GFM Curriculum Policy

Published Date:	01 September 2026
The Policy will be reviewed annually, or more regularly, in the light of any significant new developments. The next anticipated review date will be:	**01 September 2027**

This policy is applied at GFM alongside our school's vision, mission and values.

Rationale

At GFM, our driving core values: Grow, Flourish, Honour, ensures that our curriculum is designed to provide a broad, balanced, and enriching educational experience that prepares students for lifelong success. Grounded in the UK Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum, the UK National Curriculum, and the UAE Ministry of Education (MOE) curriculum, our approach ensures a comprehensive education that respects local cultural values while embracing global best practices and British Values.

We emphasise the development of 21st-century skills, known as the four Cs: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. These skills are seamlessly integrated across all subjects and learning experiences, enabling students to become adaptable, innovative thinkers ready to thrive in an ever-evolving world.

Curriculum Approach

Our curriculum strikes a balance between formally taught content and project-driven learning. This dual approach enables students to acquire core knowledge and skills while offering the flexibility to explore personal interests and passions. Formally taught lessons provide a structured foundation in subjects such as English, mathematics, science, humanities, creative arts and Arabic, while project-based elements fosters interdisciplinary connections, problem-solving, and innovation. The curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure progression, continuity, and mastery at every stage, from EYFS to the end of secondary education. The inclusion of the UAE MOE curriculum for Arabic, Islamic Studies, and UAE Social Studies ensures our students develop a strong understanding of the region's cultural heritage and values. Reading plays a pivotal role in the development of the curriculum, ensuring that GFM's students are continually exposed to and immersed in, high quality, age and culturally appropriate texts. A number of UK best practice curriculum initiatives, including White Rose Maths and LiteracyTree, support the planning, development and delivery of the Maths and English curriculum.

Curriculum for the Early Years

In the Foundation Stage (FS1 and FS2), we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, emphasising key areas of learning: communication and language; physical development; personal, social, and emotional development; literacy; mathematics; understanding the

world; and expressive arts and design. This holistic approach ensures that children develop essential skills and a love for learning in a nurturing environment. There is a strong focus on language to ensure preparation for the National Curriculum is maximised. A Department for Education (DfE) approved phonics scheme ensures that students are provided with the best possible phonics lessons, to aid early literacy development. In line with MoE guidance, Arabic lessons and a strong bi-lingual approach to learning are accessed by students.

The National Curriculum: Secondary

Years 7–8

From Year 7 to Year 8, students engage with the National Curriculum for England, which encompasses a broad range of subjects, including English, mathematics, science, humanities, languages, and the arts. This stage is designed to build a strong academic foundation, fostering critical thinking, creativity, independence, and problem-solving skills. The curriculum is enriched with the UAE Ministry of Education syllabus, incorporating Arabic, Islamic Studies, and Social Studies, ensuring students develop an appreciation and understanding of local culture, heritage, and values. Throughout this stage, the breadth and balance of the curriculum ensures students are well prepared for the increased academic demands and future examination pathways. Alternative and enriching pathways, such as ASDAN, are also offered where appropriate to ensure accessibility and engagement in learning. Where required, the curriculum is expertly adapted and differentiated to support Students of Determination, in line with their Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and personalised targets.

Year 9 – Key Stage 3 and Transition to Key Stage 4

Year 9 remains part of **Key Stage 3** and provides an important transition year between the broad KS3 curriculum and the more specialised KS4 programme. Students continue to follow a broad and balanced curriculum, consolidating their knowledge and skills while developing greater independence and preparing for their future examination pathways. During **Term 2 of Year 9**, students select their **IGCSE option subjects**. The option process is supported by subject teachers, careers guidance, and the pastoral team to ensure that students and their families are well informed about the requirements of each subject and how their choices may support their future academic and career aspirations. In **Term 3 of Year 9**, students begin their **KS4 core subjects**, establishing the foundations for their IGCSE studies and ensuring a smooth transition into Year 10. This provides students with an opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, study habits, and academic expectations required for successful progression through KS4.

The UAE Ministry of Education requirements, including Arabic, Islamic Studies, and Social Studies where applicable, continue alongside the National Curriculum. Alternative and personalised pathways, including ASDAN and other accredited qualifications, are available where appropriate. Curriculum adaptations and additional support are provided for Students of Determination in accordance with their IEPs and personalised targets.

Years 10–11 – Key Stage 4

Years 10 and 11 form **Key Stage 4**, during which students follow their chosen programme of study and work towards recognised external qualifications, including IGCSEs and Level 2 BTEC qualifications. Students continue with their KS4 core subjects alongside their selected option subjects, building subject-specific knowledge and developing the examination skills required for successful outcomes.

The KS4 curriculum is designed to provide both academic rigour and appropriate flexibility, enabling students to pursue subjects aligned with their strengths, interests, abilities, and future aspirations. Students develop independent learning, critical thinking, communication, resilience, organisation, and examination skills, while careers education and guidance support informed decision-making about post-16 pathways.

For students who require an alternative pathway, individualised programmes may incorporate ASDAN or other appropriate accredited qualifications. Differentiation, intervention, curriculum adaptation, and additional support are implemented in line with students' IEPs, personalised targets, and identified needs.

Years 12–13 – Post-16

Years 12 and 13 provide students with a range of post-16 pathways designed to prepare them for higher education, further education, employment, or other appropriate destinations. Students may undertake A Levels or Level 3 BTEC qualifications, alongside personalised or alternative programmes where appropriate.

The post-16 curriculum promotes increasing independence, academic depth, critical analysis, research skills, communication, and preparation for adult life. Students are supported to develop the qualifications, knowledge, and transferable skills required to achieve their individual aspirations and progress successfully beyond school.

Careers guidance, university and further education preparation, work-related learning, and employability skills are embedded throughout Years 12–13. Where appropriate, students may follow personalised pathways, including ASDAN or other accredited qualifications, ensuring that the curriculum remains accessible, purposeful, and responsive to individual strengths and needs.

Across Years 7–13, the school provides a broad, balanced, and inclusive curriculum that supports academic achievement alongside personal development, independence, wellbeing, and preparation for life beyond school. Curriculum provision is reviewed and adapted where necessary to ensure that all students, including Students of Determination, have appropriate opportunities to make progress and achieve meaningful outcomes.

Personal and Emotional Development

Personal, Social, Health, and Emotional (PSHE) education is a cornerstone of our students' holistic development. From the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) through to Year 6, our PSHE curriculum is designed to:

- Equip students with essential, healthy life skills,
- Enhance emotional intelligence,
- Develop personal resilience
- Secure social responsibility

In the early years, emphasis is placed on building self-awareness, empathy, and basic health habits. As students' progress, the curriculum evolves to address more complex topics such as mental health, equity, mutual respect, citizenship, healthy lifestyles and preparation for adult life.

Within secondary, PSHE themes are woven through form time programmes and PE lessons.

Beyond 100

At GFM we recognise the importance of building and sustaining healthy lifestyles and habits. Students in every year group access a 'Beyond 100' practice each day, approximately 15-minutes in length, which promotes healthy living, longevity and happiness.

The British Values

We embed the British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs into our provision. These values are explicitly taught through Personal, Social, Health, and Emotional (PSHE) education, assemblies, form time programs and cross-curricular links. Students engage in activities that promote active participation in decision-making, understanding societal rules, and celebrating diversity. This comprehensive approach ensures that students develop into respectful, responsible citizens aligned with British society. Democracy is promoted regularly with student voice and input utilised as much as possible, more so during the student leadership election process.

Equity, Enrichment and Extension:

To nurture high-performing learners, we offer a range of enrichment opportunities, supportive courses and enhancements that extend and enrich learning beyond the classroom. This includes, but are not limited to:

English Language Learners: Enrichment courses to develop speaking, reading, and writing of the English language, aimed at students new to English. FlashAcademy, an EAL platform assists with the delivery of this intervention.

Extra-Curricular Curriculum: From robotics and debate to art and drama, these activities allow students to discover and develop their talents whilst pursuing their hobbies and interests.

Conventions and Competitions: Participation in academic, cultural, and sporting events fosters confidence, teamwork, and excellence. The school participates in regular competitive sporting and academic competitions with other school and through the inter-house programme.

Leadership Projects: Programs such as student council, peer mentoring, and community service develop leadership skills and a sense of responsibility. In line with our core values: Grow, Flourish, Honour, the honor element ensures that we continually provide opportunities for reflection and community service and action across and beyond the school.

Global Perspectives: Opportunities for international collaboration, Model United Nations, and language exchanges cultivate cultural awareness and global citizenship.

Inclusivity, Equality and Personalisation

We are committed to providing an inclusive curriculum that meets the diverse needs of all students. Differentiation, personalised learning plans, and specialist support ensure that every learner can access the curriculum and achieve success. High-achieving students are challenged through advanced tasks, enrichment activities, and opportunities to pursue their interests at a deeper level. Due to local law and custom, some aspects of the UK National Curriculum are adapted, omitted or personalised to ensure the school always remains compliant, but never to the detriment of fundamental British Values.

Quality and Evaluation

The curriculum is reviewed regularly via audits, deep dives, inter-school moderation and inspection. The insights from which help us to continually improve our offer.

Commitment to Excellence

Our curriculum reflects our unwavering commitment to excellence. By combining academic rigor, skill development, and enrichment opportunities, we create an outstanding learning environment that prepares students to excel academically, socially, and personally. Through a rich and balanced curriculum, we aim to develop lifelong learners, compassionate leaders, and responsible global citizens well prepared for life in a British society.

Please read this policy alongside:

Literacy Policy, Curriculum Action Plans, Reading Action Plan

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy has been discussed and agreed by the GEMS Founders School, Al Mizhar teaching staff and leadership teams for implementation.

Designation	Name	Signature	Date
Executive Principal/CEO/	Akram Tarik		01 September 2026
Principal	Mia Chorfi		01 September 2026

Next policy review date: 01 September 2027