Learning Environment Policy

Vision: Grow - Flourish - Succeed
Mission: Together we inspire creative, mindful learners who value diversity, support one another and strive for success.

1. Introduction

At GEMS Founders School Dubai (GFS), we value the importance of a rich, vibrant and welcoming Learning Environment that can be used as a learning tool and also as a way of engaging students and building our school community.

2. Purpose of policy

This policy acts as a guide to developing the Learning Environment to ensure a shared understanding and consistency of approach throughout the whole school. We want to place a strong emphasis on the sense of ownership from the students, as well as celebrating their work.

3. Aims and objectives

The main aim is to ensure that we create safe learning environments that contribute to the learning process, and are welcoming for students and visitors.

4. Learning and Teaching style

All classroom environments should be safe and provide the following at an age - appropriate level for the students using the room:

Health and Safety

- Fire evacuation procedure should be clearly displayed by the classroom door
- Fire exits should be kept clear at all times
- Windows should be kept clear
- Lock down blinds should be fully up, unless in a lock down situation
- Classroom should be kept at a comfortable temperature
- Corridors should be kept clear to ensure free movement
- Mugs with a sealed lid must be used for hot drinks
- Students should bring their own water bottles which they can access throughout the day
- When in the outside learning environment caps/hats should be worn and sunscreen is recommended
- Cables and wires should be stored in a way that reduces the risk of any accident
- Extension cables and any additional electrical equipment is not permitted without prior approval from the HSE committee
- Any corridor displays must not block CCTV or obstruct evacuation routes
- Displays must not be attached to the ceilings. Only hooks provided by Operations can be used
- Only furniture and equipment purchased through a GEMS approved teaching aids provider is permitted in the school.

Teaching and Learning: Classroom Displays

- Students should be involved wherever possible in classroom organisation. Themes and displays should be relevant to the current topics
- Students' work should be celebrated and displayed on walls and display boards. This should be work that is marked if being used as exemplary, and work that the students and teachers are proud of
- Working walls should be used wherever necessary. The focus is to be used as a teaching tool and should be adapted to your lesson/topic focus
- Names should be clearly printed on the students' work
- Use clear labelling on displays e.g. clear title, subheadings, questions and key learning words
- Hanging displays are allowed, but only after taking advice from the Manager of School Operations (MSO)
- Event boards should be displayed around the school to communicate what is happening in the school community
- Behaviour reward systems should be clear for all to see
- Staffroom should be equipped with a staff noticeboard where communication can take place throughout the day
- You may use:
    - On windows and noticeboards: Bluetack (but do not let it go hard). No Sellotape, glue, double-sided tape. Staples on noticeboards only, pins are not permitted in student areas.
    - Nothing can be placed on ceilings, walls or IT equipment

** For further clarification on Displays, go to our Display Policy.*

The Classroom and School Environment

- Resources need to be clearly labelled
- Where possible, a range of different languages should be used when displaying key words, etc.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants should be mindful and share resources wherever possible
- Class policies and agreements/ contracts should be displayed
- Every primary and language classroom should have a class library/book corner
- The GFS vision should be displayed in the school reception and throughout the school
- At all times, classes should be left in a fit state and be ready to welcome visitors
- All personal items should be labelled with the individual's name
- Notice boards should be kept up to date
- All teachers should have access to ICT support to ensure problems do not impact on teaching
- All teachers are welcome to play music to develop and enhance their learning environment (However, a lower volume should be considered during Ramadan)
- No naked flames, heat sources, candles, or incense

5. Curriculum Planning

The Learning Environment should be referred to in planning documentation across the range of subjects as a tool to support teaching and learning, so that students take ownership of their own learning within the school.

6. Foundation Stage

The Learning Environment in the Foundation Stage should be fluid with stations set up around the classroom and the outside area to support pupil-led learning.

7. The Contribution of the Learning Environment to Teaching in Other Curriculum Areas

a. **English -** All primary classes must have an English display, e.g. celebrating the students' writing, working walls, etc.
Fixed displays could include, the alphabet, phonics, Reading and Writing rainbows, etc. (See the display and English policy for more detail).
Students should be encouraged to be independent learners, e.g. knowing where to find and use the dictionaries/thesauri in their classroom.
In secondary classes, key vocabulary, knowledge and skills in relation to the curriculum should be displayed to engage students.

b. **Mathematics -** All primary classes should have a Maths display, e.g. number lines, hundred squares, multiplication grids to 144, etc. (See the display and Maths policy for more detail). Students should have easy access to mathematical apparatus to support them with their learning, e.g. unifix, plastic coins, clocks, rulers, etc.
In secondary maths classes, key concepts and language should be displayed to engage and support students.

c. **Information and communication technology (ICT) -** All classrooms will be fitted with an Interactive Whiteboard (IWB). ICT will enhance the Learning Environment in the classroom, e.g. the use of iPads, QR codes etc.

d. **Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and citizenship -** All classrooms will display guidelines on using the internet safely, e.g. to protect against cyber bullying and how to stay safe; self-esteem building displays will be seen around the school. As a mindful school, we wish to create a positive learning environment.

e. **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development -** Displays need to be culturally sensitive eg: Mindful of Islamic values eg: appropriately clothed people e.g.: no bikinis, low cut tops, short skirts, shirtless men, etc. No pictures of pigs, religion, etc.

f. **Humanities -** Any maps or atlases should be culturally and politically sensitive to the U.A.E.

8. Inclusion including reference to SENDo, EAL, G&T

- The Learning Environment should be inclusive and adapted to all learners, e.g. interactive displays should be height appropriate. With the support of the Inclusion Team, class teachers will need to ensure that their learning environment is accessible for all learners. For instance, where there are tools and aids to support learners with additional needs these are used, e.g. wobble chairs for dyspraxic learners, appropriate coloured overlays for dyslexic learners, pencil grips for students with fine motor skill difficulties, etc.

- For ELL learners, displays must be as visual as possible and where possible, key vocabulary displayed in their home language. Where possible, bilingual dictionaries should be made available in classrooms or in the school library

- Teachers should be mindful of interactive extension tasks or challenges for all pupils

9. Equal Opportunities

The school recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve, a diverse school community which includes people from differing backgrounds, with different skills and abilities. The school will take positive steps, through its governing body, managers and other employees, to create a school culture in which people can feel confident of 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. The school is committed to the elimination of unlawful discrimination and to the promotion of good relations between all.

10. Parental involvement

Where possible, parents should be encouraged to support with the learning environment. We welcome parents to school who can support the class teachers with developing their classroom learning environment and corridors.

11. Assessment and recording

A member of the extended leadership team, SLT or the MSO will be responsible for checking that the Learning Environment is both safe and a vibrant learning space. This will be carried out through regular Learning Walks around the school. Class teachers and TAs should be encouraged to take photos of their own classroom displays as part of their own professional development. Good practice should be shared, e.g. meetings held in classrooms where there are excellent examples of a stimulating learning environment.

12. Resourcing

Resourcing for the learning environment, e.g. backing paper, coloured paper, etc. should be found in the school art store room. If needed, orders should be placed with the Store Keeper. Anything needed which is above and beyond the regular items can only be ordered on the approval of a member of the SLT.

13. Roles and responsibilities

a. **Local Advisory Board/GEMS** - To supply key company, display items, e.g. Core Values, images of the Sheikhs, marketing materials, etc. To ensure that the learning environment meets the high standards set by GEMS.

b. **Senior Leadership Team** - Through regular learning walks, all members of the SLT and middle leaders will support teachers with constructive feedback. The SLT will ensure consistency of best practice across the school. The SLT will ensure that shared learning spaces around the school, e.g. corridors, halls, etc. are a shared responsibility for all staff members.

c. **Extended and Middle Leadership Teams** – Extended and middle leaders will ensure that they carry out regular Learning Walks to ensure that their subject is fairly represented in all the classrooms/corridors and also that there is monitoring of progression throughout the school in their subject. Where possible, subject leaders will supply the class teachers with standardised learning resources to display in their classrooms.

d. **Teachers** - Teachers need to ensure that their Learning Environments are positive, informative, inspirational, current, interactive and vibrant. They need to make sure that the learning environment is a happy space for all learners where their work is celebrated.

14. Monitoring and review

This policy has been discussed and agreed by the GEMS Founders School, Dubai leadership teams for implementation.

Signed ..... Date .....11 August 2026.....
Whole School Vice Principal

Signed ..... Date .....11 August 2026.....
Associate Principal

Signed ..... Date .....11 August 2026.....
Executive Principal/CEO/Executive Vice President of Education

Next policy review date:
August 2027