

Learning and Teaching Policy

1. Introduction

At GEMS Founders School - Dubai South (GFD) we believe that every child is a unique individual with a unique way of viewing the world. We therefore aim to create an individualised approach to learning, considering our learners' needs and interests. The teachers are highly skilled facilitators who encourage child-centred learning opportunities to ensure all learners achieve the highest academic standards, meeting and exceeding UAE and international standards.

2. Purpose of policy

There are four main purposes to this policy:

- To establish an entitlement to high quality teaching and learning for all learners;
- To establish expectations for teachers in teaching and learning in all subjects;
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school;
- To develop a greater awareness of the school's approach to teaching and learning

3. Aims and objectives

Our aims are as follows:

- To ensure high quality teaching that enables the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding which will underpin all future learning.
- To establish fully inclusive classrooms with support and challenge for all learners for instance those with special educational needs, disabilities and English Language Learners, Emirati, etc.
- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which provides opportunity for all learners to make progress through enjoyment and challenge.
- To promote a wide range of enrichment experiences which enable children to make connections between all forms of learning.
- To promote positive attitudes through our school's mission which is to inspire creative, mindful learners who value diversity, support one another and strive for success.
- To integrate Emirati culture and Islamic values into learning experiences.

4. Learning and Teaching Style

At GFD, learners are encouraged to lead their own learning with teachers facilitating the process. GFD has a commitment to deliver high levels of outcomes for students, whatever their background. We work with our students to develop a range of competencies and behaviours to ensure every child has the opportunity to become successful in their learning.

Effective Learning

Our expectations for GFD learners are that they all aim high, whilst adopting the key skills in ways of thinking and behaviours to achieve their very best.

- Learners show an exceptional attitude to learning – they are positive, hard-working, enthusiastic and committed. They take responsibility for their own learning in sustained ways



- They listen carefully to others and are willing to confidently contribute their ideas
- Learners respond well to teachers, communicate effectively and collaborate well with others
- Learners respond readily to the challenge of the tasks set, show a willingness to concentrate on them, and make good progress
- Learners apply their learning to the world around them, making meaningful connections between areas of learning
- Learners are sufficiently confident and alert to raise questions and to persevere with their work when answers are not readily available and resilient in moving forwards with their learning
- Learners develop systematic ways of supporting their own learning through meta-thinking and planning strategically
- Learners demonstrate innovation, enterprise, enquiry, research, critical thinking and can use learning technologies to support them in their learning
- Learners are provided with the skills to reflect and evaluate their own work and that of others so that they can develop an understanding of their strengths and areas for development and can take targeted action to improve
- Learners regularly demonstrate: a growth mindset, positivity and enthusiasm, a curiosity for learning, open-mindedness, a questioning mind, determination, adaptability, initiative and an ability to take a risk and learn from their mistakes

Effective teaching

Our expectations at GFD are:

- Teachers have high expectations of all learners and strive to understand them, their starting points, interests and motivations so that they can support their needs; the teacher is the facilitator to learning
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding of how learners learn and childhood development
- Teachers need to be agile, adaptive, open-minded and innovative in their teaching approaches and continually learning from the best practice and research
- Teachers plan imaginative and engaging lessons and provide an inspiring learning environment. Time and resources should be used creatively.
- Every lesson has a clear learning objective and success criteria, which are explained to the class and are regularly referred to throughout the lesson. A feature of lessons should also include elements of explanation, modelling, scaffolding, practice, review and reflection
- Teachers plan for opportunities for students to have time to reflect and respond to their feedback to demonstrate mastery of misconceptions.
- Teachers must use a range of Assessment for Learning (AfL) in their practice.
- Questions are carefully planned to challenge learners' thinking and promote critical responses to develop problem solving, innovation and independent learning skills
- Teaching activities are varied and include support and challenge to ensure that all individuals make progress and aim high.
- Teachers provide opportunities for children to explore, develop and practice new skills/concepts
- All teachers cater for a range of differing learning styles and cultural diversity
- Teachers provide appropriate resources, which support learning outcomes
- All teachers have high expectations of presentation, quality and quantity of student work



- Assessment data from a variety of sources is used effectively to inform the next steps in teaching, curriculum design and adaptation to support all the learning needs of all groups of learners
- Teachers direct Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Higher-Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) to be fully involved and active in lessons so that they can support all learners. For those children with additional needs, Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) who are part of the inclusion team, help provide curriculum adaptation
- Teachers spend time reflecting on their practice to understand the impact they are having on their learners' learning and how they can maximise this progress further; teachers should strive to be role models for the learners in their care
- Teachers take an active stance in their own Professional Development
- Teachers can seek advice from our community of school leaders and across the GEMS networks

5. Whole School Curriculum Planning

Our curriculum is broad and balanced, aiming to develop a depth of learning of content, skills and the application of this to the real world. We use a range of resources to support our curriculum design:

- The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum – ARC Pathway
- The Primary National Curriculum for England
- The Secondary National Curriculum for England
- The Ministry of Education Curriculum for Arabic, Islamic Studies, Social Studies and Moral Education

The curriculum is enriched in several ways. This includes, but is not limited to: Co Curricular Activities (CCAs), sports days, art, music and creative performances events, educational visits. Importantly, in recognition of Emirati culture, our school celebrates a range of local events, including UAE National Day, Flag Day and Emirati Children's Day.

6. Early Years Foundation Stage

For our youngest children, care, happiness and personal development is our highest priority.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) there are seven key areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Art and Design

Learning through play is a key element of the EYFS framework and teaching and learning at GFD reflects this. Learners experience a balance of adult-led planned purposeful play (indoors and outdoors) with dedicated time provided for children to initiate their own learning. In this time, children can consolidate, practise and extend the knowledge and skills experienced and taught in adult-led activities. The development of children's learning skills known as "The Characteristics of Effective Learning" (Playing



and Learning, Active Learning, Creating and Thinking Critically) are supported throughout the daily routine.

7. Inclusion including reference to SENDo, EAL, G&T

At GFD we believe that all learners can achieve and make progress including those with additional needs. Through careful lesson planning, modification of assessments and expectations, we make sure that the learning is accessible or challenging enough for all. Where there is an additional need, class teachers work collaboratively with the Inclusion Team, the individual pupil and parents to ensure that they are supported through an effective Individual Education Plan (IEP). The learner's individual targets will then be the key focus for them in small group teaching including Flourish, with an Inclusion specialist. Guidance will also be followed to achieve targets within the whole class setting. (Please refer to the Inclusion Policy for more detail)

8. Equal Opportunities

The school recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve, a diverse school community which includes people from differing backgrounds, with different skills and abilities. The school will take positive steps to create school culture through its governing body, managers and other employees, in which people can feel confident of being treated with fairness, dignity and tolerance, irrespective of their individual differences. This commitment extends to the whole school community and others connected with it. The school is committed to the elimination of unlawful discrimination and to the promotion of good relations between all.

9. Parental involvement

At GFD, we recognise how important parents are in supporting in the education of their child or children. We encourage parents to support with learning at home by checking on the online platforms (such as Seesaw and GEMS Connect). We encourage parents to become partners in learning through volunteering in aspects of school life. If parents volunteer on a regular basis, we ensure that they are supported in providing recent adequate police check as safeguarding in our school is paramount. If parents would like to volunteer, they should contact the Senior Leadership Team.

10. Assessment and recording

Regular progress checks across the academic year ensure that all learners are supported effectively. Intervention processes are put in place to narrow gaps in learning. Assessment data is recorded on the school's Management Information System; the results of which are analysed and inform planning to ensure student progress. There are mandatory assessments in certain year groups as per KHDA guidelines. Parents will receive regular progress updates.

11. Resourcing

Each classroom is fully equipped with an interactive board. Teachers aspire to create imaginative and engaging classroom environments for their learners. All students have access to the school library. Learners are provided with exercise books and writing materials and electronic devices when necessary. Any additional resources required will be communicated with parents.



12. Roles and responsibilities

- **Local Advisory Board/GEMS** - GEMS carry out annual Cluster Support Visits (CSVs) to monitor the standards of teaching and learning across the school and provide support for the GFD team.
- **Leadership Team** - Leaders are accountable for standards of teaching and learning across the school. Based on the monitoring and evaluating cycle, including analysis of student data and student progress meetings, appropriate staff professional development will be identified and offered. Teachers will be encouraged by leaders to identify their own learning needs and will be guided to use a range of support and training materials. Workshops will be designed and led by the Teaching and Learning Coach. Teachers will also be encouraged to engage with other GEMS teachers through network meetings and will be directed, where appropriate, to external training. All leaders need to comply with the UAE Leadership Standards.
- **Teachers** - Teachers are responsible for meeting all of the non-negotiables for teaching which are noted in the employee handbook. They must comply with the GEMS Global Teacher Standards which are aligned with KHDA guidance and the UAE Teacher Competency Standards. For the Teacher Licensing process, all teachers should keep a portfolio of evidence towards these teaching standards. We seek regular teacher feedback, particularly through the Professional Development process, meetings and surveys.

Monitoring and review

Signed *[Signature]* Date 17/07/2024
Head of Primary

Signed *[Signature]* Date: 17/07/2024
Teaching and Learning Coach

Signed *[Signature]* Date: 17/07/2024
Principal/CEO

Next policy review dates:

February 2025

June 2025