**English**

**“Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone … just remember that all the people in this world haven’t had the advantages that you’ve had.”**

**The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald**

The English Department aims for all Al Islah students to leave with a passion for language and literature and excellent communication skills. We want our students to become confident and articulate young adults who are knowledgeable about the world around them, inquisitive and critical about the texts they read.

Transition from primary school is well managed with staff trained on the demands of the KS2 curriculum paired with an excellent understanding of the ability of entering students. Transition from primary to secondary is purposefully planned to allow students to make continued progress. Students together with partner primary schools, complete a transition unit by working on a project in the summer term which is then continued at Al Islah in September. Students that are below the expected standard on entry have a personalised intervention programme, which enables them to make rapid progress in reading and other aspects of literacy.

Reading is central to our curriculum and students are encouraged to read regularly and widely – both fiction and nonfiction. Through the study of a range of quality literature, underpinned at KS3, we build core reading and writing skills as a foundation for study at KS4. The KS3 curriculum is broad and balanced, with students studying full texts such as classics like “Frankenstein” by Mary Shelley and “The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas” by John Boyne. The transition from KS3 to KS4 is seamless, with students continuing to develop core skills in reading and writing with increasingly demanding texts for GCSE. We currently offer AQA English Language and AQA English Literature, as well as a foundation pathway of Eduqas Entry level English for students who are not ready for the demands of GCSE.

Alongside our core curriculum, strong links are maintained with the school library with students using this invaluable resource during English lessons and in their own free time. We create opportunities for students to regularly use and develop spoken language through discussions, debates and performances. We also participate in events throughout the year, including National Poetry Day and World Book Day. Students are encouraged to compete in creative writing competitions, with many having had their work published. Visits to the theatre and live performances in school also help bring texts to life and enriches the English curriculum.

**Science**

**“Science knows no country, because knowledge belongs to humanity, and is the torch which illuminates the world.”**

**Louis Pasteur**

Science has the profound ability to offer not just an illuminating account of the origins and development of life and the universe, but also the mental tools to become a scientifically literate citizen who is able to assess the validity of claim and counterclaim on the basis of evidence. The aim of the science department is to deliver a broad and deep understanding of the scientific endeavour to explain the facts of reality.

At Al Islah we want all students to think scientifically as this is an essential part of the cultural capital required to flourish in the modern, technological driven society. We cannot predict what the future holds for our students, but if they are able to form reasoned opinions based on the empirical evidence, then they will be able to make informed decisions on the ethical questions that are increasingly generated in the ever more technological world. We do not know whether artificial intelligence, climate change, big data, genetic technologies, or some other scientific development as yet unimagined will be the pressing concern in the lifetime of our students. However, if we teach them to evaluate the evidence, follow the dictates of logic and reason, then we may have confidence that they are best equipped to deal with the situation.

Al Islah Girls High School’s science curriculum follows the National Curriculum. Students begin their science studies through ‘enquiry’ as well as developing fundamental practical skills to learn how to safely practice science. The curriculum focuses on the fundamental principles of each scientific discipline with each new topic being built on the prior knowledge from earlier study. Chemistry, biology and physics are taught discretely and careful consideration has been taken to ensure the revisiting of learning is scheduled so that the vast amount of knowledge, skills and understanding are embedded and consolidated.

Our students study GCSE combined science. During these studies students will further develop their scientific skills and there is a strong focus on using practical work to learn skills of experimental design, skills in handling more advanced equipment, collecting and analysing data and drawing conclusions from evidence and evaluating the validity of findings. A high percentage of our students go on to study Sciences at further education and we have two different pathways to cater for the future educational or employment aspirations of all our students.

The science department believes that all our students are entitled to the benefits of a rigorous scientific education, to equip them with the skills to navigate the modern technological world.

**Mathematics**

**“Do not worry about your difficulties in Mathematics. I can assure you mine are still greater.”**

**Albert Einstein**

Al Islah Girls High School’s Mathematics department has established a culture of high expectations, excellent attainment and progress. We want students to enjoy maths and develop critical and higher order thinking to solve complex mathematical problems. Students experience high quality teaching and learning, rigorous assessment of their abilities with detailed feedback and an extensive intervention programme.

The mathematics curriculum is closely aligned with the National Curriculum and offers a blend of Algebra, Ratio, Proportion, Statistics, probability, Geometry and numerical calculations. Problem solving, critical thinking, logic, and independence are a key feature of the curriculum. which has been sequenced to allow content and skills to be thoroughly investigated with opportunities created to revisit core content and enhance subject knowledge. Transition between primary and secondary school are thoughtfully planned and interleaved into every unit, from inception to final examinations. Emphasis is placed on mastery and fluency to make sure students are resilient in solving, and can overcome, the toughest of problems. Lessons are engaging, challenging and students are constantly able to apply their newly learnt skills to real life applications. Activities, which allow students to investigate the beauty and practical nature of the subject, are a feature of teaching and learning at Al Islah Girls High School.

Assessments at Al Islah Girls High School are uniquely differentiated and tailored to the curriculum. During their study of mathematics, students will regularly tackle unit-based assessments in preparation for study at GCSE. Students at Al Islah enjoy and are successful in mathematics and a high proportion of students continue to study maths qualifications at A Level or Degree Level.

**History**

**“If you don’t know history, then you don’t know anything. You are a leaf that doesn’t know it is part of a tree”**

**Michael Crichton**

The study of history at Al Islah aims to provide students with the skills to analyse and de-construct interpretations of the past in order for them to better understand the world today. We want our students to view and understand their present world by knowing who, how and what has helped to shape it. Knowing our students’ own heritage has helped to construct a curriculum that reflects culture, change and development showing how key events and individuals have shaped and impacted on history over time.

We have sequenced our curriculum to better help students understand. Through overarching enquiry questions that produce both broad, thematic and depth study, we traverse through the most important events in history for our students. Through this journey we deepen our use of disciplinary knowledge such as; cause and consequence, similarity and difference, change and continuity, significance and interpretations as well as understanding a sense of time and place.

Beyond the classroom we venture into a deeper understanding of the world through independent study that is anchored in the classroom. For example, in Year 8 classwork when we look at the issue of women’s suffrage in Britain, the homework transports us to New Zealand and their woman’s suffrage movement. This is then enriched by a trip to the People’s History museum in Manchester so that when we revisit this issue in Year 11, our students have a broader and deeper context with which to evaluate, contrast and unpick similarity and difference.

Enrichment plays a crucial role in our curriculum. Students need to understand local, national and international history. We immerse students in the history of our local community including the growth of cotton towns, castles and manor houses. Speakers are invited into school to share their experiences expert knowledge on topics such as the impact of the Indian Army in WW11.

We are passionate about our curriculum and want students to be enquiring, challenging and excited about learning history; we want them to understand the relevance to today’s modern world and be able to make links over time.