



Teaching and Learning Policy

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Policy owner (SMT)	Head of Prep School
Policy owner (Board)	Principal

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Introduction

At Cheltenham Muscat we believe that high quality lessons form the bedrock of an outstanding school experience. Our teaching and learning policy has taken educational research and best practice from around the world to create a 6-step model for our teachers to follow. This framework will help shape our school into a place where learning is at the forefront of all that we do and ensure the educated leaders of the future acquire the relevant knowledge to succeed in the modern world.

We work towards our aims through providing a challenging and stimulating programme of study, based on the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, the Cambridge International Curriculum, Pearson and Cambridge IGCSE, Omani Ministry Bi-Lingual GED and Pearson I A level courses, with important modifications to consider for our Omani setting and body of children. Our creative approach to curriculum development is designed to enable all children to reach the highest possible standard of personal achievement.

Each classroom is equipped with an interactive whiteboard. The development of key ICT skills is promoted in timetabled ICT lessons and using devices in the classrooms. We use advanced technologies when we feel it will enhance the learning experience, not as a replacement for teacher-led lessons.

KG Teaching and Learning Policy

Overview

In KG we foster a supportive, inclusive, and stimulating environment where our youngest learners develop foundational skills and create a love for learning that will support their lifelong learning journey.

In KG we believe that learning is most effective when it is centered around the needs, interests, and developmental stages of each child. We aim to create a learning environment that is responsive to the individual needs of every child and encourages active participation. Teachers provide education that supports the whole child, creating well-rounded individuals who are ready to engage with the world, beyond the classroom.

Play is central to learning in KG. Through structured and unstructured play, teachers plan provocations that allow children to explore concepts, solve problems, express themselves, and develop essential skills such as communication, cooperation, and critical thinking.

Environment:

The learning environments are carefully planned and thoughtfully arranged to act as an additional adult, to both support and challenge children and their thinking. With built-in learning opportunities around the classroom, this frees teachers to interact with children.

Our classroom environments are safe, engaging, and rich in learning opportunities. Materials and resources are age-appropriate, accessible, and varied to support a wide range of learning styles and interests.

Children will be provided with opportunities to explore a range of learning experiences that encourage curiosity and independent thinking. Exploration will be encouraged both indoors and outdoors.

While flexibility is important, children will benefit from predictable routines that provide a sense of security. These routines will balance active learning time with rest and reflective periods.

Curriculum and Learning Outcomes:

In KG we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, focusing on the 7 areas of learning. Which are split into two parts.

Prime Areas of Learning:

- **Communication and Language** - listening, attention and understanding as well as speaking.
- **Physical Development** - gross motor skills and fine motor skills.
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** - self-regulation, managing self and building relationships.

Specific Areas of Learning:

- **Literacy** - comprehension, word reading and writing.
- **Mathematics** - numbers and numerical patterns.
- **Understanding the World** - past and present, people, culture and communities and the natural world.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** - creating with materials and being imaginative and expressive.

Learning Outcomes:

When children join KG, teachers will conduct an initial baseline assessment. Through play-based learning challenges, children will demonstrate their skills, allowing teachers to evaluate their progress against age-appropriate objectives.

Teachers will then carry out assessments each term to track ongoing development.

At the end of KG2, a final assessment will be conducted to ensure children are meeting the End of Year Learning Goals (ELGs).

Teaching Strategies:

Teachers will use a variety of methods to engage children, including storytelling, role-play, songs, games, and hands-on activities during circle time. Instructions will be delivered through direct teaching, whole class or small group activities.

Teachers will use scaffolding techniques to support children as they take on new challenges. Learning will be differentiated to meet the needs of all children, ensuring that each child is working at their own level while being appropriately challenged.

Children will be encouraged to ask questions, explore their interests, and participate in investigations. Inquiry-based learning will be facilitated through open-ended questions and opportunities for exploration. Children are encouraged to ask questions, explore topics that interest them and engage in problem solving. The focus will be on curiosity, critical thinking and exploration, helping children learn how to learn.

Teachers will carefully observe the children and listen to their ideas, allowing them to plan play-based activities and provocations which engage the children. Provocations will be open-ended, meaning they do not have one right answer or outcome. Throughout the learning environment effective provocations will be:

- Engaging and Interesting:
- Open-Ended:
- Relevant to Children's Interests
- Age Appropriate
- Encourages Exploration

The teacher's role during a child's play is to tailor their interactions with the children, allowing them to move their thinking forward. They will ask questions, offer new materials, and provide subtle guidance to help children think critically and make connections between their experiences.

When children are ready, Teachers can introduce new ideas or resources during play that can deepen the child's experience. This might include adding more complex materials, posing thought-provoking questions, or introducing concepts, like patterns, that build on what the children are already doing.

Play within the classroom will provide a safe space for children to express their emotions, work through challenges, and build self-regulation skills, helping them manage feelings like frustration, joy, or excitement building on those Personal, Social and Emotional skills.

Our Teaching and Learning philosophy, for **grades 3 and above** is as follows. We strive that lessons will contain much of the 6 core components detailed below.



What do these elements look like in practice?

Retrieve

Our teachers will employ a range of effective retrieval techniques, particularly at the start of lessons, to gauge prior schema and bring key concepts back into working memory. Over time, this will flatten the forgetting curve, develop memory of key information and increase learning.

Review aids students in connecting new concepts with existing knowledge, making learning more durable and meaningful. By engaging students in regular review, through activities like retrieval practice quizzes, homework correction tasks, and addressing common misconceptions as a class, students rehearse and enhance their skills to the point of automaticity. This form of daily practice makes it easier for students to acquire and assimilate future knowledge into their existing schemas.

What it looks like in class:

- Entry tasks and starters – gap fills, true or false, visuals to expand on, spot the mistakes, questioning games, online quiz platforms (in moderation and domain specific)
- Department wide consistent starters such as Daily Five, Last Lesson/Last week/Last month
- Questioning – employ a wide range of questions to check understanding: closed questioning, yes, no, elaboration, open ended
- Brain dump

- Silent Self Quiz
- Labelling a diagram
- Telling a Story
- Elaborate, Summarize, Expand
- Use multiple-choice quizzes
- Demonstrate and perform
- Map and compare
- Use pair work – pupils testing each other on the key concepts
- Think, Pair, Share
- Teacher to spot gaps in knowledge and plan to revisit

Introduce

Outstanding teachers will introduce new material in small, scaffolded steps through direct instruction, employing clear concise descriptions along with dual coding methods. This will offer clarity for learners, facilitating new material and concepts to be understood effectively.

Our working memory (the place where we process information) is small and therefore it can only process a few pieces of information at once. Because too much information swamps working memory, teachers should break down curriculum concepts and key processes into small manageable steps and allow for focused practice after each step. Breaking down information facilitates better understanding and gives teachers insights into students' knowledge gaps.

What it looks like in class:

- Teacher is leading the learning
- Children are focused and listening
- New material is delivered in small steps – working memory research suggests only 5 new pieces of information at once
- When possible, it is dual coded (pictures and words)
- Lesson slides are not too text heavy
- Teacher talk is engaging and pitched correctly
- Teachers demonstrate new skills step by step - I do, We do, You do
- Teachers use worked examples, models and WAGOLs (What a Good one Looks like) and talk to students through the new information step by step

Question

Outstanding teachers will use a range of questioning techniques to gauge understanding of new material. The questions will be scaffolded to different learners, allowing all students to participate and feel challenged. Responses to these questions will allow the teacher to quickly assess understanding and tailor the rest of the lesson accordingly.

Frequent questioning is an effective method of engaging students actively with new content and linking it to their existing knowledge. Utilising a broad range of questioning techniques (such as Doug Lemov's 'Cold Calling' or the 'Think, Pair, Share' routine) allows teachers to assess all students' understanding and

promotes a culture of active participation. Questioning strategies also help to deepen students' grasp of the material by requiring them to apply and articulate their learning.

What it looks like in class

- Cold Calling – all pupils need to be ready to answer questions
- No Opt Out – pupils can't be allowed to say 'I don't know' and it be the end of the questioning. Ask a peer (or several) and then revert back to the original student.
- Constant Checks for Understanding
- Probing – don't accept shallow answers. Ask Why? How? What's the opposite?
- Say it Again but better style questioning
- Think, Pair, Share – pupils discuss in pairs or small groups before giving the answer to the class
- Whole class response – preferable to use mini-whiteboards

Practice

Outstanding teachers will plan lessons and design tasks which ensure that students are 'deliberately practising' the key skills and knowledge in order to achieve the required outcomes for that phase of learning. Teachers will plan the activities systematically, thinking about each step of the learning process with each group of learners in mind.

Following teacher-led instruction and guided practice, students should engage in independent practice to help reinforce their learning. Rosenshine explains that practice is essential for achieving fluency in skills and knowledge, allowing for automatic recall that frees up working memory for more complex cognitive tasks. Independent practice should involve the same material as the guided practice. During this process, teachers should actively monitor and circulate the classroom to maintain engagement.

- Practice tasks are well thought out and have clear purpose
- Brian function is on the skill and knowledge in question, not on secondary skills
- Pupils are talked through complex tasks, WAGOLLS are shown.
- Practice tasks are scaffolded – with support AND appropriate challenge
- Tasks are varied but practicing the same content
- Practice tasks show progression over time
- Teacher circulating, giving feedback
- Whole class feedback given at the time before practice continues
- High expectations on vocabulary usage – new vocabulary is explained explicitly
- For longer pieces; Draft, Redraft, Publish
- Teacher setting high standards and expectations
- Teacher offering praise to those practicing well

Assess

Our outstanding teachers will use many forms of assessment in all lessons as a tool for learning. Assessment will not just be a way to measure but a means to take the learning of the students forward. Effective feedback will be given to improve the learner, not just the piece of work.

Addressing misconceptions and checking for understanding underscores the importance of regular assessment to ensure students grasp new material effectively. Frequent checks for understanding are critical, as they contribute to processing information into long-term memory and help teachers identify and rectify misconceptions early. Effective strategies include asking probing questions, encouraging students to summarise or explain concepts, and fostering discussions that require students to defend their specific viewpoints.

What is Looks Like in Class:

- Teachers set the assessment standards: WAGOLL, live modelling, clear discussion/introduction of task and rubrics
- Regular tests, quizzes, different range of one-to-one questions
- Correctly formulated multiple-choice quizzes
- Big picture questions, key ideas summaries, random question generators
- Entrance tickets, exit tickets
- Mini-whiteboard questions and answers
- Exam style questions, timed responses

Respond

Outstanding teachers will use the assessment of their students to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of the pupils. This could be to stretch and challenge pupils who have grasped the concept or reteach those who haven't. Expert teachers will adapt their teaching to ensure high success rates and overall progress.

Ensuring students achieve a high success rate during instruction is crucial, with Rosenshine's research advocating for an optimal success rate around 80 percent. This benchmark balances challenge and attainability, indicating that students are not only learning the material successfully but are also being sufficiently challenged. Teachers can use tools such as mini-whiteboards to quickly check for levels of success from the entire class. If it is below 80%, it is recommended to reteach the material.

What this looks like in class:

- Teachers are constantly gauging the room, asking questions and circulating
- Teacher is asking lots of questions, listens, responds and moves on once high success rate is achieved
- Teachers stop the lesson to give whole class feedback for misconceptions
- Teachers speak to individual pupils to reteach or explain some mistakes
- Teachers have a bank of different ways to explain and practice key difficult concepts
- Teachers predict difficult content and pre-teach accordingly
- Teachers use mini-whiteboards for fast, timely feedback
- Following assessment (AoL and AFL) teachers adapt lessons to meet the needs of the pupils
- Teachers make micro-adaptations (moment to moment, responding to the pupils) or significant adaptations (task, scaffolding and support for particular students)
- Teachers have different tasks for different groups (from high challenge to support)
- Teachers explain the thought process behind common errors and how to correct them
- Teachers try to find out what the pupils were thinking about when they made that error – then work out how to correct it.

Learning Objectives

At Cheltenham Muscat, we believe that a significant feature of a lesson should be the sharing with pupils of both learning objectives and outcomes in a clear and explicit way. The teacher should make it clear that the learning objective is what the teacher intends the pupils to learn, and that the learning outcomes define how achievement can be demonstrated by the pupils.

Objectives should be linked to appropriate year group expectations/grades to ensure appropriate levels of work and progression for all pupils. Pupils also need to know and recognise the standards they are aiming for. It is essential that teachers are clear about their expectations and communicate these to pupils. Scaffolding strategies should be planned to ensure progress is made by all pupils. Assessment criteria should be shared with pupils routinely.

Interventions and support for learning

We plan interventions that will support pupils and move them on in their learning. These are determined by accurate knowledge of pupils' previous learning, reference to CAT data and our high expectations of their progress.

Through the implementation of our six-step model, we believe that all learners will be catered for, and teachers will adapt their lessons to the needs of the pupils.

Teachers are expected to use several strategies as appropriate to ensure that learning matches the needs of all pupils including SEN and Most Able and Talented, boys, girls, pupils whose first language is not English (EAL), different ethnic groups. In addition to quality first teaching through our 6 steps.

Marking and Feedback –refer to **Marking and Feedback** policy for further clarification

We have an agreed Marking and Feedback policy which considers its' frequency, content and depth. We plan regular opportunities for pupils to respond to written feedback so that it improves their learning. We give ongoing verbal feedback to individuals and to groups of pupils throughout the lessons. Our feedback aims to take the learner forwards, not just the piece of work. Written and verbal feedback includes positive features of a pupils' work. It is sharply focused on the learning and how to improve. The purpose of our feedback (verbal, written, peer and setting new challenges) is to give pupils precise and motivating information about how well they are doing and how to improve. See the Feedback policy for more detail.

Assessment for Learning

We use a range of techniques to systematically check our pupils' understanding throughout each stage of the lesson. We should anticipate the most likely areas of misunderstanding and prepare planned interventions and support that will address these. However, we should also be ready to adapt our approach spontaneously when we meet unexpected misconceptions or difficulties

Homework –refer to Homework policy for further clarification

We recognise the importance of pupils learning at home. We believe that it helps to extend and consolidate school learning. Our homework policy outlines the arrangements that we make to plan

regular and appropriate homework at each stage. We evaluate the effectiveness of our homework by the impact that it has on pupils' learning. All pupils are encouraged to use TEAMS and SeeSaw to access homework tasks, revision tools and research projects. Teachers are expected to set regular Homework on TEAMS and SeeSaw following the frequencies stated on the home learning policy.

Monitoring of Teaching and Learning

We will monitor the impact of our teaching and learning in several ways. Primarily, SLT and phase leaders carry out weekly learning walks, analysing culture and pedagogy. Feedback, orally or via email, is then made to the teachers if required.

As a minimum, teachers will be formally observed by SLT members twice a year. Feedback will be given according to the Lesson Observation proforma and criteria (in appendix).

Although feedback will predominantly be developmental, a grade will be noted for inspection and quality assurance purposes. Should it be deemed necessary by the SLT, a teacher may have a third formal observation to show improvements are being made to their teaching practice.

At specific times in the year, each department will undergo a Curriculum Area Review (CARE). The aim of the CARE process is to drive forward teaching and learning. The CARE process will be thoroughly explained to each department prior to being carried out.

Following assessments and data drops (maximum 5 per year) Heads of Department and phase will analyse their results; looking for trends in attainment. Then, with the line manager, SLT or the Principal, they will discuss areas for improvement and next steps. Line managers, SLT and the Principal will offer advice on how to improve teaching, learning and outcomes.

Planning

The learning journey through the different phases of the school must consider the following curricula:

EYFS Framework
Cambridge International Curriculum
Pearson IGCSE
Cambridge IGCSE
Pearson International A Levels
Omani Ministry curricula for Arabic, Social Studies, Islamic Education and GED.

Long Term Planning

Long Term plans provide an overview of what is taught over the course of the year to each year group and detail Programmes of Study.

Medium Term Planning

Medium Term Planning details:

- Learning objectives in each curriculum area
- References to the relevant curriculum or syllabus

Short Term Planning

G3-5 Teachers meet weekly in year group teams to plan. Secondary teachers may meet less frequently, but joint planning is encouraged. Short Term plans can detail:

- Learning objectives
- Learning objectives to be shared with pupils
- Links to prior learning
- Success criteria to be shared with pupils
- Direct teaching including key questions and vocabulary
- Pupil activities including reinforcement and extension activities
- Resources
- ICT
- Activities for Teaching Assistant and other Adults
- Opportunities for assessment
- Foundation Stage planning based on Foundation Stage Profile Objectives
- Notes for next teaching sequence

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

All our teachers and teaching assistants reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and are encouraged to discuss and plan their professional development as part of their on-going professional development programme. Cheltenham Muscat supports teachers' needs for in further professional development. In-service activities are offered during the year either by using the expertise of existing staff, bringing in outside speakers or attendance at external courses.

At Cheltenham Muscat, CPD is delivered regularly and there is a rotation of sessions including whole school focus on areas for development, pedagogical research into action, pastoral focus and academic team development. The quality of education is monitored (See QA policy) and the standards by which we measure this are set out in the Appendix.

Policy History – change dates

Date of adoption of this policy	1.9.2025
Date of last review of this policy	1.9.2025
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Policy owner (SMT)	Head of Prep/Teaching and Learning lead
Policy owner (Chair of the Board)	