



مدرسة جيمس متروبول الواحة  
GEMS Metropole School  
AL WAHA

# POLICY

## Curriculum

Approved by:	Jeremy Hallum (Principal)
Last reviewed on:	August 2025
Next review due by:	August 2027

### MISSION

Lead, nurture and succeed.

### VISION

A sustainable and inclusive community hub, nurturing future leaders.

*Nurturing*  
**LEADERSHIP**



This policy is applied at MTW alongside our school's vision, mission and values. Alongside the principles of Effective Learning.

### Vision and Intent

- At GEMS Metropole Al Waha (MTW), we are committed to providing a high-quality education aligned with the National Curriculum for England.
- Our unique approach nurtures curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking, ensuring that all students develop a lifelong love for learning.
- Through child-initiated play, Forest School, our farm, and the Bio-Cube, we provide a rich curriculum that fosters independence, resilience, and a deep connection with the natural world.
- Our curriculum is designed to be broad, balanced, and purposeful — supporting the academic, social, physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth of every learner.
- Our curriculum is designed to cultivate an innovative learning environment that nurtures creativity, develops essential skills, deepens knowledge, and enriches experience. We aim to empower every learner to think critically, collaborate effectively, and embrace lifelong learning in an ever-changing world.
- The intent of our curriculum is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and character needed to succeed in a global society and to prepare them for future pathways, whether that be as a scientist, geographer, musician, engineer, artist, web designer, entrepreneur, or any other role they choose to pursue.

### Curriculum Structure

- We follow the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum for England, delivering all compulsory subjects with mandated teaching hours.
- We meet the UAE Ministry of Education subject requirements for Arabic, Islamic, Social Studies and Moral Education.
- In the Foundation Stage, we use the Development Matters Framework to support early learning and development.
- Our curriculum is structured around a progressive framework that ensures continuity and development across all key stages.
- This structured approach enables coherent progression in subject-specific concepts, knowledge, and skills, ensuring learning is connected and meaningful at every stage.
- Our aim is for this structured curriculum to foster curiosity, creativity, and confidence, preparing learners for academic success, personal fulfilment, and lifelong learning.
- Our curriculum provides a programme of PSHE which reflects the school's aim and ethos, and encourages respect for other people.



## Primary Curriculum Implementation

At MTW, we are committed to delivering high-quality teaching across all subject areas through structured, engaging, and progressive programmes of study:

- **English** — Phonics is taught using *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds*, supported by the *Big Cat* reading scheme and a thematic approach to writing that nurtures creativity and strong communication skills.
- **Mathematics** — Lessons follow the *White Rose Maths Scheme*, ensuring a clear, systematic progression of mathematical understanding and reasoning.
- **Science** — Delivered through the *White Rose Science Scheme* and enriched by hands-on learning experiences in both the Bio-Cube and the farm, allowing students to apply scientific concepts in real-world contexts.
- **Foundation Subjects** — Structured through thematic learning with meaningful cross-curricular links that deepen understanding and promote curiosity across a range of disciplines.

Our teaching is fully differentiated and personalised, ensuring that all learners — regardless of starting point — experience an inclusive, accessible, and aspirational education. We are an inclusive school, where all learners are catered for, including our SEND, ELL and Gifted Learners. Please see the separate Inclusion Policy and ELL Policy for further details.

## Nurturing Curiosity and Confidence:

By anchoring the curriculum around **Curiosity** and **Confidence**, the school ensures a smooth developmental journey from early exploration to self-assured mastery. This nurtures well-rounded learners who are equipped to thrive in both school and life.

The approach:

- Aligns personal growth with academic success.
- Embeds real-world relevance and 21st-century skills at every stage.
- Encourages active, hands-on learning while cultivating moral character, resilience, and leadership.
- Creates an environment where children feel safe to explore, question, and challenge themselves — building both intellectual and emotional capacity.

### Nurturing Curiosity

The early years' curriculum is designed to spark children's natural wonder about the world through hands-on, real-life experiences. By encouraging curiosity, the school builds the foundations for lifelong learning and emotional growth.

This stage focuses on:

- **Farm School** – Children develop practical life skills through farming, including responsibility, teamwork, and scientific observation.
- **Forest School** – Encourages a deep connection with nature while nurturing problem-solving, independence, and self-confidence.
- **Child-Initiated Play** – Play-based learning fosters creativity, emotional intelligence, social interaction, and language skills.
- **Bio-Cube** – Children learn about ecosystems, biodiversity, and environmental responsibility, developing global awareness and stewardship from an early age.

This emphasis on curiosity ensures that young learners develop open, inquisitive minds and a passion for discovery — essential qualities for all future learning.

### Nurturing Confidence

As children progress, the curriculum shifts focus on building **confidence** — both academically and personally — equipping them with the skills needed to face challenges and seize opportunities.

This stage focuses on:

- **Values Education** – Instills strong moral foundations, self-respect, and a sense of belonging within the school community.
- **Mastery** – Strengthens core academic abilities including maths, writing, public speaking, and scientific enquiry to ensure readiness for advanced learning.
- **Entrepreneurial Leadership** – Provides students with real-world leadership opportunities through projects in financial literacy, strategic thinking, and risk-taking. One specialist lesson per week supports their development as entrepreneurs.
- **Enrichment** – A wide range of extra-curricular opportunities helps children discover personal passions and talents beyond the classroom.

This confidence-building phase empowers students to be resilient, articulate, and capable problem-solvers, ready to lead and innovate.

*(See appendix one for a comprehensive rubric which outlines a progression in confidence-building skills)*

## Broader Curriculum

Each phase, and year group, follows well-structured programmes of study and thoughtfully designed schemes of work, ensuring students receive a broad and balanced education that both meets and stretches beyond the expectations of the National Curriculum.

Beyond the classroom, students are challenged and inspired through a wide range of experiences designed to extend their learning. Opportunities such as Student Agencies, MTW Talks, competitions, enrichment clubs, and class assemblies promote critical thinking, leadership, collaboration, and creativity — helping children develop the confidence and skills needed to thrive in an ever-changing world

## Assessment and Impact

### Foundation Stage (FS)

Assessment in the Early Years is continuous and formative, ensuring that all children make steady and meaningful progress. A range of strategies are used to capture and celebrate each child's development:

- Observations of child-initiated play and exploration.
- Portfolios documenting student inquiries and discoveries, supported through the use of Arc.
- Teacher-led assessments to monitor progress against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).
- Strong parental engagement to extend and support learning beyond the classroom.

This approach nurtures the development of essential skills such as curiosity, collaboration, and resilience — laying strong foundations for future learning.

### Key Stage 1 and 2

Assessment in Key Stage 1 and 2 remains ongoing and formative, ensuring that all children are challenged and supported to make continuous progress. A range of tools and strategies are used to monitor and evaluate learning:

- Teacher-led assessments to track progress against National Curriculum expectations.
- In-class progress checks to provide immediate feedback and guide next steps.
- Go4Schools is used to track objectives and inform planning.
- Summative assessments at key points to measure attainment and inform reporting.
- External assessments such as NGRT, PTE, PTM, and PTS are used to validate internal judgements and ensure consistency.

This robust assessment framework helps ensure children develop the knowledge, critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and resilience needed for success in the next phase of their education.



## Secondary Curriculum Implementation

### Broader Curriculum

Each department has clear programmes of study and schemes of work. These show that students have a broad and balanced education, and that provision is made for linguistic, mathematical, spiritual, moral, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative experiences. Many of these are supplemented by the vast range of extra-curricular activities including those in sport, music, drama, the creative arts and enterprise. Lessons and activities are appropriate to the students' ages and abilities.

### Organisation of Education

There are 28 formal academic teaching periods each week in the secondary school and there is a weekly timetable. Lessons take place daily (Monday to Friday) from 7.40am to 3.00pm, and until 11:30am on Friday.

Students are taught in their year groups, and for some subjects are 'set' according to their ability in that subject. Curriculum booklets and maps, as well as weekly information and half-termly updates are provided for parents giving information about programmes of study and examination board specifications. These are located on the school's website, on the Parent Portal, and in the weekly newsletter.

### Public Examinations

Most pupils in Year 10 and 11 sit IGCSE, GCSE or IBTEC examinations through one of the recognised English Examination Boards (Pearson/AQA). Those students following an alternative pathway choose from ASDAN and IBTEC courses or a blend of these to best suit individual student needs.

### Key Stage 3

Each student's timetable includes the core subjects of Mathematics, English, Science and Arabic, Islamic Studies (for Muslim students), plus Entrepreneurship, Art, French, Spanish, Music, Drama, Geography, History, Physical Education, ICT, Islamic, UAE Moral and Social Studies. For some pupils, they follow an ASDAN curriculum and receive support from the inclusion team. There is also a programme of PSHE delivered alongside Moral Education and during drop down days. Both operate throughout all year groups in the school and throughout the academic year, these days can be found on the school calendar. At the end of Term 1, Year 9 students make their GCSE subject choices. Students receive lots of help and support via taster days, guest speakers, marketplace activities, and interviews to discuss the various options available and this guides them towards the most sensible choices for their particular talents.





## Subjects and Time Allocation

The time distribution is a guided amount of time to be spent on average on each subject per week. The following is adhered to for each year group:

Subject	Year 7		Year 8		Year 9	
	Lessons Per week	Minutes Allocated	Lessons Per week	Minutes Allocated	Lessons Per week	Minutes Allocated
English	4	240	4	240	5	300
Maths	4	240	4	240	4	240
Science	3	180	3	180	4	240
Physical Education	2	120	2	120	2	120
Islamic Studies (Muslim Students) / Intervention (Non-Muslim)	2	120	2	120	2	120
Arabic	4	230	3	180	3	180
Geography	1	60	1	60	1	60
History	1	60	1	60	1	60
Modern Foreign Languages: French / Spanish	1	60	1	60	1	60
Entrepreneurship	1	60	1	60	1	60
ICT & Computing	1	60	1	60	1	60
Art	1	60	1	60	1	60
Performing Arts (Drama, Music, Dance) - rotation	2	120	2	120	2	120
Moral, Social, Cultural Studies (MSC)	1	60	1	60	1	60

## Key Stage 4

For nearly all students, iGCSE and GCSE courses begin. Compulsory subjects taken are Mathematics, English, Arabic, Islamic Studies (Muslim students), and Science. Elective subjects are the same as those offered in Year 9 plus Psychology, Sociology, Media Studies, Food and Nutrition, Business, Economics and IBTEC engineering and construction. MTW endeavors to accommodate all combinations of choices but cannot guarantee such. For some students, often with additional Learning Needs, the ASDAN curriculum is followed or IBTEC entry levels are explored. Students with English as an Additional Language (EAL) have the option of sitting English as a Second Language at GCSE.

The option blocks for Academic Year 2024/25 are as follows for the GCSE/iBTEC programme. Students select one from each block if they are taking the standard GCSE compliment.

Block A	Block B	Block C
Business studies	Economics	Psychology
BTEC Engineering	Drama	Business studies
BTEC Construction	PE	History
Sociology	Art, Craft & Design	Geography
Food & Nutrition	ICT	Media studies
Psychology	Design & Technology	Food & Nutrition



## PSHE

There is a programme of PSHE covered through Moral Education and pastoral activities. It is delivered in every year group by teachers and is covered for two hours per week in lesson time for year 7. Year 8 and 9 have MSC for one hour and twenty minutes a week in lesson and morning tutor time.

PSHE is also delivered through year-group and whole-school sessions outside the normal timetable throughout the year through tutors and Heads of Year, in form time and assemblies. It is essential that this provides effective preparation for life in a British society. We are clear that we do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, law, liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with individual faiths and beliefs; in fact, these are actively promoted throughout the curriculum. University Guidance and Careers education forms a significant part of the careers programme for all years. Guiding pupils towards their choices of university courses is a major part of the role of the careers counsellor and curriculum lead.

## Stretch and Challenge

In addition to being encouraged to play a lead role in the school's many teams, councils and extra-curricular activities, students identified as able, gifted and talented – at any stage of their educational journey – students are supported to participate in competitions, clubs and programmes that challenge both their interests and passions. From Year 10 onwards, students are introduced to the university admissions process.

## Monitoring Learning and Progress

Learning and progress are carefully monitored by the teaching and learning lead, teachers, Heads of Department, and Senior Management, who all take an active role in ensuring pupils develop and reach their potential. The school has a Marking and Feedback Policy which outlines the agreed principles of Assessment and Feedback. Assessment of student's work takes place regularly and thoroughly, and information is used from that assessment to plan teaching so that students can progress. It is the responsibility of Heads of Departments to amend their own departmental assessment and feedback processes, based on the principles and good practice in this policy. This is discussed regularly in Departmental Meetings. It is the duty of Heads of Departments to undertake regular (half termly) assessment and feedback scrutiny to ensure adherence to departmental policies. Spot checks are carried out, comparing assessment and feedback of pupils' work, in the style of mock inspection processes, this will take place at least termly by SLT to ensure compliance of all policies.

## Progress Reports

MTW has an annual cycle of termly reporting which ensures parents are kept informed of the academic and extra-curricular progress of their child/children. The aim is to provide insightful, relevant and up-to-date comments and data which assess a student's current performance and determine how he/she can continue to make progress. Given this aim, the information is also of significant importance to students and to the staff who support them. The school shares reporting with students, undertaking to ensure that he/she is given guidance on how to interpret it. The cycle of reporting includes formal written reports, tracking grades for achievement and effort, along with school examination results and parents' meetings.





## Inclusion

At GEMS Metropole Al Waha, our Inclusion Support provision is central to fostering a learning environment where every student can thrive. We are committed to identifying and addressing individual needs through personalised support plans, ensuring equitable access to the curriculum. Our approach prioritises early intervention, collaboration with parents, and tailored strategies that empower students to reach their full potential. Inclusion is embedded in every aspect of our practice, from lesson planning and differentiation to the use of diverse assessment methods. Supported by a dedicated Inclusion Team, we work closely with teachers, Learning Support Assistants, and external specialists to create an inclusive community that values diversity and promotes success for all learners.

We are committed to ensuring fair access to assessments through tailored access arrangements, including extra time, reader or scribe support, and modified materials, based on individual needs and eligibility. For students who benefit from alternative pathways, we offer ASDAN programmes that focus on developing life skills, personal development, and employability. These pathways provide flexible and meaningful learning opportunities, empowering students to achieve success and prepare for their future aspirations.

We recognise the unique needs of English Language Learner (ELL) students and are dedicated to providing a supportive environment that promotes language acquisition and academic success. Our ELL provision includes targeted interventions, scaffolded instruction, and access to specialised resources to ensure students develop their English proficiency while engaging fully with the curriculum. Teachers are equipped with strategies to differentiate instruction, fostering an inclusive classroom culture where ELL students feel valued and confident. Through collaboration with parents, we ensure continuity of support at home and school, enabling students to develop their communication skills and achieve their full potential in a multilingual and multicultural community. Pupils can be entered for IGCSE English as a Second Language in Year 11 and preparation for the IELTS examination is offered to students studying in the Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13).

Please see separate Inclusion Policy and ELL Policy for further details.



## Curriculum Review

At MTW our curriculum review process is cyclical and ongoing, ensuring that our offerings remain effective and aligned with the needs of our diverse student body.

To support our curriculum review, we ensure that we:

- Regularly evaluate the curriculum effectiveness through data analysis, classroom observations, and feedback from all stakeholders to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Involve all stakeholders through discussions and surveys to gather insights on potential enhancements.
- Analyse stakeholder feedback to set measurable goals for improvements
- Develop action plans to address areas for improvement, including adjustments to teaching strategies and professional development for staff.
- Continuously assess the impact of changes through student work monitoring and use feedback, assessment and AfL to make real-time adjustments.





## Appendix One

### Confidence Skills – Key Stage 2

This comprehensive rubric outlines a progression in confidence-building skills across Personal and Social Skills, Communication Skills, and Academic Skills from basic engagement in Year 3 to independent and leadership-oriented competencies in Year 6, ensuring a well-rounded foundation for future success.

#### Personal and Social Skills

Skill Category	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Self-Awareness & Reflection	Identifies strengths and achievements through guided activities.	Sets personal and academic goals, reflecting on progress.	Uses self-reflection journals to assess growth and areas for improvement.	Demonstrates self-awareness by setting long-term goals and tracking development.
Confidence & Positive Thinking	Practices positive self-talk in classroom routines.	Uses affirmations to build resilience in learning and social situations.	Demonstrates confidence in new challenges through proactive strategies.	Shows self-assurance in unfamiliar situations, mentoring younger peers.
Collaboration & Social Interaction	Shares ideas in small group discussions.	Works effectively in team projects, respecting others' viewpoints.	Takes on leadership roles in group activities, ensuring balanced participation.	Mentors and guides peers, demonstrating strong teamwork and leadership.

#### Communication Skills

Skill Category	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Expressing Ideas Clearly	Shares thoughts in small group discussions, taking turns to speak.	Uses full sentences to express ideas and responds to others' points in discussions.	Communicates ideas effectively in class presentations and structured debates.	Demonstrates confidence in articulating complex ideas and opinions in a range of settings.
Active Listening	Listens to peers and responds with basic questions or comments.	Demonstrates active listening by summarizing others' points before responding.	Engages in discussions by building on others' ideas and asking thoughtful questions.	Shows leadership in discussions by facilitating conversations and encouraging others to contribute.
Verbal & Non-Verbal Communication	Uses voice and basic body language (eye contact, gestures) to communicate ideas.	Adjusts tone and expression based on audience and purpose.	Uses persuasive language and varied tone to engage an audience.	Demonstrates effective public speaking skills, using advanced verbal and non-verbal techniques.

#### Academic Skills

Skill Category	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Independent Work & Responsibility	Completes tasks with minimal supervision, demonstrating basic independence.	Sets and works towards academic and personal goals, tracking progress over time.	Takes responsibility for research projects, organising tasks independently.	Engages in self-directed learning, setting long-term goals and managing personal progress.
Help-Seeking & Problem-Solving	Uses a structured method (e.g., "Help Wanted" sign) to request assistance when needed.	Applies simple problem-solving strategies to overcome academic challenges.	Evaluates different solutions to academic challenges, choosing the most effective one.	Demonstrates confidence in tackling complex academic problems with minimal guidance.
Organisational & Time Management Skills	Maintains a tidy workspace with daily "desk checks."	Uses a simple timetable to plan homework, tasks and manage time effectively.	Organises research projects and presentations, managing deadlines efficiently.	Independently plans and executes long-term projects, demonstrating advanced time management.
Critical Thinking & Analysis	Engages in structured discussions about academic topics, sharing basic observations.	Begins to analyse information critically, identifying key points in texts and discussions.	Evaluates the reliability of sources and makes reasoned judgments based on evidence.	Analyses and interprets complex data, drawing independent conclusions.
Research & Presentation Skills	Conducts simple independent research on a given topic.	Begins to structure research projects, summarizing findings clearly.	Completes structured research projects, incorporating multiple sources.	Conducts independent research on complex topics, presenting findings confidently.