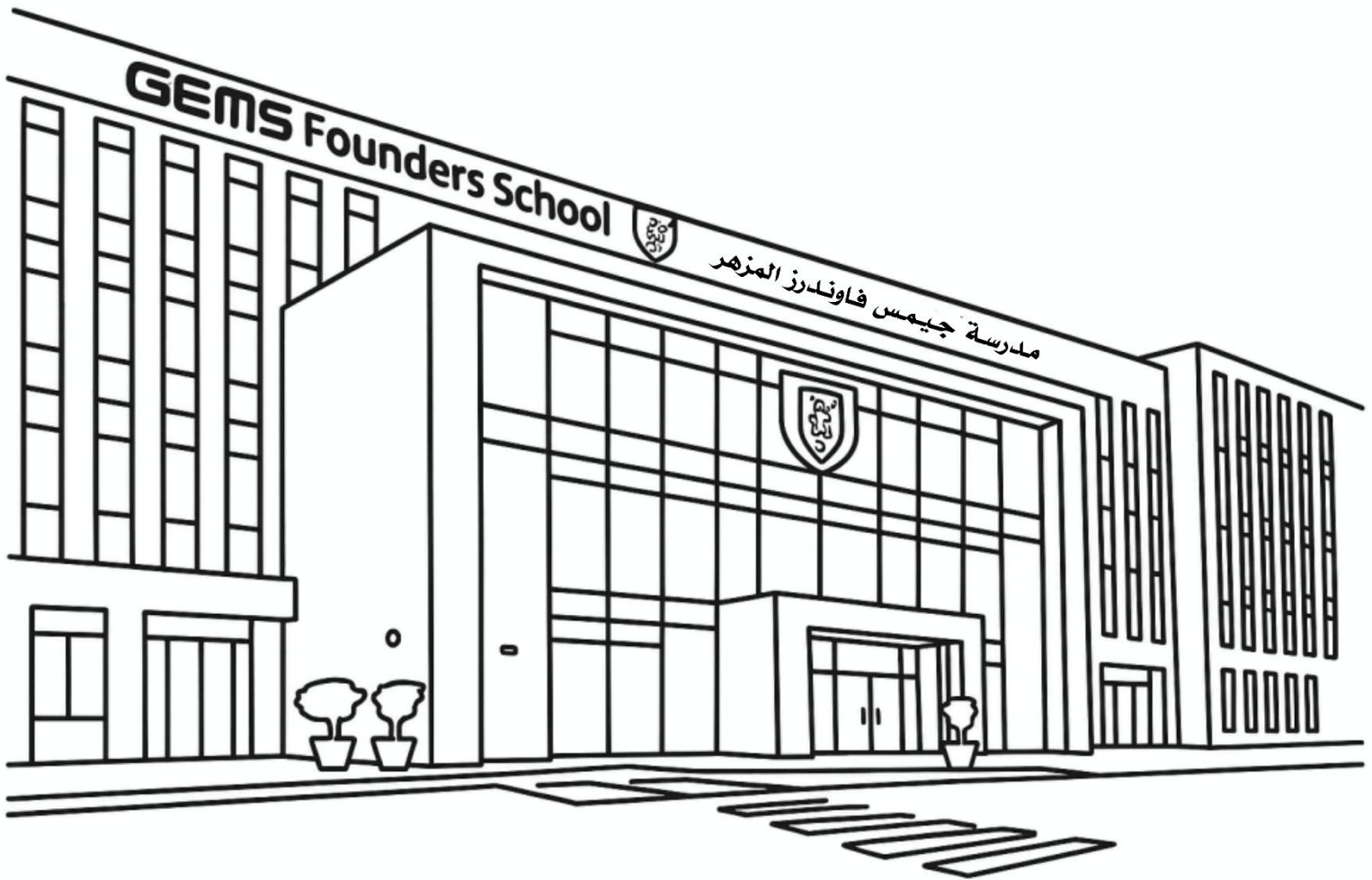


# GFM School Excellence Plan Update

Parental Update

December 2025



A culture of continuous sustainable improvement

## GEMS Founders School Al Mizhar

<https://www.gemsfoundersschool-mizhar.com/en/>

## School Excellence Plan, an update on GFM's key priorities for 2025-26

4 January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

At GFM, our vision is simple but powerful: to help every member of our community **Grow**, **Flourish**, and be **Mindful**. This vision comes to life through our core pillars, known as **#TheFoundersWay**:

**#TheFoundersWay** defines how we do things at GFM. It shapes the culture, character, and high standards we expect from both our students and staff, guiding every aspect of school life.

A key part of our growth is our partnership with you, our families. I would therefore like to update you on our progress against our priority actions, which outline both our current strengths and areas for development this academic year.

Each term, we will share an easy-to-read report that summarises progress against our Educational Excellence Plan. This plan forms part of our [three-year Strategic Plan](#), ensuring that every improvement we make leads to a real, positive impact on student outcomes and school performance.

Our Excellence Plan is built around three key pillars:

1. **Educational Excellence** – focusing on curriculum intent, teaching and learning (Teach Like a GEM, Read Like a GEM), academic outcomes, school culture, and the UAE National Agenda.
2. **GFM Strong Family** – strengthening student and parent satisfaction, wellbeing, and people development.
3. **Operational Excellence** – ensuring the highest standards in health, safety, and compliance across our school.

We are committed to making our progress visible and meaningful for everyone in the community. I encourage you to read the upcoming report carefully to see how your child's school is developing and the many initiatives underway.

Our shared goal is to continue our journey toward becoming an Outstanding high-performing school, and we truly value your ongoing support in making this a reality. Together, we are creating tomorrow's successful and caring citizens today.

With best wishes,



Akram Tarik

Principal / CEO

### GFM Parent Excellence Report 2025-2026

School	GEMS Founders School, Al Mizhar		Curriculum	British international	
Principal	Akram Tarik				
Inspection Rating	KHDA: <i>Good 2024-24</i>	Inspection Other	BSO <i>Outstanding</i> in all standards 2024 -2025		
Progress Review Date					
	October	December	February	May	
Academic outcomes					
Curriculum					
Teaching and Reading					
Culture					
Parent & student voice					
Wellbeing					
Safeguarding					
Health and Safety					

#### How to understand this document

- Each update shares the key priorities we are working on and what progress has been made. To help you read this quickly and clearly, we use a simple RAG rating.
- What RAG means?
  - RAG stands for **Red**, **Amber**, **Green** and shows our current confidence level in delivering each priority by the end of the academic year.
    - Red:** Significant concern - Progress is too slow, barriers remain, or impact is not consistent. It requires urgent action, closer monitoring, and additional support.
    - Amber:** Target remains achievable by the end of the academic year. This area is improving and the goal is still within reach, but there are elements that are not yet fully secure.
    - Green:** Minor or no immediate concern. This area is on track. Systems are in place, progress is secure, and impact is clear.
- For each priority, you will typically see
  - What we promised in our Excellence Plan as Priority Actions
  - What we have delivered so far with evidence of impact
  - The RAG rating which summarises our current status
    - Please note that a RAG rating is not a judgement of children or staff. It is a transparent way of communicating progress, being honest about what is going well, and being clear about where we are working hard to improve.

At GFM we want you to be happy with the communications we share with you. How happy were you to receive this communication?  
We may use your answer to improve our communications and their relevancy to you.

<https://forms.office.com/r/UvBf1kJ1Mi>

	Oct	Dec	Mar	May		
Areas of Focus	RAG				Priority actions for improvement 2025-26	Progress against priority actions December 2025
Educational Excellence						
Academic Outcomes					<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We are focusing on raising achievement by providing extra support in key GCSE and A Level subjects, especially subjects we have identified for additional focus and support.</li></ul>	<p>Our Raising Achievement Plan for 2025 to 26 is now in place. Here is what this means for families and how we are supporting students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We are keeping a closer eye on students who need extra support and following up quickly if attendance becomes a concern. This has included meetings with parents and targeted support for specific students.</li><li>During the October half term and the December winter break, we have offered revision sessions for exam year groups and other students who would benefit from extra practice.</li><li>We are continuing to provide weekend revision support, both in school and online, across a range of subjects.</li><li>Students who need the most support in core subjects have been given exam practice packs to use at home and in school.</li><li>In a small number of subjects, we have adjusted lesson time and support to ensure teaching stays on track and students are fully prepared for exams.</li></ul>
Curriculum					<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>This year, our priority is to strengthen early Arabic bilingual learning</li><li>Align the curriculum from FS2 to Year 9, integrate future-ready skills like digital literacy and AI</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We are moving toward full KHDA requirements. There are a small number of areas where we are still strengthening our systems, and we are actively working on these.</li><li>We have refreshed the curriculum in FS2 and Year 1 to ensure it meets UAE Ministry of Education expectations. We also held a parent engagement event to explain these updates and how they support children’s learning.</li><li>To support stronger bilingual learning, some topics from English, Maths, and Science are now being linked more closely with Arabic lessons, helping children make connections across subjects.</li><li>Across the school, we are strengthening what children should know and be able to do at each stage, so learning builds clearly from year to year and children are well prepared for the next step.</li><li>We are continuing to make learning more meaningful and connected to the real world. This includes opportunities in Primary and Secondary that develop problem solving, thinking skills, and understanding of wider issues such as sustainability.</li><li>Students are increasingly using age appropriate AI tools to support creativity and problem solving, under teacher guidance and with a focus on safe and responsible use.</li></ul>

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance teaching through regular assessment, staff training, and responsive planning to ensure every child makes strong progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have improved how we check understanding and track progress across both Primary and Secondary. Teachers are using more regular checks and short quizzes to identify gaps early and respond quickly.</li> <li>Teachers are using these checks to adjust planning, provide extra support where needed, and make sure curriculum content stays on track across the year.</li> <li>Staff training and professional development continues throughout the year, focused on improving the quality and consistency of teaching. This helps ensure students benefit from strong lessons in every class.</li> <li>Term 2 plans for all subjects are being finalised and reviewed to ensure learning is well sequenced and consistent across year groups.</li> </ul>
<p>Teach Like A GEM (TLAG) – Teaching</p> <p>Read Like a GEM – Reading</p>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This year, GFM is deepening its focus on high-quality teaching and reading.</li> <li>At the same time, Teach Like a GEM continues to grow, with every teacher receiving regular coaching, practice clinics, and professional development to ensure consistently excellent teaching and learning in every classroom.</li> <li>Read Like a GEM is being launched across all phases, with clear support for students who need extra help, daily reading routines, and exciting initiatives like DEAR time and parent workshops to build a strong reading culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Every Monday, teachers take part in focused training where they practise the small habits that make the biggest difference in lessons, such as clear explanations, strong routines, and checking understanding.</li> <li>Teachers also receive regular one to one coaching to help them improve specific parts of their teaching and to share what works best.</li> <li>During Term 1, leaders carried out many short classroom visits to check what is working well and where extra support is needed. This allows us to act quickly and keep teaching quality strong.</li> <li>A small number of teachers are receiving extra weekly support so we can strengthen teaching quickly and ensure every class benefits from the same high standards.</li> <li>We are also strengthening reading support and enrichment from Year 1 to Year 10.</li> <li>Reading assessments are helping us identify exactly what each child needs, so they can be given the right support.</li> <li>Students are building vocabulary through regular activities in lessons and at home, and we monitor engagement each week.</li> <li>Reading is taught and practised regularly in class, with additional targeted support for students who need it.</li> <li>Our Reading Challenge is now running across the school for Year 1 to Year 10, and will be shared with older students after their mock exams.</li> <li>We are also checking that reading materials and book choices are appropriate and consistent across the school.</li> </ul>
Culture and BeAGEM					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This year, we are focusing on strengthening our school culture through the Be a GEM Playbook, which promotes positive behaviour and shared values across all phases. We are celebrating student success more consistently, developing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each week, our staff review whole school behaviour information so we can spot any patterns quickly and respond consistently. Staff also receive practical guidance on strategies that work, so expectations are the same across classrooms and year groups.</li> </ul>

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					<p>leadership through mentoring and community programmes, and embedding the GEMS Leadership Gemstones into daily life so that every child grows in character, confidence, and purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are seeing a strong culture of recognising and rewarding positive choices. This year, students have received over 700,000 achievement points for showing the GEMS values. Overall, positive recognition is far higher than negative points, which is exactly the culture we want for children to thrive.</li> <li>We have strengthened our school routines and expectations so students know what is expected in key moments of the day, such as arrivals, transitions, corridors, and lessons. This helps create calm, safe, and respectful learning environments.</li> <li>We have also made our behaviour recording clearer and more consistent. This means that when a concern is raised, it is logged properly, followed up promptly, and shared appropriately between Primary and Secondary, so support for students is joined up.</li> </ul>
<b>Strong GEMS Family</b>						
Parent and student satisfaction					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are focusing on giving new families the best possible start through our First 100 Days programme, which helps everyone settle in smoothly and feel part of the GFM community.</li> <li>Our goal this year is to continue improving parent satisfaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Term 1, we completed all key actions in our First 100 Days programme, which is designed to help new families settle in quickly and feel well supported.</li> <li>In our November New Joiner Parent Survey, we received a strong overall score of 49, which is 22 points higher than last year and above the wider GEMS average. This shows a clear improvement in the new joiner experience.</li> <li>We also had a high number of parents responding to the survey, which helps us listen more accurately and act on feedback.</li> <li>Where any parents shared concerns, we followed up directly and addressed these quickly.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Term 2, we will implement our “You said, we will” actions for new joiner families, based on the feedback received, so we continue improving the transition and settling in experience.</li> </ul>
Wellbeing					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appoint a new Wellbeing Lead for AY25–26 and introduce a refreshed wellbeing strategy that includes enhanced education programmes for both staff and students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellbeing remains a priority at GFM. We have reviewed feedback from our wellbeing surveys and have a clear plan in place to follow up on what student and staff have shared.</li> <li>We have also run inclusive wellbeing initiatives for all staff, including teachers, support staff, and administration, such as our Term 1 Pick and Mix Activities Day and the school funded Winter Soirée.</li> </ul>
<b>Operational Excellence</b>						
Safeguarding					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This year, we are strengthening our safeguarding work by ensuring all staff complete training, reducing incidents through greater awareness, and supporting families with regular safeguarding newsletters and parent workshops throughout the year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All new staff who joined GFM after the start of the year have completed Safeguarding Level 1 training for 2025 to 26.</li> <li>Analysis show that staff are more confident and consistent in noticing concerns early and reporting them properly. This helps us act quickly and provide support sooner.</li> <li>Our safeguarding team reviews safeguarding information every week to identify any patterns and to ensure follow up actions are taken. Where needed, we provide additional reminders and training for staff.</li> </ul>

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>36 Year 12 students have completed Mental Health First Aid training and will support younger students through mentoring, under staff supervision.</li> <li>The Dubai Police delivered mandatory drug prevention sessions to Year 9 and Year 10 students during Term 1.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Dubai Police will deliver the remaining mandatory age appropriate drug prevention sessions to other year groups by the end of Term 2.</li> </ul>
Health and Safety					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all aspects of HSE are fully compliant to ensure that all members of the school community are working in a safe environment.</li> <li>To collaborate with the RTA to improve parking facilities and enhance traffic flow around the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our health and safety system is now fully updated and is checked regularly to ensure any issues are followed up quickly.</li> <li>We are recording more “near miss” incidents than in previous years. This is a positive sign that staff are reporting potential risks early, allowing us to prevent accidents before they happen.</li> <li>A new exit gate has been approved and will be installed near Staircase 4 to further improve student safety on site.</li> <li>We completed our required fire drill and lockdown drill during Term 1. The next fire drill is planned with Civil Defense in February 2026.</li> <li>All required licences and compliance documents are checked and kept up to date.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next step</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will continue working with RTA to resolve the parking and traffic situation outside Gate 5.</li> </ul>

*RAG		Significant concern		Target remains achievable by the end of the academic year		Minor or no immediate concern
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# The GFM Way



# #WeAreGFM

T. +971-4-210-3555

E. [registrar\\_gfm@gemsedu.com](mailto:registrar_gfm@gemsedu.com)

W. <https://www.gemsfoundersschool-mizhar.com/en>

Link Tree: [https://linktr.ee/GEMS Founders Almizhar](https://linktr.ee/GEMS_Founders_Almizhar)