

GFM Policy for Inclusion

Schedule for Development / Monitoring / Review

The Policy will be reviewed annually, annually or more regularly in the light of any significant new developments. The next anticipated review date will be:	April 2026
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This policy is applied at GFM alongside our school's vision, mission and values. Interwoven with the principles of High Performance Learning; values, attitudes and attributes.

1. Introduction

GEMS Founders School (GFM) provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all students. The National Curriculum for England is our starting point for supported tasks in order to meet the specific educational needs of individuals and groups of students. When planning, teachers set suitable and appropriate learning challenges and respond to student's diverse learning needs.

GFM recognises that some students have specific educational needs and require action by the School and Inclusion Team. We pay particular attention to providing provision for:

- SEND (Special Educational Needs)
- ELL (English Language Learners)
- High Performance Learners (Gifted and Talented)

GFM will identify any students with specific educational needs (not identified on admission) through thorough screening strategies and on referrals from all the stakeholders. The Heads of Inclusion plays a key role in coordinating such assessments and screening. We believe that our students, including those identified as having specific educational needs have rights to be fully included in all aspects of school and also have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum. The staff at GFM have high aspirations for all groups of students including those who fall under Inclusion. There is a clear focus in removing barriers to achievement.

Where students with specific educational needs are admitted and/or identified, appropriate interventions will be put in place, reviewed and enhanced on regular bases to support their individual learning needs with appropriate strategies and support/scaffolding that will enable them to progress. Some students may require a Learning Support Assistant, an Individual Education Plan (IEP), support/scaffolding in lesson plans which also includes challenge for Gifted and Talented.

Parents will be involved in regular dialogue regarding the identified individual needs of their child and the progress they are making.

2. Purpose of policy

This policy describes the way we meet the individual needs of the students, who experience specific educational needs which may relate to SEND, ELL, and/or Gifted and Talented (G&T) as per DISB . The principles of HPL, which is referenced throughout this policy, ensures all students are not limited by their learning and are able to reach their full potential.

3. Aims and objectives

We aim to develop a community where all students can flourish, feel safe and welcome. We recognise that students learn at different rates and that there are many factors affecting achievement including their ages, abilities, maturity, emotional states and learning environments. However, it is important that we never limit the aspirations or potential which follows the core values of HPL.

The aims and objectives of the Inclusion Team are:

- to ensure that the specific educational needs of students are identified and assessed in a timely manner, provide support/planning to meet needs, and progress continually monitored.
- to make clear the expectations of all stakeholders in the process so that students with specific educational needs have access to the curriculum through planning which shows support, scaffolding and effective strategies by class teachers, subject teachers, Inclusion Team members, and learning support staff.
- to ensure that parents are able to contribute and play active roles in supporting their child's education
- to support staff and parents.
- to model inclusion, mindfulness, and support of all community members.
- to make recommendations for referrals in cases the need for external advice and/or services arise.
- to ensure students on admission can be supported by the Inclusion team.
- ensure students feel they can trust the school to help them be successful.

4. Learning and Teaching style

Effective learning

- students and stakeholders to be active participants in the creation of the Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- to support and guide stakeholders in the production and lesson plans.
- to have a clear profile of Level 2 and Level 3 students to help staff understand their needs and to support and scaffold work in the classroom.
- to raise awareness of the nature of learning styles and differences of all students with specific educational needs and how they are met in the school community.
- Please refer to Appendix D

Effective teaching

Inclusion is a whole school responsibility where all staff need to be aware of. Teachers should have a range of strategies to support all students, including those with specific educational needs through effective and appropriate strategies and support or referral where appropriate. Teachers need to ensure that they build confidence, motivation, and self-esteem through a safe, calm, secure and welcoming atmosphere in all lessons to all students. The curriculum is flexible enough to meet almost all the needs of students. Once in the school, no student will be excluded from any learning tasks and activities due to his or her specific educational needs and/or disabilities, unless it is clearly of benefit to that student and leads towards inclusion.

For some students the mainstream environment can be challenging and therefore impact on their progress. For this reason, a small number of students in Years 2-6 will be in our Flourish Class for Math and English. This smaller setting will allow for more personalized learning and a more functional curriculum.

5. Inclusion curriculum planning

Teachers at GFM ensure that all students:

- are taught to enable them to experience success. This will be achieved through support, scaffolding and a range of strategies to meet the student's special educational needs.
- use tools and materials that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles and differences in which they are able to participate fully in class and have same learning experiences as their peers', regardless of any specific educational or medical needs.
- have clear, challenging yet achievable learning targets and outcomes that enable them to succeed.
- review and inform the next stage of learning outcomes by using assessments and performance records.
- Flourish classes will follow the curriculum as closely as possible but the main priority for these classes that the lessons are relevant to the needs of the students.

6. Foundation Stage

GFM acknowledges that many students at the Foundation Stage (FS) will be in an English environment for the first time. We support and encourage the use of all first languages to promote an inclusive and welcoming community. FS pupils will be instructed in English at the same level. If after some time it is apparent that a student may require specific educational support related to SENd the Head of Inclusion for Primary will be notified to begin the appropriate observations and assessments, and make recommendations for further support both in and outside of the school community.

Blank Verbal Reasoning Skills used within Foundation Stage supports all FS students to improve their language skills, also the implementation of Speech and Language Therapist to bridge the gap.

7. The contribution of Inclusion to teaching in other curriculum areas

We provide learning opportunities that are matched to the needs and abilities of all students, and weekly planning clearly shows supported and scaffolding of tasks and appropriate teaching strategies in all curriculum subjects. Students with IEPs and Passports and who require support/scaffolding will be identified and planned for in the GFM lesson plans. The documents are accessible to all teachers and leadership team members. Inclusion Teachers are embedded within the year groups and will plan lessons with the year group team to ensure support and scaffolding is in place across the subjects.

8. Opportunities

GFM has adopted the HPL principles and recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve, a diverse school community which includes all students from different backgrounds with a variety of skills and abilities. GFM will take steps to create a positive school culture through its governing body, leaders and other employees, in which all students can feel confident and accepted whilst 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. We are committed to the elimination of unlawful discrimination and to the promotion of good relations between all.

9. Parent involvement

GFM works closely with parents in the support of their child with specific educational needs. We encourage an active partnership through ongoing dialogue with parents. Parents have much to contribute to our support for students with specific individual needs.

We invite parents in for regular meetings to share the progress of their child. We recommend the need of outside intervention for parents, and we share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of students with specific educational needs. It may be necessary to discuss with parents the need for additional support for their child or to request an external assessment. Where there is a cost implication it will be as per GEMS guidelines.

We also understand that our parents are not able to meet us regularly and so a termly IEP progress tracker will be sent home for our Level 3 students. Level 2 and Level 3 students also have a link Inclusion teacher which parents can communicate via email. In addition to this, daily interactive updates are posted via seesaw to those children who have a Learning Support Assistant and to those children who receive weekly interventions.

10. Referral process and assessment

Observation, assessments and referral (for those students who have not been diagnosed)

- At the beginning of the academic year, the class and subject teachers observe and assess their students. After the observation and assessment period, teachers complete referral forms if they have concerns about students who might be at risk and/or need additional support from the Inclusion Team. Members of the Inclusion Team will observe the students who have been referred by the teachers in various classroom settings, e.g. during English or P.E. lessons. Where appropriate, educational assessments will be carried out by the team members and parental consents will be sought prior to the assessments.

- Signs in English and Arabic will be placed in classrooms/staff rooms to support the identification of students supported by the Inclusion team.
- Responsibility of the Heads of Inclusion to ensure GFM Teacher TEAMS contains all relevant documents to support the teaching and learning of students of determination. This includes the Inclusion register, IEPs, Passports, IEP Trackers, and any other documentation so staff are well informed.
- Please see Appendix B

ELL students

ELL teachers will support the students under the guidance of the ELL Leader as follows:

- Level 1: For those who have low needs of ELL support - in-class support
- Level 2: For those who have medium needs of ELL support – will receive pull out sessions in line with the curriculum.
- Level 3: For those who have high needs of ELL support - The students will be pulled out of class and an alternative program followed to improve their English including phonics.
- Level 4: No English – Intense English learning program

Supported curriculum and ELL strategies which are outlined in the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP) will be provided including their assessment information as necessary.

Some students will be assessed on entry and there is a minimum expectation of English Proficiency on entry. This depends on which year group the child is applying for.

High Performance Learners (Gifted and Talented Students)

At GFM Gifted Students are those who are identified through CAT4 as achieving 127 and above in Quantitative and Verbal and a mean SAS score of 123 or above in any battery with evidence from the Subject Specific Criteria. Our Talented students are those who excel in non-academic subjects and demonstrate skills well above and/or beyond for a person of that age. HPL ensures all students at all levels reach their full potential.

Provision for High-Performance Learning (Gifted and Talented Students)

Adaptive Teaching - the need to adapt teaching to the needs of learners in the classroom is one of the key challenges of any teacher. Particular areas of pedagogy can be used to meet the needs of Gifted and Talented Students, but these should not be seen in isolation. The Inclusion team works in partnership with G&T Champions and Senior leaders to identify common areas of pedagogy that can be further enhanced via professional development support and QA processes to promote the effective provision for all learners, including Advanced Learners.

Provision for Students with SEND

After reviewing the previous medical/psychological and/or relevant documents (e.g. reports from a Speech therapist and previous school reports), the Head of Inclusion will meet with the parents and discuss the possible support and provision that the School and Inclusion Team can provide. Where appropriate,

educational assessments will be conducted prior to parental consent. Student observation and assessments will be conducted in a timely manner. Parent-Teacher- SENDCo meetings will be held to discuss possible short- and long-term learning outcomes of the child, in addition to the IEP if required. If necessary, LSAs (Learning Support Assistants) will be employed depending on the needs of the student. The cost will be the parents' responsibility, according to GEMS guidelines. If the child is identified as needing support during admissions the LSA contract will be included in the enrolment of the child.

LSA's will be employed by the school and external providers are invited to support the LSA however external providers are not able to be their LSA's. Standalone therapy sessions such as ABA, Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy (OT) can take place in school at an agreed time and regularly.

Flourish Provision

Flourish Class for Year 2 to Year 7 students. These small groups, with a maximum of 15 students per class, focus on Maths and English, taught by our Specialist Teachers (Inclusion). The aim is to remove learning barriers and address knowledge gaps. In these smaller settings, students access a differentiated curriculum tailored to their needs, allowing for targeted interventions and curriculum adaptations. This approach is particularly beneficial for students of determination, providing them with the support needed to engage in core subjects at their own pace, ensuring individual progress and understanding.

Alternative Curriculum for students of determination

GFM offers ASDAN (the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) as part of this curriculum, and select courses will be introduced for students of determination to benefit from learning life skills and independent skills alongside their academic education. Additionally, GFM offers BTEC level 2 and 3 that provides a wide range of subjects, enabling students to explore various areas of interest and pinpoint their strengths. The skills acquired through BTEC courses directly match the requirements of the current job market, giving students a competitive edge.

11. Resourcing

Students with specific educational needs will be provided with the learning tools and materials they require to access the curriculum on an as-needed basis, where available. Where outside support is recommended by the Heads of Inclusion, this cost will be the responsibility of the family. Class and subject teachers will provide all students with resources within the classroom so that they may meet their individual learning targets and outcomes. This may include enlarged or first language texts, bilingual dictionaries, pictures and drawings, labels, visual schedules, etc. The additional accommodations will be outlined in the provision in their IEPs or in their Individual Passports.

GEMS has a 'No Hands On Policy' and so we are not able to meet the needs of students whose behaviours warrant positive handling to keep them safe.

12. GEMS Founders Counselling Program

Mission Statement:

The mission of the GEMS Founders Counselling Program is to foster culturally competent students by designing and implementing a data-driven, comprehensive school counselling approach. We are dedicated to promoting positive mental health for all students, empowering them to reach their full potential, our counsellors are committed to providing an accepting, non-judgmental, and confidential environment while utilizing solution focused techniques to support students.

Our professionally trained school counsellors create a safe and nurturing space for students to reflect on their challenges, equipping them with practical skills to navigate any issues they may face.

At GFM, we recognise that students encounter specific mental health and well-being challenges that require support from both the counselling team and the broader school community.

We offer support in the following areas:

- Personal growth and development
- Child safeguarding and child protection
- Social-emotional support and enhancing social skills
- Trauma
- Bullying issues
- Self-regulation (anger, anxiety, stress)
- Exam stress and friendship/relationship issues
- Relocation challenges (moving schools or countries)
- Support for families and teachers to enhance student development
- Referrals to school and community resources for mental health concern

Referral and Support System:

GFM identifies students in need of counselling support through a holistic referral system that incorporates input from multiple stakeholders, including student self-referrals, teacher recommendations, and suggestions from the safeguarding team and parents. Our counselling team plays a vital role in coordinating support by welcoming students and understanding their concerns. This initial assessment enables the development of a comprehensive support plan, focusing on solution-based strategies that are practical and effective. These strategies are shared with teachers and parents to ensure a collaborative approach to supporting the student.

Counsellor Objectives:

The objectives of the school counselling program are to:

- Provide a safe and nurturing environment for all students.
- Offer short-term counselling or crisis intervention.
- Promote personal growth, self-awareness, and appreciation of global diversity.
- Facilitate students' social, emotional, personal, and academic development.

After implementing support strategies, the counselling team monitors student progress through feedback from the student, teachers, and parents. If progress is insufficient, the counselling team, in agreement with the parents, may recommend external specialist support. In such cases, the team collaborates with external providers to ensure that the student receives the necessary support within the school environment. This collaboration is particularly important for students facing issues related to violence, abuse, or trauma.

13. GEMS LINK program

GFM follows the GEMS LINK program that offers in-house Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy sessions for students requiring additional support in these areas. The cost is reasonable and affordable which will be the parents' responsibility, according to GEMS guidelines. Speech and Language Therapy – supports children with their speech, language and communication needs using holistic assessment, observation, and evidence-based individualised intervention programs.

Programmes may have focused areas on speech sounds, fluency, oral motor skill development, Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC) and social communication.

Occupational therapy – supports children with motor skills, sensory processing, and cognitive skills and supports essential life skills using holistic assessment, observation, and evidence-based individualised intervention programs. Intervention may focus on sensory integration, motor movement skills, hand-eye coordination, social skills and self-regulation. The SaLT and OT have been allocated two classrooms to conduct their therapy sessions within the school premises

14. Small Steps Big Dreams

Small Steps is a specialist Autism Centre based within GEMS Founders School. It caters for students who require full time Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) therapy from a qualified therapist. The ABA therapists are overseen by a qualified Board-Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA). Students are enrolled in the school and have access to all the resources on offer including an allocated place in their classroom. Inclusion and reverse inclusion takes place to ensure those enrolled through Small Steps have the opportunity to mix with their classroom peers (where appropriate). Small Steps have two classrooms based within the school which are designed to mirror the mainstream classrooms with adaptations for 1:1 therapy. Small Steps is an extensive support service that incurs an additional cost, in line with GEMS guidelines. Further information regarding the Small Steps Provision can be found on their website <https://smallstepsbd.ae/about-us/>

15. Roles and responsibilities

Local Advisory Board/GEMS

GEMS determine, support, monitor and review the support of inclusion within the School.

In particular they are:

- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies and methodologies to ensure best practices of teaching and ultimate learning outcomes.
- Provide GFM with adequate resources for inclusion.
- Monitor teaching strategies and methodologies in terms of raising teaching and learning standards.

Senior Leadership Team/Executive Leadership Team

The GFM leadership team will ensure that best practices related to Inclusion are followed throughout the school. They will provide support to the Inclusion Team by ensuring that class and subject teachers adhere to the provisions outlined in a student's IEP and lesson plans so that the needs of the students with specific educational needs are met and they are included in all classroom tasks and activities in which they are able to fully participate. The leadership team will also ensure HPL philosophy is embedded throughout the school.

Extended/Middle Leadership team

Middle leaders must ensure that they are monitoring and providing for the specific educational needs of SENDo, ELL and/or G&T students outlined in their IEPs and Lesson Plans. It is their responsibility to ensure inclusion is practiced to a high level and that planning, and assessment are conducted in effective ways

Teachers

All teachers must be aware of and act on the Inclusion Policy as well as any IEPs and Lesson Plans that their students may have. Inclusion teachers are linked to individual year groups to be part of the planning across the curriculum. They will take responsibility for the learning of all students in their class and ensure that the learning environment is accessible, welcoming, and inclusive.

16. Planning, recording, monitoring and review

IEPs and support through planning

- All students with SEND, ELL and High Performance Learner needs will be identified in lesson and seating plans.
- Inclusion Team will set up meetings with teachers and parents to discuss and agree on the IEP, student passport and Individual Support Plans (ISP).
- IEP's will have 3 outcomes for each term unless students achieve them earlier than expected.
- Inclusion Team members will then write IEPs and share this with teachers on a shared area
- Students will be categorised according to their individual needs, e.g. ELL, SEND and G&T and will be supported by class teachers, Inclusion teachers and the Heads of Inclusion and Heads of Key Stage. Some students may fall in two categories, e.g. they can be both have ELL and SEND needs.
- The use of learning outcomes within the teacher's planning, marking and recording will inform the continuous assessment cycle by the teachers and Inclusion Team. As a result, learning outcomes can be reviewed and rewritten as appropriate.
- Student needs will be discussed at Student Progress meetings to share good practice in teams.
- IEPs are continuously assessed and reviewed for learning by all stakeholders. Formal reviews are held at the end of each term and are arranged by Inclusion Team members.

The Heads of Inclusion monitors the movement of students within the Inclusion system in school. They provide staff and management with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practices of the School, with input from the Inclusion Team and stakeholders. The Inclusion Team are instrumental in supporting teachers involved in drawing up and carrying out IEPs, Passports and ISPs for the students with specific educational needs.

17. Monitoring and review

This policy has been discussed and agreed by the GFM teaching staff and leadership teams for implementation. This policy takes into consideration the GEMS Inclusion Policy and the Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework.

Signed

Date

Head of Inclusion Primary

Signed

Date

Head of Inclusion Secondary

Signed

Date

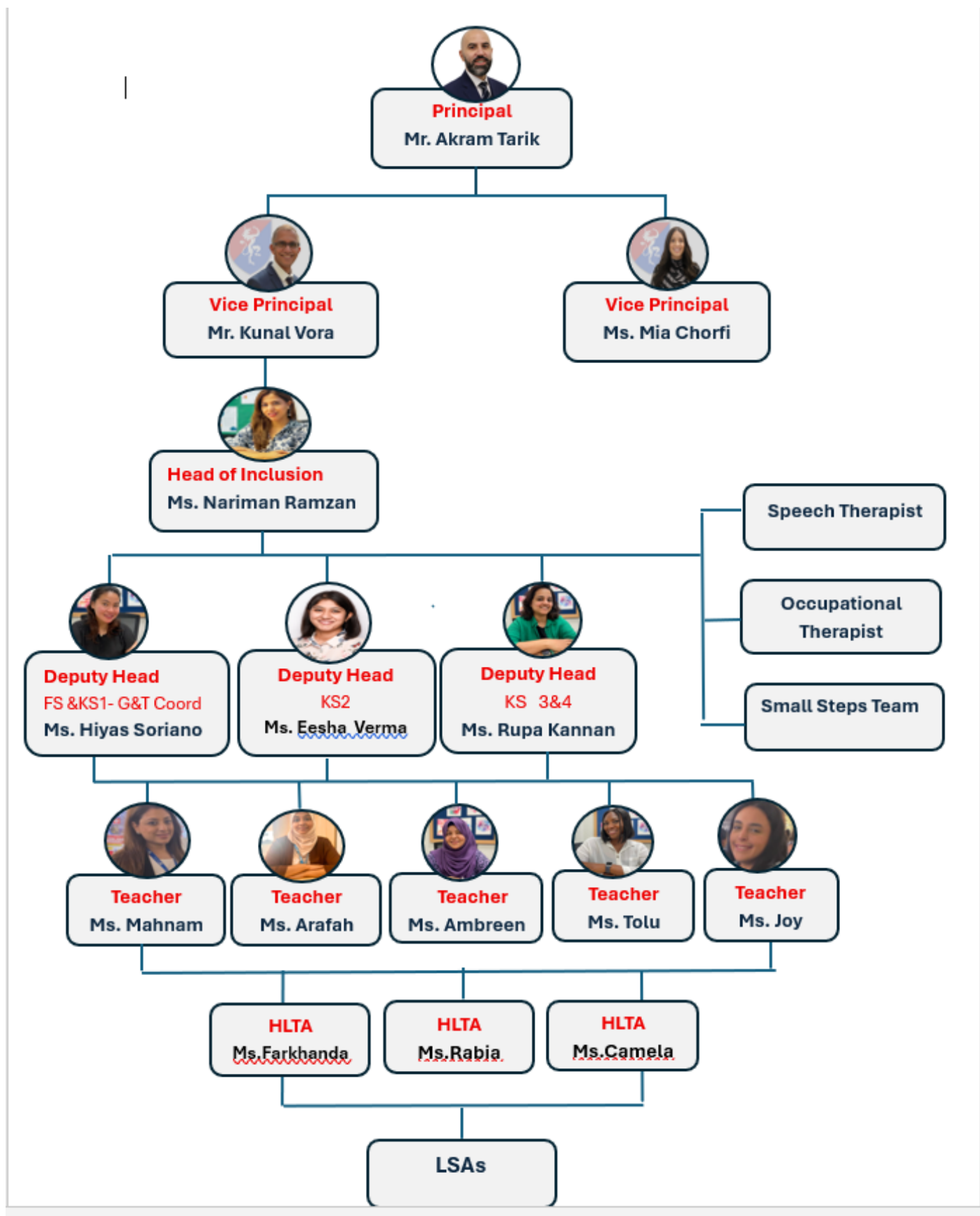
Vice Principal

Signed

Date

Principal/CEO

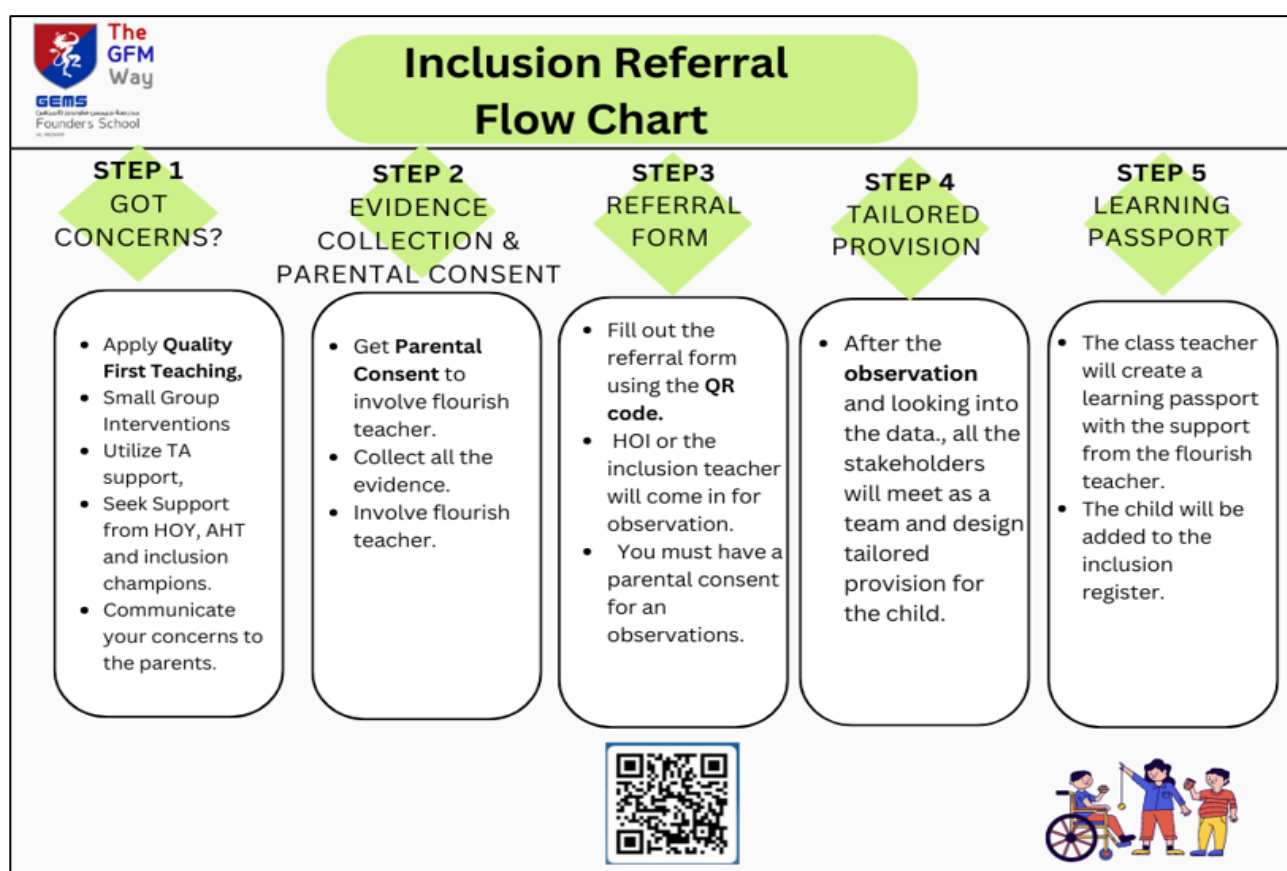
Next policy review date: 11 April 2026 The policy has been written in line with and working towards the 2020 Dubai Inclusive The policy has been written in line with and working toward the 2020 Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework (2017) in addition to Dubai Law 2014, Federal law 2006, Dubai law 2014 (no.2), Executive Council Resolution No. (2) of 2017 – Regulating Private Schools in the Emirate of Dubai including; Article 4 (14), Article 13 (16), Article 13 (17), Article 13 (19) and Article 23 (4). The 'Revised categorisation framework for students of determination 2019-20' was also used in the development of this policy.



Appendix A - Inclusion Department Staffing

Name	Position
Nariman Ramzan	Head of Inclusion
Hiyas Soriano	Inclusion Teacher-Deputy Head of Inclusion -G&T coordinator
Eesha Chahudhri	Inclusion Teacher- Deputy Head of Inclusion-ELL coordinator
Rupa Kanan	Inclusion Teacher-Deputy Head of Inclusion
Joy Nakhoul	Inclusion Teacher
Mahnam Awais	Inclusion Teacher
Ambreen Chahhaya	Inclusion Teacher
Tolulope Adewoye	Inclusion Teacher
Arafah Sulthan	Inclusion Teacher
Mable Newton	Head of ELL
Saeeda Khatoum	ELL teacher
Mai Sobh	OT Therapist
Keira Banim	SALT Therapist

Appendix B - Inclusion Department referral process



Appendix C – Level of Support



Level of support for students of determination at GFM

Level 3 – Highest Need

Long-term, intensive support with formal diagnosis/observed by Inclusion Team.
Students unable to access the curriculum even with differentiation and would require an LSA to engage in activities directed by the teacher/Inclusion teacher. Most likely to be in Flourish class.
IEP in place with input from the student, family, external agencies and teachers. Targets will focus on gaining independence; including improving social skills, communication and life skills.
Student also has an individual passport with key details.

Level 2 – Moderate Need

Students receive pull-out sessions/interventions/Flourish classes based on individual needs. Students may have a formal diagnosis and may receive support or may be monitored by the Class Teacher and Inclusion team. Class teacher supported by the Inclusion team to adapt work/working practice as needed. Students may receive additional support from external centers. Individual Passports with personalized targets for each student.

CAT4 (SAS below 70), PTE/PTM/NGRT Stanine 1 + PASS

Level 1-Lowest Need

Students need **quality first teaching and curriculum differentiation**.
Students identified by: referral from teacher and data collection. **Years 1 – 6:** Students working **well below** **A.R.E.KS3:** Maths: D1- and below A.R.E. English: D2+ and below A.R.E. **Data Indicators:** NGRT, PTE/PTM stanine 2 or 3, CAT4 mean SAS <85 or SAS of below 82 in any 2x batteries + PASS