



# NEASC Internal Reflection 2020 - 2021

## Learning Principle 5

# Learner Engagement and Autonomy

ENGAGE INSPIRE INNOVATE CREATING A BETTER WORLD THROUGH EDUCATION

## Learning Principle 5: Learner Engagement and Autonomy

Learners are engaged with and inspired by their learning. They have autonomy over their learning and make informed choices, supported by teachers acting as coaches and mentors.

### Judgment:

VIPS Learning Communities are Working on it... (Building; establishing the 'how')  
We are just beginning to embrace this phase.



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## Future Design: Where do we want to be? What will our learners be doing?

As a result of the development of our approaches to Learning Engagement and Autonomy, our learners will:

1. be motivated and equipped to engage in SDL across the curriculum
2. actively and regularly participate in various SDL processes (e.g. goal setting, levels of learner choice, learner-led conferences, on-going portfolios, personalized learning plans, etc.)
3. engage with their strengths, challenges, interest and passions in personalized ways



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## Future Design: Where do we want to be? What will our learners be doing?

### Pre-Covid, prior to March 2020

Our curriculum will:

1. Provide a wide range of curricular options (via choice and opportunity) in which students can benefit from learning experiences that encourage and nurture their talents, interests and aspirations.
2. Enable teaching to consistently promote students' deep and critical thinking, problem-solving and innovation skills in lessons. Students will regularly assess their own learning. There will be an increase in opportunities for peer observations to share exemplar practice.
3. Enable classes to have a more flexible environment to help students be engaged in their learning and promote a healthy and open teaching environment.



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## Future Design: Where do we want to be? What will our learners be doing?

### Pre-Covid, prior to March 2020

4. enable student voice through more collaboration, teamwork, and innovation.
5. systematically develop students' critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation, and independent learning skills through effective, purposeful lesson planning and delivery practices.
6. Utilize success criteria for use in AfL, for students to self-reflect on their tasks.
7. enable secondary students to be able to lead their own learning by asking questions, finding solutions and research.



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## The Current Reality: Where are we now? What are our learners currently doing?

### March 2020 to date

- Most students enjoy learning and take increasing responsibility for their own learning.
- Students regularly demonstrate a genuine interest in learning as they are more actively involved and show increasing levels of engagement and autonomy in lessons.
- Developments in the design of assessment tasks and the assessment models are providing students with increased opportunity to exercise choice in their own learning and the assessment of it.
- Students reflect on their work and are developing their abilities to identify their strengths and areas for improvement.
- The advent of Distance Learning has significantly increased the scope for self-directed learning, and, therefore students are growing into autonomous and engaged learners.



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## The Current Reality: Where are we now? What are our learners currently doing?

### March 2020 to date

- Students have demonstrated that they are capable of working productively on their own, and they do not require as much guidance from teachers as they typically use resources/technology sensibly to drive their learning.
- Teachers are adopting the skills and attitudes more befitting of a coach and a mentor to reflect this evolution in approaches to learning.
- The range of curricular options continues to grow, providing students with choices that develop their talents, interests and aspirations. Students regularly participate in opportunities (stakeholder surveys, interviews, assemblies, open discussions) to shape their learning programs and feel that they are usually successful in having their choices met.



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## The Current Reality: Where are we now? What are our learners currently doing?

### Pre-Covid, prior to March 2020

- Teachers possess specialist knowledge, as ensured by HR as well as ADEK teacher approval criteria, related to the possession of a bachelor's degree in the taught subject
- Teachers consistently apply their subject knowledge and use a variety of approaches, demonstrating an understanding of how students learn.
- Teaching continues to improve across the school. This improvement trend over time can be attributed to improved recruitment, extensive CPD opportunities, and a more systematic approach, supported by effective lesson planning and improved lesson observation practices.



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## The Current Reality: Where are we now? What are our learners currently doing?

### Pre-Covid, prior to March 2020

- As per the 2018 Irtiqa inspection, “*Teaching to develop students' critical thinking, problem-solving and innovation skills in all lessons*” is now a key part of the lesson observation focus and CPD opportunities for identified staff to further develop and embed.
- Lesson observation outcomes are used to identify targets in teachers' individual performance development plans. Teachers whose lessons are judged as acceptable or lower are supported with intervention strategies, including planning exercises, additional coaching peer observations, and follow up lesson observations.
- Across the school, teachers embrace professional learning opportunities, with weekly training sessions and workshops allowing them to improve their pedagogical skills.
- All teachers keep a record of their CPD in order to meet the 25 hours mandatory CPD requirements, as stipulated by ADEK.



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## The Current Reality: Where are we now? What are our learners currently doing?

### Pre-Covid, prior to March 2020

- Teachers are also beginning to engage in team-teaching, cross-curricular planning and delivery, and modeling lessons for peers, as part of the coaching and mentoring support system.
- Lesson planning is scrutinized across all phases, each week by grade leaders, coordinators and senior leaders, to ensure quality and consistency.
- Lesson planning builds on the prior knowledge of students, and the use of plenaries and assessment in lessons provides opportunities for students to reflect on the learning which has taken place.
- The development of the use of learning objectives and outcomes, across the school, has helped to make learning more explicit and has supported the development of more effective AFL practice.



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## The Current Reality: Where are we now? What are our learners currently doing?

### Pre-Covid, prior to March 2020

- Planning procedures within primary have been streamlined to ensure more effective use of teacher time in preparation of engaging learning activities/resources.
- The school is currently expanding its use of ICT resources and has introduced a 1:1 Chromebook initiative in Grades 10+.
- Chromebooks and iPads are used regularly in lessons, across all phases.
- Robotics, Maker's Space, and game-based learning are also available as extra-curricular activities, developing further the students' use of technology.
- Available ICT resources are also utilized in phases 1-3, in order to deliver skills-based assessments, evidenced in the PBL in elementary and the cross-curricular assessment project in secondary.



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## The Current Reality: Where are we now? What are our learners currently doing?

### Pre-Covid, prior to March 2020

- Specialist workshops with certified trainers have taken place and a program of ongoing support and CPD is underway this coming academic year.
- The majority of teachers understand that students learn in different ways, and adapt their approaches (including questioning) accordingly. Following on from CPD sessions on effective questioning and Bloom's Taxonomy to support questioning, the school is moving forward, improving in this area - particularly in the use of open-ended questions to promote higher-order thinking skills.
- Teachers generally use the available time and resources well, to deliver engaging lessons in which students are active participants and teacher-student interactions are positive and productive.



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## The Current Reality: Where are we now? What are our learners currently doing?

### Pre-Covid, prior to March 2020

- There is a positive climate for learning in which students are encouraged to interact with one another, and are supported and encouraged by their teachers.
- Most lessons are well planned and take into account the individual needs of students. New initiatives have been introduced, such as Guided Reading and mental math, which has supported this.
- There is a need to further improve differentiation, in order to ensure better progress for all groups of students, especially the most able.
- The School Development Plan has targeted this as an area for improvement, ensuring that all groups of students are provided sufficient challenge and support



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## The Current Reality: Where are we now? What are our learners currently doing?

### Pre-Covid, prior to March 2020

- 21st-century skills, and skills outlined in the SCF, such as communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking, are commonplace in teachers' planning, across all phases of the school.
- Students are also encouraged to develop thinking skills more independently, and this has been further enhanced by the school's initiatives, including ADEK's SCF, which has been introduced this academic year.



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## Learning Plans - How will we close the gap? What will be our major actions?

### March 2020 to date

1. Further develop the plans for meeting the goals of SDL;
2. Provide CPD opportunities which enable teachers to further grow in pedagogy as coaches and mentors
3. Ensure that assessment criteria is aligned with the goals of SDL



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## Learning Plans - How will we close the gap? What will be our major actions?

### Pre-Covid, prior to March 2020

- All teachers (100%) systematically develop students' critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation and independent learning skills through effective, purposeful lesson planning and delivery practices.
- Ensure that all teachers have keen knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of individual students.
- Ensure that all teachers provide well-focused challenge, support, feedback and follow-up.
- providing activities where students engage in finding their own solutions to given problems.
- Develop student-centered approaches more consistently across all subjects to (further) develop students' critical thinking, innovation, collaboration and independence.



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