



مرکز تعلم متميز في قلب المجتمع
A Centre of Excellence in Learning
at the Heart of The Community

Family of Schools

RAK Academy

IPK Teaching and Learning Policy

IB PYP



Beliefs/philosophy

The Ras Al Khaimah Academy PYP believes teaching and learning is based upon a constructivist pedagogy aligned with the Schools Guiding Statements and philosophy of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP). Through inquiry based teaching methods, all students at RAK Academy IPK PYP will be inspired to be compassionate, confident, knowledgeable, skilled and internationally minded. Our students will be challenged to excel in a safe, happy and nurturing learning community. As a direct result of their learning experiences student will be empowered to take thoughtful action locally and globally.

Principles of Teaching and Learning at RAK Academy IPK PYP

We believe that students learn best when:

- structured inquiry, critical thinking, learning through experience and conceptual development are central to teaching in the school
- their prior knowledge is considered to be important
- learning is relevant and in a localised context
- they can learn collaboratively
- the learning environment is provocative
- they get appropriate and constructive formative feedback that supports their learning
- diverse learning approaches are understood and accommodated
- they feel secure and their ideas are valued and respected culturally
- there is a culture of curiosity at the school
- they understand how learning is assessed, and how to provide evidence of their learning
- they become aware of and understand how they learn
- learning is engaging, challenging, rigorous, relevant and significant
- they are encouraged in everything they do in school to become responsible for their own learning and to become lifelong learners
- The focus is on deep understanding and discussion,

Therefore teachers recognize that:

- The relationship teachers build with their students profoundly impacts their learning
- Each learner needs to feel valued for who they are
- A learning community is more effective when open mindedness and risk taking is encouraged
- Shared laughter can build classroom spirit
- Learners will take risks and embrace challenges in an environment that feels safe, supportive and secure
- Learners benefit from playing an active role in classroom decision making
- Clear goals, processes, expectations, rules, routines and a discipline plan enable students to take more responsibility for their learning



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- Understanding the learning process and their personal learning attributes
- All students can benefit from collaborative learning
- When students are emotionally involved in learning, they are more likely to stay on task, accept challenges and remain motivated
- Individual, constructive and on-going assessment feedback can be a powerful key to engaging the learner
- The physical environment can have a significant impact on the learner's engagement
- Teacher expectations have a profound impact on the way learners see their own potential
- Students need sustained periods of time to maximize learning
- Families and communities are important sources of knowledge and skills that can enrich the school curriculum
- Students benefit from interacting with a range of people as they learn – not just teachers
- Reflection and metacognition are central to teaching and learning
- Thinking skills can be taught within the context of meaningful content and purposeful activities
- Assessment strategies should lead to improved student learning
- Assessment is more authentic and powerful when it is embedded within everyday learning experiences
- Collaborative teacher planning produces a richer and more coherent curriculum
- Forward planning enables teachers to keep the 'big picture' in mind.

Implementation

- All teachers will have a copy of the relevant IB programme publications to guide their planning, teaching and assessing of students. For example: PYP – *Making the PYP Happen – A Curriculum Framework for International Primary Education*. These documents will guide teachers with regard to the specific implementation of the PYP.
- IB training
- Making sure the planners are used, contributions in meetings
- Ensure all available resources are used e.g. library, resources, OCC, colleagues, etc...
- Visit classrooms to see Inquiry in action e.g. Evidence of Vision/Mission, Learner Profile, UOI, languages, student work

A successful teaching and learning policy within the school will:

- Reflect the School's Guiding Statements, IB mission and Learner Profile
- Provide a safe and happy place to learn and work
- Raise levels of attainment for all children
- Develop confident, disciplined and enquiring learners
- Foster a love of learning, raising children's self-esteem
- Encourage children to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners
- Ensure equal opportunities in relation to gender, race, class, ability, belief and culture.

The Learning Environment

- All our classrooms are lively, safe and characterised by purposeful inquiry. They are places in which the pursuit of deep understanding and the construction of meaning is balanced with the acquisition of knowledge and skills
- The Learner Profile is evident in every classroom and underpins everything we do
- Promotes languages, including Arabic, English and other mother tongues
- Students are empowered to set learning goals focusing on achieving their potential and supported to this end by their teacher and each other
- Our classrooms encourage the development of international mindedness and intercultural sensitivity where teachers and students demonstrate respect, tolerance and empathy towards others of different gender, nationality and levels of academic, linguistic and intellectual development
- As teachers, we model being life-long learners and take seriously students as critical thinkers with their developing ideas of the world
- Displays within the classroom celebrate individual and collaborative achievements, on-going learning and thinking in progress.
- The principles underlying the IB Learner Profile and the PYP Attitudes will guide the establishment of behavioural expectations, e.g. essential agreements.

Documentation of Teaching and Learning

All teachers at RAK Academy IPK PYP are professionally accountable to ensure that accurate records are kept of all planning and assessment of learning. Planning and assessment files will be monitored and may be requested at any time by members of the Leadership Team to ensure that planning within and across grade levels shows consistency, progression and academic rigour. All planning and assessment will be stored electronically.

Documentation of planning will include:

- Long Term Planning: Yearly or by Semester overviews of the subject area (e.g. Programme of Inquiry (POI), Scope and Sequence documents, policies, handbooks, Strategic Plans)
- Medium Term Planning PYP: 6 - 8 week/monthly overviews (e.g. Units of Inquiry, Summative/Formative and Unit reflections, Exhibitions)
- Short Term Planning: Weekly or daily breakdown of specific learning objectives with reference to differentiating the learning to meet the needs of all students, including assignments, homelearning, presentations, etc...

Documentation of assessment records can include (but not limited to):

- Anecdotal records: brief written records based on observations of students. May include quotes from students.
- Continuums: visual representations of developmental stages of learning. Students are plotted on continuums based on teacher's assessment data.
- Rubrics: an established set of criteria for assessing students against agreed objectives
- Exemplars: samples of students' work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged.
- Photographs or video with accompanying annotations.



- Checklists: lists of information, data, attributes or elements that should be present. A mark scheme is a type of checklist.

Accountability:

As a school we believe that teachers are professionals. A school has the responsibility to support and guide teachers in the implementation of this policy's contents. Therefore, teachers will be supported through:

- Appraisal by administrators and peers
- Professional development,
- Coordinators e.g. IB PYP, ALN, Arabic, English, Mathematics
- Research material and access to IB resources

Monitoring and Evaluating:

The School is aware of the need to regularly review our policies to take into account new initiatives, changes in curriculum or developments in technology.

Original policy date: 2015

Reviewed May 2017, Updated Aug 2019.

Sources: Making It Happen PYP, IB Forums and IB Schools