral and spiritual aspects through various co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

7.0 Assessment for Lessons

- Integrate AFL in instructional planning and use ongoing formative assessment to effectively modify instruction and improve learning

- Provide students with opportunities for peer and self-assessment and reflection

- Utilize appropriate assessment strategies to identify underperforming students.

- Provide appropriate tools and strategies for the students to establish connections between prior learning and application of new learning

- Monitor teaching and learning dynamics in the classroom to ensure that learning targets are achieved

8.0 Constructive Feedback

Teacher's constructive feedback is communicated to establish a positive teacher-student relationship and to improve student outcomes. Through verbal and written feedback, students shall be actively engaged in self-reflection to become self-motivated independent learners responsible for their own achievement. Throughout the learning process, we shall:

- Ensure that feedback is developmental to guide students in planning for their next steps in learning

- Use ongoing assessment information to provide clear feedback – written and oral – to help students address and correct errors or misconceptions, and set goals for continuous improvement.

- Use a variety of feedback forms, such as example prompts, reminder prompts, and scaffolding prompts.

- Ensure that feedback is criterion-referenced to guide students through their learning journey to achieve age-appropriate curriculum standards.

9.0   Differentiation

Differentiated teaching instruction takes place throughout the lesson to cater to the [3]needs of students with a range of learning styles and ability levels. DMES draws on the guidance from Tomlinson's instructional practices that contribute to the success of differentiation[4]:

- **Proactive planning to address readiness, interest, and learning profile** – planning lessons and modifying instruction according to the proficiency of student experiences and skills for the task at a given period, learning pursuits

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[3]UAE Inspection Framework 2015-2016, page 120

[4]Tomlinson, C.A. The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners 2014, pp. 25

and topics that interest them, and the learning styles, intelligence profiles, talents, and abilities of students.

- **Modifying instructional approaches based on student needs and the nature of content** – incorporating a variety of instructional approaches based on what students learn (content), how students make sense of learning (process), and how students demonstrate what they have learned (product).

- **Teaching up** – setting up high expectations for all students and providing stimulating tasks and activities that offer stretch and challenge and allow students to push them to the limits of their knowledge and comfort levels.

- **Assigning respectful tasks that match students' needs** – designing tasks that are equally interesting, engaging, and focused on essential knowledge and skills that promote challenge and success for students with diverse learning needs.

- **Using flexible grouping strategies** – helping student gain access to a wide range of learning opportunities, working arrangements, and resources that cater to their learning needs and draw on the strengths of individual group members, including underperforming students.

Effective differentiation practices at DMES shall be reflected in the following areas:

9.1 Lesson Planning

Teachers shall carefully plan instruction to meet each learner's needs and integrate the following elements:

- Clear learning goals and aligned standards – what students should know, understand and be able to do.

- Students' levels of readiness and interest and their learning profiles.

- Lesson introduction, assessment tasks, teaching strategies, learning activities, tiering/grouping, products, resources/materials, extension or enrichment activities.

- High-level questions based on Bloom's Taxonomy, which guide teachers in moving students from the most basic kind of learning (knowledge) to the most complex (evaluation).

9.2 Assessment

Teachers shall conduct effective assessments to align instruction with curriculum standards and to identify students' needs for differentiation.

- Pre-assessment tasks help teachers determine the students' readiness to learn, their interests and attitudes towards learning. (e.g. KWL, interviews, concept maps, surveys, etc.)
- Formative assessments allow teachers to modify instruction according to individual student needs and enable students to set different targets and adjust their learning strategies. (e.g. Think-Pair-Share, group demonstrations, stoplight method, quick quizzes/checkups, etc.)
- Assessment as Learning tasks develop students' metacognition and support students as they monitor their own learning and analyze their work against learning goals. (e.g. journals, checklists, learning logs, etc.)
- Performance-based assessments allow a variety of types of learners to demonstrate mastery of subject matter based on the course, unit, or lesson objectives. (e.g. portfolio, projects, presentations)

9.3 Group Structure/Tiers

Teachers shall provide students with opportunities to work within groups that correspond to the instructional purpose and students' learning needs.

- Tier 1 – Teachers provide more complex/abstract assignments with more opportunity for independent study.
- Tier 2 – Core instruction for all students is conducted to provide access to grade-level curriculum.
- Tier 3 – Supplemental instruction in addition to core instruction are provided to bridge the learning gap for students who are approaching grade-level mastery.

- Tier 4 – Teachers provide supplemental and more intensive instruction to meet individual student needs.

- Whole Group – Students in a class share grade-level learning experiences and receive core instruction as they are introduced to new learning content and strategies

- Small Group (same ability) – Students work in groups of 3 to 8 based on assessment information and their skill levels, and receive targeted instruction based on specific students' needs.

- Small Group (mixed ability) – Teachers serve as facilitators of learning. Students are grouped based on student abilities and interests and are provided with access to work in classroom centers/stations to extend their learning.

- Pairs/Partners – Students work with partners for practice activities in core subject areas, and to promote social interaction and peer collaboration.

- One-on-One – Each student receives instruction at an appropriate level, pace, and expectation and the setting allows for close observation and monitoring of student progress.

9.4 Task

Differentiation by task involves preparing and adapting tasks and activities to meet the needs of varying students and student groups. To support this, teachers shall:

- Ensure that learning tasks tap into students' interests and provide appropriate levels of challenge.

- Design authentic and relevant tasks that allow students to actively engage with the concepts, knowledge, and skills in the curriculum.

- Use open-ended tasks that promote independent application of learning.

- Create challenging tasks that extend learning and level of complexity.

- Provide opportunities for student input/voice in designing tasks.

- Create differentiated learning tasks that have a number of entry and exit points and directions.

- Provide a range of tasks that allow choice and recognize aptitudes and interests.

9.5 Resources

The provision of rich and varied instructional resources and technologies facilitates effective differentiation. Teachers shall engage students in the learning process by:

- Providing resources and materials at varying levels of difficulty.

- Enabling student access to a wide variety of media which includes text and non-text materials (i.e. magazines, film, audio files, internet, newspaper articles, etc.)

- Providing students with rubrics, assignment guides, and grading criteria before the lesson or task.

- Utilizing manipulatives, models, realia, and other tangible objects to help students understand new concepts.

- Integrating the use of online resources, digital platforms, and software for personalized and interactive learning.

10.0 Pedagogical Strategies

At DMES, teaching practices shall reflect an understanding of the different ways in which students learn, and this is evidenced by student engagement and performance. Teachers shall uphold high standards of instruction by providing relevant learning experiences and utilizing pedagogical approaches to address the diverse and differentiated needs of all students, such as:

10.1 Inquiry-Based Learning – utilizing an active learning approach on questioning, critical thinking, and problem-solving based on the idea – "Involve me and I understand." Students are empowered to develop their research skills and become lifelong learners.

10.2 Discovery-Based Learning – encouraging students to ask questions, to give suggestions, and to identify various solutions to the given task. Students are

engaged in a self-guided exploration, where they formulate their own ideas and reach conclusions based on the given information.

10.3 Problem-Based Learning – using ill-structured problems as contexts for students to define their learning needs, to conduct self-directed inquiry, to integrate theory and practice, and to apply knowledge and skills to develop a solution to a defined problem.

10.4 Project-Based Learning – employing a systematic approach that utilizes complex projects as central organizing strategy for educating students. PBL experiences that address real-world problems and issues allow students to investigate and analyze their complexities, interconnections, and ambiguities.

11.0 Roles and Responsibilities

11.1 Student

A student is expected to:

- Abide by the school's rules and regulations regarding punctuality and preparedness, the use of school property and learning resources, and student discipline.
- Engage and participate actively in the learning process.
- Complete class work and assignments within the given period.
- Take risks and assume responsibility in learning to meet and exceed his/her potentials.
- Apply knowledge and skills within and beyond the classroom.
- Act upon the teacher's feedback to achieve learning targets towards continuous progress.
- Develop collaborative and independent working skills and gain confidence in evaluating and reflecting on one's work and that of others.

11.2 Parents

To support teachers and students, parents are expected to:

- Provide encouragement and support for their children to develop a positive work ethic and a sense of responsibility in learning

- Maintain open communication with the school regarding concerns that may affect their child's performance and attitude in school.

- Ensure a healthy balance between their children's academics, homework and co-curricular activities

- Attend parent, teacher and student conferences and parent drop-in meetings to become acquainted with their child's learning progress and other relevant concerns.

12.0   Related Policies

The Teaching and Learning Policy is linked to the following school policies:

- Curriculum Policy

- Assessment Policy

- Differentiation Policy

- Feedback Policy

- Student Motivation Policy