



ST. MARY'S *Catholic High School, Dubai*

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

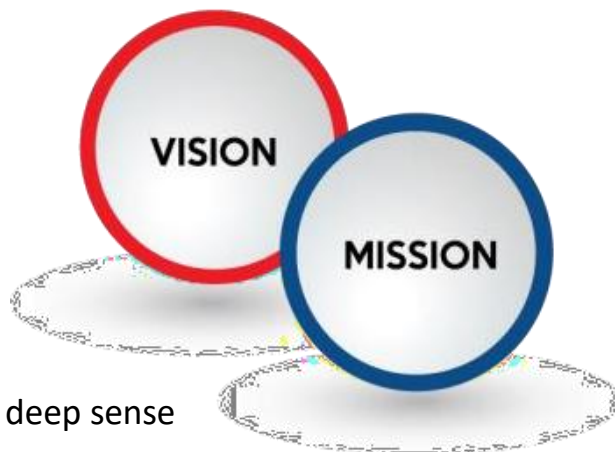
2025-2026

St. Mary's Catholic High School, Dubai



VISION:

We envision ourselves as a school community that consistently strives to develop highly independent learners who confidently showcase innovation through meaningful reflection and purposeful collaboration. We aim to achieve this by ensuring every teacher inspires students through effective questioning and feedback to reach their highest potential in a culturally diverse society.



MISSION STATEMENT

We serve with compassion to develop a deep sense of integrity, mutual respect and tolerance within the Marian family so that the uniqueness of each person is celebrated, allowing them to holistically develop as successful learners and responsible citizens.

TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY:

Rationale:

We believe that:

1. Learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone i.e. learning should be fun especially in Primary phase and enable children to make expected or accelerated progress.
2. Teaching needs to equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary in order that they can play an increasingly useful and positive role in society and make informed choices about their lives both now and in the future.
3. High quality teaching and learning experiences support children to be lifelong learners.

Aims:

St. Mary's Catholic High School aims to provide children with the opportunities needed. to develop towards their full potential; academically, emotionally and socially by:

- Providing the highest standard of education to enable children to acquire the skills, knowledge and concepts relevant to their future.
- Promoting an ethos of care, mutual respect and support, where effort is valued, and success celebrated.
- Enabling children to become active, responsible and caring members of the school and wider community.

The school works towards these aims by:

- Promoting high quality learning and attainment.
- Providing a high-quality learning environment.
- Valuing each other and ourselves.
- Working in partnership with parents and the community.



Teaching that makes learning visible

At St. Mary's we believe that very good teaching is when teachers

- Form positive relationships with the children in their class and other members of the school community.
- Plan lessons effectively which take children's prior learning and current assessment into account and are appropriately differentiated in order that the lessons consolidate, build upon and extend learning for all children.
- Insist on high expectations of learning and social behaviours.
- Ensure that effective direction and support is given in order that the children make better than expected progress.
- Demonstrate secure subject and pedagogical knowledge in order to inspire children and build their understanding.
- Apply a range of teaching styles which appropriately match the children's learning styles and needs in order to sustain their concentration, motivation and application.
- Develop and sustain good links and focused communication with parents in order to support the children's learning using active learn, Google classroom and learning ladders.
- Effectively assess and monitor children's progress in order that they can extend children's learning both within individual lessons and over time.
- Use resources effectively, including other adults, to support children's learning; Use technology effectively in order to support children's learning.
- Use questioning effectively to gauge and extend children's skills, knowledge and understanding; and use 'think pair share.' and 'pose, pause, pounce and bounce' strategy while questioning to challenge students appropriately so as to make them effective critical thinkers.



What is a Very good lesson?

At St. Mary's Catholic High School, we believe that a very good lesson should comprise of the following elements.

- Planning – teachers have a clear understanding of subject knowledge and setting objectives, and it is well planned and differentiated.
- High expectation – there is optimism about, and high expectation of success is a norm to the lesson.
- The intended learning and success criteria are clearly shared. Main teaching- modelled and high-quality examples provided.
- Interactive – pupil's contributions are encouraged, expected and extended.
- Well-paced – there is a sense of urgency, driven by the need to make better than expected progress.
- End of the lesson; plenaries and/or mini plenaries within the lesson
- Use of assessment and evaluation – before, during and after the lesson.



Lesson Planning

Generic lesson template has been developed to assist staff and give them structure and support for lesson planning that they can have confidence in. Completing lesson plans in advance will give other teachers involved in the lesson the opportunity to familiarize themselves with their roles, the subject area and the expected outcomes so that they can contribute more effectively.

These lesson plans will be checked by the subject leader and/or subject coordinators of respective subjects to check their quality. This is good professional practice and will support greater collaboration. Effective collaboration will lead to improved learning for learners.

The generic lesson plans for the first two weeks of September will be prepared in June in accordance with the Long-term plan by subject teachers with consultation with the subject leader. Thereafter the generic lesson plans will be prepared a week in advance, by teachers following the instructions of the subject leader. The completed lesson plans need to be submitted to the subject leader for checking after which they will be saved by individual subject leaders in digital form.

Teachers are expected to show how these plans have been adapted to meet the needs of specific learners in their lesson. Teachers should also maintain data and records to inform planning and improving their own teaching practice.

Lesson Delivery

Teachers are expected to have good knowledge of teaching and learning strategies and the curriculum. Teachers use the approach of I do, You do and We do to model new concepts and then extend the learning through tasks that are use of effective action verbs from Bloom's Taxonomy. Teachers should reflect on their learners understanding regularly, identifying misconceptions accurately and providing clear, direct feedback through conversation with the children. Subject leaders support pedagogical thinking and ensure that teachers have secure skills so that they can adapt their teaching to suit all learners from SEN to Gifted and Talented. Teachers are expected to use formal written comments as feedback on student's work that clearly indicate the next steps in their learning. Teachers use online adaptive learning platforms like Alef, Bug club, and active learn to provide students with individualized challenges tailored to their specific strengths and needs.

During periods of off-site learning, such as adverse weather days or school closures, the school will operate live remote lesson via Zoom or Google Meet. Asynchronous learning material will be uploaded in Google Classroom as required.

Lesson Observations

Formal lesson Observations will take place once each term. The subject leaders will prepare a schedule for their respective subjects. There will be a pre-observation meeting wherein the subject leader will make his/her expectations clear to the Teacher being observed. After the lesson observation feedback will be given to the teacher and a copy of the feedback form will be provided to the teacher. The **iAspire** online platform will be used to observe lessons.

The second formal lesson observation will focus on the areas for development identified in the previous lesson observation.

Walk through observations will be conducted at random to monitor the quality of teaching & learning in the school by subject leaders and the Senior Leadership Team.

Peer lesson observations are an ongoing process that will provide support for teachers who need assistance in certain areas of their teaching. Subject leaders identify teachers in their respective departments who need to further develop their teaching skills and organize peer lesson observations and follow up the improvements made.

This policy will be reviewed every year and changes incorporated into policy and practice.



Next date for Review is June 2026.