

Curriculum & Learning Programme Policy

August 2025

Overview

Introduction

Villa Nola is committed to providing a high-quality early years curriculum that is child-led, play-based, and nature-connected. Our curriculum reflects international best practice, UAE cultural values, and KHDA expectations. Learning is designed to nurture the whole child, laying strong foundations for lifelong learning and wellbeing.

Policy Details

Purpose and Scope

This policy establishes the principles, framework, and delivery of the curriculum at Villa Nola. It applies to all teaching staff, assistants, and support staff engaged in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning experiences for children aged 45 days to 71 months.

Aims and Objectives

The curriculum at VNEC aims to:

- Support holistic development: cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and creative.
- Promote curiosity, independence, and problem-solving through play and inquiry.
- Respect and integrate UAE national identity, Arabic language, and Islamic values.
- Embed sustainability and environmental stewardship into everyday routines.
- Provide inclusive learning experiences that meet the needs of all children, including children of determination.

Curriculum Framework

The Villa Nola curriculum is influenced by international early years frameworks and aligned with KHDA guidance. It is organised into broad areas of learning and development:

1. Communication and Language
2. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
3. Physical Development
4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

In addition, Arabic language and culture are interwoven throughout the curriculum to support bilingualism and cultural awareness

Teaching and Learning Approach

Learning at Villa Nola is guided by the following principles:

- The child is an active participant in learning; teachers are facilitators and co-learners.
- Play is the primary vehicle for learning, supported by intentional teaching.
- The environment is considered the 'third teacher', rich in natural, open-ended resources.
- Inquiry-based projects evolve from children's interests and real-world contexts.
- Outdoor learning is prioritised, taking advantage of shaded and safe natural spaces.
- Teachers model positive behaviours, communication, and problem-solving strategies.

Planning and Environment

Teachers plan weekly and termly using observations of children's interests and developmental progress. The environment is intentionally designed to be safe, engaging, and reflective of cultural values. Provision includes opportunities for free play, small group work, and guided experiences. Learning spaces are resourced with sustainable materials, recycled items, and nature-based resources.

Inclusion and Differentiation

Villa Nola embraces inclusion through Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Teachers adapt activities, materials, and assessments to accommodate diverse needs. Children of determination receive targeted support through Individual Education Plans (IEPs), developed collaboratively with the SENCO, staff, and families. Arabic and English are both used in the classroom, with visual aids and bilingual signage to support understanding.

Assessment for Learning

Assessment is continuous and formative, designed to inform planning and celebrate progress. Methods include:

- Observations of play and interaction

- Photographic and video evidence (with parental consent)
- Learning journals and portfolios
- Checklists aligned with developmental progressions

Summative assessments are completed termly, focusing on the whole child rather than isolated skills. Results are used to adjust provision, inform teaching, and support transitions.

Family Engagement

Families are integral partners in the learning process. Teachers share planning highlights and learning outcomes through weekly updates, parent conferences, and learning stories. Parents are invited to contribute expertise, cultural traditions, and feedback. Workshops are provided on topics such as play-based learning, supporting early literacy, and positive parenting strategies.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The curriculum is monitored through lesson observations, planning reviews, and team reflections. The Lead Teacher and Centre Manager ensure that delivery aligns with policy aims and KHDA standards. Annual evaluations gather feedback from staff, parents, and children, which inform continuous improvement.

Roles and Responsibilities

Lead Teacher: Oversees curriculum design, planning, and evaluation.

- Centre Manager: Ensures curriculum aligns with regulatory requirements.
- Teachers: Plan, deliver, and assess learning experiences.
- Inclusion Lead: Supports differentiation and inclusion strategies.
- Parents: Engage in curriculum activities, support learning at home, and provide feedback.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Assessment data, observations, and learning portfolios are treated as confidential records. They are shared only with parents and authorised staff. Photographs and videos are stored securely and deleted at the end of the academic year unless required for regulatory reporting.

Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed annually by the Lead Teacher in consultation with the Centre Manager and Inclusion Lead. Updates reflect feedback from families, regulatory guidance, and evolving best practice in early years education.