

Mission Statement:
Creating tomorrow's successful and caring citizens today.



GFM Secondary Teaching and Learning Policy

Policy Updated By	Latest Publish Date	Monitoring Cycle
Mia Chorfi Akram Tarik	January 2023	Annually

Schedule for Development / Monitoring / Review

This policy was approved by the Governing Body on:	January 2023
The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the:	Principal and Senior Leadership Team
The Policy will be reviewed annually, or more regularly in the light of any significant new developments. The next anticipated review date will be:	January 2024
Should serious incidents take place, the following external persons/agencies should be informed:	Akram Tarik (Principal) and in his absence (Vice Principal)

1. Introduction

At GEMS Founders School, Al Mizhar we believe that every child is unique and has the ability to achieve the highest levels possible. Our high-quality lessons encourage students to collaborate with their teachers and their peers. We encourage student-centred learning opportunities to ensure all learners maximize their potential and achieve the highest academic standards.

2. Purpose of policy

There are four main purpose to this policy:

- To establish an entitlement to high quality teaching and learning for all learners;
- To establish teaching and learning expectations for teachers 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. These include students with special educational needs, disabilities, those identified as gifted and talented, and those with additional support needs such as English Language Learners.



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- 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 core value of 'mindfulness' (mindful of self and mindful of others)
- To integrate Emirati and Islamic values into learning experiences.
- That all teaching at GFM is 'Good' or better.

At GFM we believe that all students are capable of achieving at the highest level and that given the correct tools and guidance will become High Performance Learners. The principles of HPL, both the ACPs and VAAs, underpin our provision for all students.

At GFM we understand that pupils learn best at school when they:

- Feel safe, secure, valued, and have their physical needs met.
- Are engaged and motivated.
- Have the HPL tools to overcome challenges and aspire to be the very best.
- Have high expectations and aspirations, both for themselves and for others.
- Are taught by experts who can use their pedagogical knowledge to ensure effective learning over time.

4. Teaching and learning principles

At GFM students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning with teachers being available to facilitate. Through this approach, our students are provided with a range of learning opportunities that centre around our High Performance Learning (HPL) framework.

Our students are helped to develop a range of competencies in ways of thinking and ways of behaving. The ways of thinking are known as Advanced Cognitive Performance characteristics (ACPs) and the ways of behaving are known as Values, Attitudes and Attributes (VAAs). These competencies will ensure all of our students are high performing learners.

a. Effective learning

Our expectations at GFM are that all learners will aim for the top, whilst adopting the ACPs and VAAs. To do this, students must:

- Show an exceptional attitude to learning – they are positive, hard-working, enthusiastic, and responsible for their own learning
- Listen carefully to their teachers and peers
- Be willing to communicate their views/ideas to others

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- Respond well to their teachers and peers and effectively collaborate with others
- Respond to tasks set, show a willingness to work hard on them, and make good progress in all lessons
- Reflect and evaluate their own work to develop an understanding of their strengths and areas for development. They must also be able to feedback to their own and others' learning in an effective and thoughtful way
- Apply their learning to the world around them and make meaningful connections between different subjects
- Confidently raise questions and persevere with their work when they face difficulties. They must be resilient and offer ways to move forward with their learning
- Develop systematic ways of supporting their own learning through meta-thinking and planning strategically
- Demonstrate innovation, enterprise, enquiry, research, critical thinking and can use technologies to support their learning
- Demonstrate: a 'growth mindset', positivity and enthusiasm, a curiosity for learning, open mindedness, determination, adaptability, initiative and the ability to take risks and learn from their mistakes.

b. Effective teaching

Our expectations at GFM are as follows:

- Teachers have high expectations of all learners and strive to understand them, their starting points, interests and motivations so that they can support their individual needs. Our teachers are facilitators for learning.
- Teachers have an exceptional subject knowledge and understanding of how students learn in their subject.
- Teachers are agile, adaptive, open-minded and innovative in their teaching approaches and are continually learning from best practice and research
- Teachers plan imaginative and engaging lessons and provide an inspiring learning environment. Time and resources should be used creatively to enable all groups of learners to learn successfully
- Teachers must use a range of Assessment for Learning (AfL) techniques in their practice. This enables the teachers to understand their students' strengths and areas for development. Teaching is adapted as a result of these techniques
- Questioning is carefully planned and directed throughout all lessons. Questioning promotes critical responses and develops problem solving

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skills. Higher-order thinking

skills are developed as a result of this questioning

- Activities are varied and include support and challenge to ensure all students have the opportunity to reach the same, highest level end goal
- Teachers cater for a range of learning styles and cultural diversity thus ensuring full student participation and understanding
- All staff at GFM have the highest expectations for presentation, quality, and quantity of work
- Teachers use assessment data from a variety of sources (CAT4, GLs, baselines, AfL, formative and summative assessment) to inform planning and next teaching steps. This data also informs curriculum design and adaptation to support the needs of all groups of students
- Where applicable, teachers direct Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) to be fully involved in lessons so that all learners are supported. For those students with additional needs, Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) who are part of the inclusion team. Help provide curriculum adaptation to ensure entitlement
- Teachers reflect on their practice to understand the impact they are having on their students
- Teachers are role models for the students in their care
- Teachers take responsibility for their own Professional Development and are always seeking ways to improve their practice.
- Teachers network with other professionals in the cluster, across GEMS, and the BSME network.

c. Effective planning for learning over time

At GFM we understand that outstanding progress and outcomes for students begins with effective planning. For this reason the below principles of planning for learning are expectations for all teachers.

- Planning should begin with the end in mind. Teachers will break down learning goals into granular knowledge by analyzing assessments and wider curriculum goals within units of work.
- Teachers will build upon prior knowledge by sequencing from what students may already know, through acquisition of knowledge and towards application.
- Utilise student data to inform planning, set challenging success criteria and tasks, and ensure individual needs are catered for.
- Make learning accessible by identifying how to overcome potential barriers and misconceptions.
- Build lasting learning by planning for spaced retrieval of key knowledge and concepts.



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- Increase complexity by ensuring knowledge and understanding is cumulative in difficulty and that students apply their learning across a variety of contexts.
- Through AfL identify student misconceptions and plan for opportunities within lessons to address these promptly.

d. Lesson structure for learning

At GFM we use evidence informed learning structures within our lessons which enables strong learning over time and allows HPL to be embedded in our daily practice. The below are the key elements of our lesson planning learning model. This does not limit the teacher's professional creativity, but provides an effective pattern for learning. The following elements will be present in all lessons at GFM.

- A **'Do Now'** activity to engage students in their learning from the moment they enter the classroom. Good practice here are activities that support challenging recall and retrieval of previous learning; hook activities that help to introduce new learning or themes; or literacy based activities as appropriate.
- The **learning objective** (in the form of a question) will be shared with the students along with the **Steps to Success**. These are explained to students and regularly assessed throughout the lesson
- A **recap and review** of previous learning to ensure that new knowledge is learned in context. This again is an excellent opportunity for challenging recall and retrieval.
- **New content and/or skills** will be delivered and facilitated by the teacher using the most appropriate and effective strategy. Good practice here will focus around direct instruction; guided and independent practice; feedback; questioning and modelling success.
- The language and competencies of **HPL** will be a consistent feature of all lessons and learning.
- A **'Prove Your Learning'** task. This is the opportunity for the student to apply knowledge and demonstrate their learning through independent practice. This will usually be in the form of written work, although other strategies may be appropriate.
- A short **plenary** to reinforce key learning points and to identify any misconceptions or gaps in understanding. These would inform teacher planning for the next lesson.

Throughout all planned learning there must be appropriate support and challenge for all learners based on their starting points. Activities must be designed to be challenging for all and require hard-work to achieve. The three Steps to Success does not mean that three

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separate differentiated lessons or resources need to be created, but it does mean that activities need to be structured to enable outcomes to be met and exceeded.

All lessons should be planned and delivered with the very highest expectations of all students in mind and with the belief that all can become High Performance Learners. Strategies and support for those not yet achieving at this level must be used to help them access the learning at the highest level possible.

5. Home learning

Learning at home and having the discipline, organization and necessary HPL skills to complete work independently is key for students to make exceptional progress. Effective home learning and the encouragement of student own learning must be planned carefully if it is to be effective.

Home learning will be set across all year groups regularly and consistently, and must be:

- Planned with the impact on learning in mind
- Link closely to the Steps to Success and needs of the individual students.
- Clear and easily understandable by the students
- The purpose of the home learning should be made clear to the students
- Challenging and require hard-work and effort to be successful
- Set consistently in line with the school guidelines on home learning

6. Inclusion

At GFM we believe that all learners can achieve the highest levels 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 every student. Where there is an additional need, class teachers work collaboratively with the Inclusion Team, the individual student, and parents to ensure that they are supported through an effective Individual Education Plan (IEP). The student's individual targets will then be the key focus for them within the classroom or an appropriate alternative such as individual 1:1 support or small group teaching with an Inclusion specialist. More details are available in the Inclusion Policy.

7. Parental involvement



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At GFM we recognize the importance of parental involvement in supporting the education of their children. Parents will be encouraged to do the following:

- Value learning and discuss their child's learning at home
- Ensure their child has good attendance to school and arrives with the correct school equipment.
- Support good learning habits at home regarding home learning, good sleep patterns and appropriate use of electronic devices.
- Participate in discussions, through PTCs and other means, about their child's progress.
- Communicate with the school to share all relevant information promptly.
- Encourage their child to take responsibility for their learning.

To support this the school will provide the following:

- Curriculum overviews for all subjects
- Weekly learning overviews
- Regular reporting of student progress.
- Regular PTCs
- Clear resource lists and required textbooks
- Staff email directory.
- Online platforms to support information sharing.
- Opportunities for direct parental involvement in the school, for example through events and volunteering.

8. Roles and responsibilities

- Local Advisory Board/GEMS** – GEMS will carry out regular internal reviews to monitor the standards of Teaching and Learning across the school. They will provide any necessary support for GFM staff and students.
- Leadership Team** – Leaders are accountable for standards of Teaching and Learning across the school. On the basis of the monitoring and evaluating cycle, including pupil data and pupil progress interviews, appropriate training will be identified and offered. Teachers will then be encouraged to identify their own learning needs and will be guided to use a range of support and training materials, e.g. T&L Coaches. Workshops/PD sessions will be designed and led by our Middle and Extended Leadership Teams. Teachers are also encouraged to engage with other GEMS teachers through network meetings and will be directed, where appropriate to external



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training, including courses provided by GEMS. All leaders need to comply with the UAE Leadership Standards.

- c. **Subject Leaders/Year and Phase Leaders** – To be effective, collaboration between all leaders is required. At GFM Heads of Department and subject leaders will sequence the curriculum and lessons effectively; drive improvements in their subject area; systematically review progress and attainment; and identify and improve on weaknesses identified through monitoring activities. All leaders need to take responsibility in achieving the highest standards of Teaching and Learning in all subjects, supporting their team members and senior leaders.
- d. **Teachers** – Teachers are responsible for meeting all expectations for teaching noted in the employee handbook and the teaching and learning expectations as set out in this policy. They must comply with 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. We seek regular teacher feedback, particularly through the PDP process, meetings, and surveys.

9. Monitoring and review

This policy has been discussed and agreed by the GEMS Founders School, Al Mizhar teaching staff and leadership teams for implementation. The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated through the following within our Quality Assurance procedures:

- Progress and attainment data
- Learning walks
- Lesson observations
- Reviewing marking and feedback
- Pupil progress meetings
- Input from the school council and other means of pupil voice
- Planning and book looks.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Signed

Assistant Principal - Teaching and Learning

Date *Fehouf*
2023

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Signed

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Date

Vice Principal

Signed

Date *February 2023.*

Principal /CEO

Policy review date: January 2024

