GFM English Language Learners (ELL) 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.

1. Introduction:

At GFM, the ELL policy supports the diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds of students. It ensures that English Language Learners receive the necessary assistance to excel academically and personally, while aligning with the school's mission to foster creativity, problem-solving, and individuality, helping students thrive throughout their educational journey.

2. Aims and objectives:

- **Access to Curriculum:** Ensure that all ELL students have full access to the curriculum enabling them to reach their full academic potential.
- **Achievement**: Help ELL students achieve curriculum levels and examination grades in line with their capabilities.
- **Inclusion & awareness**: Foster an inclusive environment by raising awareness among staff, students, and parents about the needs of ELL students and promoting respect for linguistic and cultural diversity.
- **Clarity in provision**: Provide clear guidance to staff on identifying, supporting, and tracking the progress of ELL students, promoting consistent, high-quality ELL practices across the school.

3. Definitions

- English Language Learner (ELL): A student whose dominant language is not English and who requires additional support to develop proficiency in English for academic purposes.
- English as an Additional Language (EAL): Refers to students for whom English is not the first language, but who may or may not require support depending on their proficiency.

4. Fundamental Principles of ELL Provision

- At GFM, we believe in a holistic approach to developing linguistic fluency that incorporates:
    - **Linguistic fluency:** Understanding language structures, academic vocabulary, and functional language use.

- **Cognitive fluency**: Developing higher-order thinking skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities.
- **Sociocultural/Psychological fluency**: Fostering the ability to adapt to different cultural norms and practices building confidence within academic and social contexts

5. Identification of ELL Students

- GFM's admissions process includes identifying ELL students who may require language support. Key indicators include:
  - The data from the admissions test or Language Screener or the information in the admissions file.
  - Academic assessments (e.g. CAT4, language screeners) indicating below-average English proficiency.
  - Reports from prior schools, or direct observations by teachers, indicating language barriers that may impact learning

6. Band Assignment

- Based on the assessment results, the ELL team will assign the student to one of the following bands:
  - Band **A**: New to English
  - Band **B**: Early acquisition of English
  - Band **C**: Developing competence of English
  - Band **D**: Competent in English
  - Band **E**: Fluent in English

(Detailed Band Descriptors can be found in the Appendix)

7. ELL Support

At GFM, all teachers are responsible for supporting the language development of ELL students, regardless of their subject area. We believe that every teacher is a language teacher. The ELL department works in collaboration with teachers to ensure that lessons are accessible to all students through differentiation, scaffolding, and the use of audio and visual aids

8. Responsibilities

- **Head of ELL:** Leads the ELL provision, manages assessments, and collaborates with the Inclusion Department to develop strategies for ELL support.
- **ELL Instructors:** Conduct personalized ELL Intervention Sessions
- **Teachers:** Ensure differentiation in lesson planning and delivery, contribute to the identification of ELL students and provide feedback on student progress.
- **Parents:** Engage in ongoing communication with the school regarding their child's progress and participate in the development of ILPs when applicable.

9. Links to Other Policies

The EAL policy aligns with other key policies at GFM, including the

- Inclusion Policy
- Gifted and Talented (G&T) Policy
- Safeguarding Policy, and Wellbeing Policy, all of which emphasise the holistic support of every learner.

10. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the ELL Head, in collaboration with the Principal and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Progress of ELL students will be monitored through regular assessments, classroom observations, and review meetings with teachers and parents.

11. Conclusion

The ELL policy at Gems Founders Al Mizhar seeks to create a nurturing, inclusive, and innovative educational environment. By helping every student grow, flourish, and cultivate mindfulness, we empower our learners to celebrate their uniqueness and embrace the challenges of a globalized world.

Appendix A

ELL Band Descriptors

Appendix B:

ELL Programme Parent Contract

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Based on assessments conducted by GEMS Founders School Al Mizhar, your child has been identified as requiring ELL (English Language Learning) intervention.

The aim of the programme is to strengthen students' English language development so that they can access learning more confidently and successfully, both academically and socially. Through the ELL programme, your child will receive a combination of in-class support, alongside targeted individual and small group sessions delivered by our specialist ELL teachers.

Your cooperation and partnership will play an important role in supporting your child's progress throughout the school year and beyond. We believe that, through a strong home school partnership, meaningful progress can be achieved through a strong home school partnership. As a next step, we kindly request your consent for your child to be enrolled in the ELL programme.

The ELL Programme will run across the academic year. The annual fee is divided into

three terms, each consisting of ten weeks of intervention sessions. Payment for each term must be made in advance.

- Term 1: AED 1,750 (payable at the start of September)
- Term 2: AED 1,750 (payable at the start of January)
- Term 3: AED 1,750 (payable at the start of April)

Please note that students are placed into Bands A to E according to their level of English proficiency, with Band A representing the entry level and Band E the exit level. Students placed in Bands **A**, **B,** or C are expected to remain in the programme until they have progressed to at least Band **D**.

Please also note that no financial adjustments will be made for student absence or scheduled school holidays. In the event of an unforeseen school closure (distance learning), missed sessions will be made up through additional sessions within the same term where possible. Term fees are non-refundable, and intervention sessions will only commence once payment has been received in advance. Until payment is made, your child's place will remain on the waiting list.

Please sign below to confirm your consent for your child to participate in the ELL Programme. Kindly email or submit the signed contract to the Admissions or Finance Office, where payment for Term 1 can also be made.

I agree to make the ELL payment for my child:

Name: _____

Student ID No.: _____

In September, my child will be in Year _____ (class) *and will participate in the ELL*

Program for the academic year _____ / **_____.**

Parent's Signature: _____ **Parent's Name:**

_____

Date: _____

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

Next policy review date: 01 September 2027