

Curriculum Policy

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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

- 1.1. The GEMS Al Barsha National School (GNS) curriculum is designed to promote high expectations, challenges and opportunities.
- 1.2. We believe that the purpose of the curriculum is to inspire learners and teachers, not simply instruct them.
- 1.3. We aim to create a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of every student.
- 1.4. We offer a curriculum that is designed to support a range of abilities through offering an appropriate menu of academic and vocational qualifications.
- 1.5. We believe strongly in the importance of basic key skills such as literacy, numeracy and that these form the foundation for achieving progress in all subject areas and improve skills that facilitate social mobility and success in adult life.
- 1.6. We offer opportunities to experience, enjoy and succeed in a wide range of subjects. This includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the range of extracurricular activities, that the school organises in order to enrich the experiences of the students.
- 1.7. We endeavor to build cultural capital in our students by providing an extensive range of opportunities beyond the classroom through educational visits and an extensive array of trips.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1. To ensure that each student receives their curriculum entitlement through a coherently planned and sequenced curriculum from FS to Secondary.
- 2.2. To ensure a smooth transition in the curriculum from the Foundation Stage to the Secondary phase and our Post-16 provision.

- 2.3. To outline the role of assessment and feedback to check for understanding of the curriculum.
- 2.4. To outline how the pedagogy underpins the curriculum.
- 2.5. To outline how we personalise learning and inclusion.

3. Foundation Stage Curriculum

- 3.1. The Foundation Stage curriculum is based on the Development Matters Framework and The UAE Ministry of Education Early Years Framework.
- 3.2. Use of these frameworks enables the Foundation Stage team to plan a bilingual approach to teaching our youngest students ensuring that there is synergy between The Development Matters Framework and Ministry of Education outcomes.
- 3.3. Students make links with their knowledge, skills and understanding in both Arabic and English.
- 3.4. Teachers can develop learning in both languages to meet each student's individual language needs and level of development.
- 3.5. The Curriculum is mapped out thematically, with Prime and Specific areas of coverage (See Appendix 1). This enables students to make wider connections across the Development Matters Framework and Ministry for Education Framework.
- 3.6. Teams plan so that students each week answer an element of their *Big Question*.

4. Primary Curriculum

- 4.1. The learning of students in Years 1 to Year 6 is derived from the National Curriculum for England.
- 4.2. The curriculum enables strong links, transfer of knowledge and connections.
- 4.3. Primary students follow a thematic approach to learning underpinned with purposeful outcomes and conceptual understanding.
- 4.4. It is each teacher's responsibility to be an expert in the area of the curriculum they are teaching.
- 4.5. Teachers are required to understand the key concepts and common misconceptions in each curriculum area in order to plan carefully and precisely.
- 4.6. Half-termly core texts for each year group drive a *Big Question* alongside a science, geography or history focus.
- 4.7. Teams plan so that students each week answer an element of their *Big Question*.
- 4.8. Teachers create links between core and foundation subjects thematically to ensure wider connections can be made between knowledge and skills. (See Appendix 1)

5. Secondary Curriculum

- 5.1. Students in the secondary phase study the National Curriculum for England's core knowledge and skills as well as Exam Board specifications.
- 5.2. Students study a wide range of National Curriculum and UAE Ministry of Education subjects across our broad 3-year KS3. Teachers ensure that appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding are taught at Key Stages 4 and 5.
- 5.3. Learning is sequenced across key stages.
- 5.4. Students receive relevant and appropriate careers advice, before choosing two options to take through to KS4
- 5.5. Students study a range of IGCSE courses offered at Key Stage 4 and International AS and A Levels at Key Stage 5
- 5.6. Pathways through Key Stage 4 and 5 are specifically tailored to individual needs to ensure alternative courses can be followed for specific cohorts of students.
- 5.7. Through high quality teaching, students' knowledge and understanding is accurately assessed to discover what has been retained, including content from previous units of learning.
- 5.8. Throughout Secondary, students in all years receive Moral Education, Core PE lessons and a range of UAE Ministry of Education subjects without terminal examinations.
- 5.9. The Key Stage 4 curriculum is enriched with relevant content in subjects not progressed through to GCSE years.
- 5.10. All students in the secondary phase are encouraged to complete Year 13 and continue to higher education.

5.11. Suitable and appropriate qualifications are offered, preparing all students effectively for their next steps in education.

6. Ensuring a smooth transition through the curriculum

- 6.1. Teachers know what skills students are expected to have gained at each stage of the curriculum.
- 6.2. Teachers know how these cumulatively prepare students for the next key stage in their learning from Foundation Stage to the rigors of IGCSE and IAL examinations in their subject.

7. Home setting into FS1

- 7.1. To ease students into the transition into school, the first two weeks of the new school year are operated as a gradual and staggered start.
- 7.2. We support each student in this gradual and personalized process, enabling them to confidently adjust to their new environment.
- 7.3. Teachers and leaders ensure there are frequent and valuable opportunities for parent and teacher interaction.
- 7.4. We encourage parents/guardians to provide regular feedback about these important first few days at school.

8. Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1

- 8.1. Knowledge of child development and of the curriculums informs transition practice at the start of Key Stage 1.
- 8.2. The transition from the Foundation Stage to Year 1 is based on maintaining similar approaches in the way students learn.
- 8.3. The Year 1 curriculum is taught through a play-based approach.
- 8.4. Teachers learning objectives and students' success criteria reflect the needs of both the Development Matters Framework and the English National Curriculum.
- 8.5. Students who continue to work through the Development Matters Framework are transitioned onto the English National Curriculum when they have reached a Good Level of Development.

9. Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3

- 9.1. In Key Stage 3, we build on students' achievements in Year 6 to develop the breadth and depth of their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- 9.2. Students will be introduced to a wide range of subjects, developing skills they will need for lifelong learning, becoming more independent and self-aware.
- 9.3. The curriculum primarily focuses on ensuring that students have essential learning skills.
- 9.4. Students are given opportunities to be creative and resourceful and are encouraged to have enquiring mind.
- 9.5. Students are encouraged to think for themselves, to process information, reason, question and evaluate.
- 9.6. This provides the foundation for Key Stage 4 and beyond.

10. Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4

- 10.1. In Key Stage 4, we aim to offer students a challenging, broad and balanced curriculum.
- 10.2. This provides a range of learning opportunities, enabling all students to gain the skills and qualifications they will need to progress on to further education and employment.
- 10.3. The curriculum is designed to be flexible, so that it meets the needs of every student as well as the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- 10.4. We seek to secure a balance between choice and breadth.
- 10.5. We offer three pathways for IGCSE Science tailored to individual interests and capabilities, such as, Triple, Double and Single Science.
- 10.6. Students' choice is valued and considered throughout their time at the school, however, the school will make the final decisions about options studied, including tier of entry (where relevant) for each student.

11. Key Stage 4 to Key Stage 5

- 11.1. In Key Stage 5 our aim is to encourage all students to continue their education onto Post16.
- 11.2. We aim to offer a variety of courses to enable all students to follow an appropriate pathway such as the International A Level qualification.
- 11.3. Students continue to access Arabic A lessons and sit the EmSAT (The Emirates Standardized Test) exam at the end of year 13
- 11.4. Students participate in activities within and beyond the school community and to investigate options for future development.
- 11.5. Students in Key Stage 5 have access to careers advice and guidance to support their university applications.
- 11.6. Post-16 students have access to a wide range of enrichment opportunities, including the GNS Post-16 Leadership Development Programme.

12. Curriculum Mapping

- 12.1. The curriculum is coherently mapped from Foundation Stage to Secondary.

13. Long Term Curriculum Planning

- 13.1. Each Foundation Stage and Primary Phase and Secondary Subject area has Long Term Plans in place mapping out the main areas of learning in each year.
- 13.2. Long Term Plans are based on the Development Matters Framework, National Curriculum for England and to examination board requirements.

14. Medium Term Curriculum Planning

- 14.1. Each Foundation Stage and Primary Phase and Secondary Subject area has Medium Term Plans in place, providing detail of the knowledge, skills and understanding taught in each unit of learning.
- 14.2. Teachers must ensure that Medium Term Plans meet the needs of the cohort of students they are teaching.
- 14.3. Adaptations must be made if required whilst being taught.
- 14.4. The Medium-Term Plan structure focuses on:
 - Prior assessment knowledge of cohort and individual children e.g., CAT data, AEN
 - Links to the bigger picture -how does this theme of learning fit in coherently with what else the students are learning?
 - Oracy – planned vocabulary, sentence stems, opportunities for collaborative talk
 - Reading – how we will use of reading skills to learn deeply in this subject
 - Core knowledge by the end of the unit of learning
 - Checking for understanding
 - Key Questioning
 - Key Vocabulary

15. Short Term Curriculum Planning

- 15.1. All teachers must complete short term plans based upon their Medium-Term Plan.
- 15.2. Short-term plans provide the following information:
 - learning objectives
 - success criteria
 - differentiation
 - modelling
 - opportunities for checking for understanding
 - progression through the medium term plan.

16. Assessment in the Curriculum

- 16.1. Using assessment efficiently and effectively is the best way to know if a curriculum is changing and empowering our learners.
- 16.2. Well-designed assessments that align with the curriculum help us know if those important changes to students are beginning to happen and if they are embedded. (See Appendix 2)
- 16.3. Assessment should make students successful learners.
- 16.4. Assessments Identify a student's stage of development and achievement against age related expectations.
- 16.5. Assessments develop each student wider learning skills and behaviours in order for them to achieve deeper learning.
- 16.6. It is a progressive process completed alongside each student. This enables the teacher to collect holistic evidence.
- 16.7. See assessment policy for an outline of formative and summative assessments carried out.

17. The role of pedagogy in underpinning the curriculum.

- 17.1. The pedagogy that underpins the curriculum is grounded in evidence-based research.
- 17.2. Teaching is adapted to meet individual student's specific needs, prior knowledge, and current level of understanding, in relation to desired curriculum goals.
- 17.3. Teachers deliver the curriculum in line with our Teaching and Learning Policy and the Teaching and Learning Checklist. (See Appendix 3) This ensures that the curriculum is challenging, relevant and meets the needs of each learner.

18. Personalised learning and Inclusion

- 18.1. Teachers set high expectations for every student.
- 18.2. Students who enter at below average levels of attainment, will be supported to narrow the gap so they can access, and be successful in our curriculum.
- 18.3. Teachers plan stretching work for pupils whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard.
- 18.4. They have an even greater obligation to plan lessons for students who have low levels of prior attainment.
- 18.5. Teachers use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious.
- 18.6. The curriculum in GNS is designed to provide access and opportunity for all students who attend the school.
- 18.7. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so in consultation with the students' parents.
- 18.8. If a student has a special educational need or disability, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs.
- 18.9. In most instances, if a concern arises suggesting that a student may have barriers to learning the teacher is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet these needs within the normal class organisation.
- 18.10. Where needed, effective high-quality interventions are successfully implemented, and any gaps in knowledge are quickly addressed to ensure every child can succeed.
- 18.11. High levels of challenge should be heard, seen and modelled around the school.
- 18.12. Where needed, appropriate support will be given in order that all students are fully prepared for their next steps.

19. Moderation and Evaluation

- 19.1. The Leadership team and subject leaders conduct learning walks throughout the year to ensure there is a broad and balanced curriculum being delivered to the children.
- 19.2. Book looks are also carried out to ensure clear progression is evident in books.
- 19.3. They ensure that clear learning intentions are identified in plans and that children receive consistent and developmental feedback on their work in line with the school's marking policy.
- 19.4. Subject leaders monitor the way in which resources are stored and manage.

- 19.5. Standardisation across the department occurs prior to the Medium-Term Plan being taught to agree / discuss 'expected' and 'exceeding' attainment.
- 19.6. Post assessments, departments moderate together.
- 19.7. Students receive feedback that clearly outlines areas for development and next steps.
- 19.8. Students will then have the opportunity to refine and improve work.

20. Home Learning

- 20.1. Home learning enables provides a range of skills across all areas of the curriculum in new and different contexts.
- 20.2. It is giving an opportunity for:
 - deliberate practice
 - Embedding key knowledge and skills
 - Flipping the learning with pre-curricular tasks.
 - Engage in the curriculum outside of the school setting.
 - Revision for exams
- 20.3. Relevant and appropriately challenging home and project-based learning must be provided for all students, with appropriate time given for students to complete the tasks set. (See appendix 4)

21. Cultural Sensitivity and withdrawal from curriculum

- 21.1. KHDA Compliance: The school ensures full compliance with UAE Ministry of Education Curriculum expectations. This includes:
 - Providing the required numbers of teaching hours for Arabic, Islamic Studies and Social Studies and the correct alignment of course materials and year groups.
- 21.2. The School believes that it is important that pupils participate in all aspects of the formal and informal curriculum.
- 21.3. Teachers are sensitive to the cultural and religious traditions of its students and parent community.
- 21.4. Topics such as Sex Education, Reproduction and content across the curriculum are dealt with sensitively and resources are quality assured carefully.
- 21.5. Teachers communicate with parents in relation to potentially sensitive topics and provide opportunities to withdraw from relevant lessons
- 21.6. Parents and carers may ask that a pupil should be wholly or partly withdrawn from Music and topics related to Sex and Relationships Education.
- 21.7. Parents wishing to do so should contact the Head of School to discuss this request as the School remains responsible for supervision and for ensuring that the request does not impact on a child's attendance at school.

Appendix 1: GNS Curriculum Overview

FS and Primary

Subject	FS1	FS2	Subject	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	YR 6
ENC	9	13	English	5	5	6	6	6	6
Arabic	9	10	Phonics	3	1	0	0	0	0
PE	1	1	Maths	5	5	5	5	5	5
Islamic	1	1	Science	2	2	2	2	2	2
	20	25	Art/Hums	1	1	1	1	1	1
			Music	1	1	1	1	1	1
			Drama	0	0	0	0	0	0
			PE	2	2	2	2	2	2
			Arabic	4	4	4	4	4	4
			Islamic	2	2	2	2	2	2
			Social Studies	0	1	1	1	1	1
			Moral Education	0	1	1	1	1	1
				25	25	25	25	25	25

Foundation Stage Prime and Specific Areas of Coverage

Prime Areas of Learning			
Communication and Language	Physical Development		Personal, Social and Emotional Development
Specific areas of learning.			
Literacy	Mathematics	Knowledge & understanding of the world	Expressive Arts and design.

Secondary

Key Stage 3 - Boys			
Subject	Yr 7	Yr 8	YR 9
English	4	5	5
Maths	4	4	4
Science	4	4	4
Arabic	4	3	3
Islamic	2	2	2
Social Studies	1	1	1
Moral Education	1	1	1
Humanities	2	2	2
Art/DT	1	1	1
Music/Drama	1	1	1
Computer Sci	1	1	1
PE	2	2	2
Spanish	1	1	1
	28	28	28

Key Stage 4 - Boys		
Subject	Year 10	Year 11
English *	5	5
Maths	4	5
Science	5	5
Arabic	3	3
Islamic	2	2
Social Studies	1	0
Moral Education *	1	1
Option 1: ICT/AD	3	3
Option 2: Business/Food	3	3
PE	1	1
	28	28

Key Stage 3 - Girls			
Subject	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9
English	4	5	5
Maths	4	4	4
Science	4	4	4
Arabic	4	3	3
Islamic	2	2	2
Social Studies	1	1	1
Moral Education	1	1	1
Humanities	2	2	2
Art/DT	1	1	1
Music/Drama	1	1	1
Computer Sci	1	1	1
PE	2	2	2
Spanish	1	1	1
	28	28	28

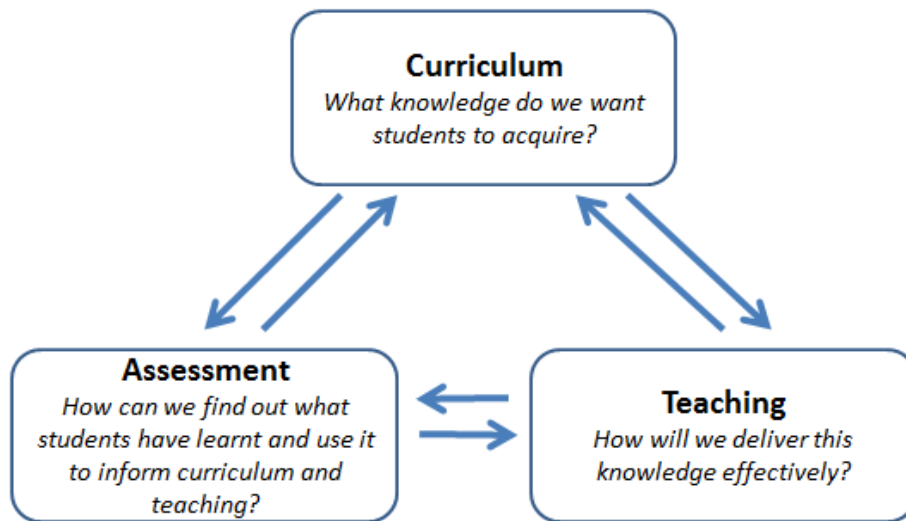
Key Stage 4 - Girls		
Subject	Yr 10	Yr 11
English *	5	5
Maths	4	5
Science	5	5
Arabic	3	3
Islamic	2	2
Social Studies	1	0
Moral Education *	1	1
Option 1: Business/AD/Geography	3	3
Option 2: ICT/Food/History	3	3
PE	1	1
	28	28

Post-16

Key Stage 5 - Boys	
Subject	Lessons
A Level (up to 3): Business/ICT/Maths	18
Arabic	3
Islamic	2
PE	1
IELTS	2
Community Leadership Project	1
Moral Ed	1

Key Stage 5 - Girls	
Subject	Lessons
A Level (up to 4): English/Business/ICT/Maths/Psychology Biology/Chemistry/History	20
Arabic	3
Islamic	2
PE	1
IELTS	0
Community Leadership Project	1
Moral Ed	1
Directed Study	
	28

Appendix 2: Curriculum and Assessment Cycle



Appendix 3. GNS Teaching and Learning Checklist

Learning Objectives	1. Appropriately challenging learning objectives are based on the relevant curriculum standards and students' needs. Learning objectives and success criteria are sharply focused and precise.
Assessment Data	2. Teachers use a wide range of assessment data, including CATS assessments, Reading Ages and SEND data to plan a range of activities to support and challenge in students' learning.
Meeting Needs	3. Teachers have high expectations of all students and provide appropriate levels of challenge in all learning activities. Students are able to access the knowledge, skills and understanding being taught through a wide range of strategies which may include (visual cues, thinking time...)
Varied Resources	4. Teachers use a wide range of resources, including (but not solely) ICT resources, to engage students and accelerate progress.
Explaining and modelling	5. Teachers use their subject knowledge to explain tasks and concepts clearly and model learning effectively.
Checking Understanding	6. Teachers use a range of strategies to check the understanding of pupils, both in relation to tasks set and the knowledge, skills and understanding being taught.
No-Hands Questioning	7. Teachers use no-hands questioning regularly to encourage participation and check the understanding of all students.
Questioning to extend	8. Teachers extend and stretch students through questioning techniques such as Pose-Pause-Pounce-Bounce.
Talking for Learning	9. Teachers provide students with regular opportunities to talk about their learning. - Teachers insist that students speak in clear, correct language and reinforce the need for students to answer in complete sentences and extend their answers where appropriate. Teachers provide structures and support to help students achieve this. - Students only speak in the language of instruction of the subject during the lesson.
Independent and Active	10. Pupils are active learners in lessons. Teachers plan varied activities to develop pupils' independence and help students do more of the cognitive work.
Collaborative Learning	11. Teachers provide students with the structures to work effectively in groups and ensure that all students are participating and learning from the activity.
Making Connections	12. Teachers check for understanding and ensure that students are able to make connections between the learning in the lesson and their learning in other subjects and in the world outside of school.
Reading	13. Teachers support students to develop their reading skills. - Key vocabulary is taught explicitly. Teachers ensure that key vocabulary is displayed prominently and re-visited regularly to support students' learning. - Teachers use a range of strategies to support students develop their comprehension skills, including through skimming, scanning and groupwork.
Writing	14. Teachers support students to produce high quality written work. - Teachers ensure that students maintain the highest standards of presentation in their written work. - Scaffolding and support is provided where appropriate to enable students to produce extended writing whilst still maintaining challenge in their learning.
Progress	15. Teachers track the progress of students towards their targets in lessons and over time and ensure that intervention is put in place swiftly to ensure that students make expected and better progress.

Appendix 4: Primary Home Learning

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
ENC Reading	<p>Sunday – New books Thursday – Books collected 10 minutes a day, minimum three times a week.</p>					
ENC Spelling	<p>Wednesday Spelling Test Thursday New Spellings Two spellings a day</p>					
ENC Writing					<p>Thursday – every fortnight set. 30 minutes a week Returned the following Thursday.</p>	
Maths	<p>Maths Seeds updated every Monday. Work to be completed for Sunday 10 minutes a day, 3 times a week.</p>		<p>Mathletics Updated every Monday work to be completed for Sunday 15 minutes a day, minimum three times a week.</p>			
Science	<p>Optional Termly Project to be completed. Flexible deadline</p>				<p>Optional Half -Termly Project. Flexible deadline</p>	
Arabic Reading	<p>Assignment task through E-platform <i>Kutubee</i> every Thursday. Deadline Wednesday. 10 minutes a day, minimum three times a week.</p>					
Arabic Spelling	<p>Spelling Test during <i>Ithra</i> lessons. New spellings given the same lesson. Two spellings a day</p>					
Arabic Writing	<p>Assignment task through E-platform Bravo-Bravo And 1 writing work sheet every Thursday to be completed by Wednesday. 30 minutes a week</p>					
Islamic	<p>Islamic A: Quran and Hadeeth memorisation (10 minutes a day), Reading Islamic stories homework. Islamic B: Practising reciting the required Quran verses (10 minutes a day) set and due in for the last timetabled lesson of the week.</p>					
U.A.E. SS	<p>Sent Thursday due in on timetabled lesson. Work sheet 15 minutes. Education Games 15 minutes.</p>					

