

Gifted and Talent Policy

2024-2025

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Our Vision:

A British curriculum school, rooted in the values of the UAE, creating the leaders of tomorrow. A premium community school, empowering learners to achieve excellence and make a difference.

Our Mission:

Nurturing by including all learners, prioritising their safety and happiness and promoting their character development rooted in the national values of the UAE. Empowering by providing an exciting, enriching and ambitious learning experience where students excel by fulfilling and exceeding their academic potential.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to outline GEMS Al Barsha National School's approach and provision for our Gifted and Talented students.

1.1 GNS is committed to inclusion. We embrace the principle of providing high quality education to all the children who attend our school and pay particular attention to the provision for and the achievement of the following groups of learners:

- Students of Determination
- Learners who are considered 'gifted and talented'
- English Additional Language (EAL)

1.2 As an inclusive school, we believe that some students do have exceptional ability due to both nature and nurture. However, we believe that all students, regardless of their starting point at GNS, can develop and improve their performance in every aspect of school life. This 'Growth Mindset' underpins our vision and our ethos and also supports our "High performance learning' strategy. . We believe all of our students have the right to access high quality educational experiences and to take part in a broad and balanced curriculum as well as have an offering of varied exciting extracurricular activities, events and trips.

2. Defining Gifted and Talented

2.1 GNS's definitions of Gifted and Talented are as follows:

Gifted (G): The term *gifted* refers to a student who is in possession of untrained and spontaneously expressed exceptional natural ability in one or more domain of human ability. These domains include intellectual, creative, social and physical abilities. (GNS recognises that Giftedness can be difficult to identify, as it maybe masked by personal circumstances and disengagement with a curriculum that is not sufficiently demanding.) As a school we use data to identify students as 'Gifted'.

Talented (T): The term *talented* refers to a student who has been able to transform their giftedness into exceptional performance. Talented students will demonstrate exceptional levels of competence in the relevant domains of human ability.

2.2 Being talented is not a one-off fixed state of existence.

A talented learner is one who demonstrates a significantly higher level of ability than most students of the same age in one or more curriculum areas or in any of the following:

- physical talent
- talent in visual and performing arts
- mechanical ingenuity
- linguistic ability
- leadership
- high intelligence
- creativity
- a high level of interpersonal skills

3. Identification of Gifted and Talented Students

3.1 Students with a specific CAT4 score or a Stanine 8/9 in one or more areas may be identified as Gifted academically.

3.2 Teacher nomination, professional judgment based upon sustained performance over a period of time.

3.3 Parent nomination with supporting documentation.

3.4 Previous school records, at time of admission.

3.5 With the increase in International Testing, and high-quality feedback received, this information as above will be used to triangulate school judgements and potentially identify Gifted Students.

4. Whole School Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of how GNS will provide for Gifted and Talented students.

As a school, we aim to:

- Ensure that all students are stretched and challenged in all lessons
- Provide advanced tasks, explanations and homework as appropriate for students
- Promote consistency and collaboration between teachers in their approach to providing learning for all students
- Provide appropriate opportunities for all students to reach their full potential in lessons
- Provide appropriate opportunities for all students to reach their full potential outside of lessons through enrichment opportunities
- Work effectively with parents in order for students to fulfil their potential in their academic, physical and creative achievements
- Ensure equality permeates all aspects of school life. We want every member of our GNS community to feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth

4.1 Planning Stages of Lessons: During the planning stages of lessons, our teachers incorporate strategies to cater to the unique needs of gifted and talented students. These strategies include:

4.2 Flipped Learning: To provide gifted and talented students with the opportunity to delve deeper into upcoming units or topics, we implement a flipped learning approach. Students are provided with resources and materials in advance, enabling them to acquire core knowledge and familiarize themselves with key concepts before the lesson. This approach allows for more in-depth discussions, analysis, and application of knowledge during class time.

4.3 Delivery of Lessons: In the delivery of lessons, we employ various instructional methods to support gifted and talented students in deepening their understanding. These methods include

4.4 Staggered Starts: Within a lesson, teachers may utilize staggered starts, allowing gifted and talented students additional time to explore and engage with challenging tasks. This approach provides them with the opportunity to extend their understanding beyond the core content and encourages independent thinking and problem-solving skills.

4.5 Bespoke Home Learning: As part of our commitment to individualized learning, gifted and talented students are provided with extension tasks on the parent home learning slides. These tasks are designed to further enhance their knowledge and skills in alignment with their abilities and interests. By encouraging independent exploration, we aim to foster a love for learning and enable students to stretch their capabilities.

4.6 Access to Challenging Material: To support the intellectual growth of gifted and talented students, we utilise home learning platforms to meet the individual needs of students. Through our homework platforms, students can access a range of challenging materials tailored to their abilities. These

resources include advanced reading, complex problem-solving tasks, and enrichment activities, promoting independent learning and academic growth.

4.7 Monitoring and Evaluation: We recognize the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of our Gifted and Talented Policy. Our teachers regularly assess the progress of gifted and talented students, considering their individual achievements and areas for development. Feedback from students, parents, and teachers is valued and used to refine our strategies and tailor the learning experience to best meet the needs of these students.

5. Expectations

5.1 Offer the Most Difficult First: Rather than set a task that builds up to a specific skill, set the main task first and work backwards. As and when you see students falter or struggle, you can then revert to scaffolded tasks that can assist students' understanding. This affords G&T students the opportunity to develop their own understanding of skills needed to succeed rather than giving them a framework. For example, in Maths, a student may perform an end of unit assessment at the beginning of the series of lessons - should they score highly, they may be encouraged to explore something more complex.

5.2 Project-based learning: Collaborative learning improves interaction among students and provides a medium for them to exchange information and knowledge. This process keeps them motivated as they are working on a project and developing a sense of responsibility with their roles. By introducing more Project Based Learning, educators can create a more extraordinary task for the students and organise their subtasks, making room for independent growth and encouraging a growth mindset.

5.3 Pace: It is likely that G&T students will learn at a faster pace. They may understand new concepts more easily and with fewer repetitions. Consequently, teachers will need to provide appropriate challenge to sustain the students' attention and desire to learn.

5.4 Groupings: Students with special gifts and talents can benefit from flexible grouping within the classroom where they can work individually or with other gifted students.

5.5 Peer assessment: It may be enlightening for a G&T student with excellent non-verbal skills to read and assess a piece of work from a student who regularly produces strong and interesting work.

5.6 Questioning: Appropriate questioning is a useful way of differentiating for G&T. Rather than accepting an initial answer, teachers can probe further by asking young people to explain how and why. When planning, script the language you will use before the lesson and rehearse the answers yourself. Probing questions should be designed to encourage deeper thinking: What is the main idea of? Which one is the best... and why?

5.7 Connecting the topic to topical opinions and current affairs: Often presenting students with the big picture view and asking how your learning can affect their understanding will promote authentic engagement.

5.8 Facilitate Independent Learning: Engaging the flipped model of teaching to challenge more able students and allowing them the opportunity to really dive deep into their learning at their own pace.

5.9 Enrich students' Learning: Encourage students to participate in events, competitions and activities. Students learn a great deal through this as they are challenged at their own level and experience failure in a safe environment. It can improve teamwork, enhancing social and emotional skills while increasing intrinsic motivation.

By utilising these multiple means of challenge, we can encourage learners to challenge themselves, be more transparent about their abilities and create a culture of high achievement.

6. Responsibility of Teachers at GNS

- 6.1 Have high expectations of all students and use 'High Performance Learning' strategies in lessons
- 6.2 Encourage all students of all backgrounds to be proud of their abilities and to make the most of them.
- 6.3 Use prior assessment to inform planning
- 6.4 Differentiate and scaffold effectively using a variety of teaching and learning strategies to develop all students (adaptive teaching):
 - *Differentiation by task (including differentiated homework)*
 - *Differentiation by outcome.*
 - *Differentiation by resource, support and pace.*
 - *Setting individual targets*
- 6.5 Inspire and motivate all students
- 6.6 Gather information on their students including progress and attainment data
- 6.7 Observe their students to identify if there are any who may need alternative provision in order to be sufficiently stretched
- 6.8 Liaise with their Head of Department (HoD) regarding their observations and plan appropriate pathways
- 6.9 Liaise with the parents of identified Gifted and Talented students, providing support where appropriate
- 6.10 Provide appropriate stretch and challenge for Gifted and Talented students
- 6.11 Engaging with continued professional development (CPD) to ensure all colleagues know a range of approaches to stretch and challenge learners in their lessons
- 6.12 Use High Performance Learning (HPL) in lessons to develop students' learning skills

7. Responsibility of Students at GNS

- 7.1 Take pride in their work and produce work of a high standard
- 7.2 Understand and participate in discussions concerning their progress and attainment
- 7.3 Speak to their teacher if they do not feel sufficiently stretched and challenged
- 7.4 Take up opportunities to extend themselves in lessons
- 7.5 Take up opportunities to extend themselves outside of lessons

8. Responsibility of Parents at GNS

- 8.1 Always encourage and support their child
- 8.2 Inform the school of their child's talents and skills including any special achievements outside of school
- 8.3 Contact the school if they feel that their child is not being sufficiently stretched or challenged
- 8.4 Encourage their child to take up opportunities to extend themselves in lessons
- 8.5 Encourage their child to take up opportunities to extend themselves outside of lessons