

GFM School Development Plan Update



Parental Update

December 2024



The
GFM
Way

GEMS

مدرسة جيمس فاوندرز (المزهر)

Founders School

AL MIZHAR

A culture of continuous sustainable improvement

#WeAreGFM

Helping each other to Grow.

Helping each other to Flourish.

Help cultivate an ethos of Mindfulness.

GEMS Founders School Al Mizhar

<https://www.gemsfoundersschool-mizhar.com/en/>





School Development Plan, an update on GFM's key priorities

December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Our vision at GFM is to help our *people to Grow, Flourish and be Mindful*. Our vision is enacted in line with our core pillars of **#TheGFMWay**:

- *Helping each other to Grow*
- *Helping each other to Flourish*
- *Cultivating an ethos of Mindfulness*

#TheGFMWay defines how we do things here at GFM. We are very clear about our vision of the culture and character that we expect from our students and staff alike, and this approach underpins everything that we do. Every member of the GFM community therefore has a responsibility to uphold, live, role model and demonstrate the following:



A culture of continuous sustainable improvement

Help each other to Grow

High expectations, aspirations, excellence and a belief that all can succeed

Innovation & risk taking

Lead by example



The GFM Way

Help cultivate an ethos of Mindfulness

Act to support each other to be successful

Collaborate and work together in teams

Trusting, caring & honest relationships

Help each other to Flourish

Demonstrate respect for ourselves and every other member of the GFM community,

Safe and inspiring learning environment

Celebrate equality, diversity and inclusion

#TheGFMWay is a critical strategic priority as to build a culture of sustainable school improvement. In the spirit of **#TheGFMWay**, I am writing to parents (with termly updates to follow) to share our school action plan in a clear, understandable layperson's language.



What you see in the pages which follow are three areas of priority for the academic year:

- **Area of Improvement 1:** Embed recent improvements in Islamic Education and Arabic so that standards of teaching, learning and achievement are at least good across all phases.
- **Area of Improvement 2:** Develop further differentiated planning of learning to personalise provision more effectively for individual students in lessons – most notably for higher attainers.
- **Area of Improvement 3:** Improve further students' learning skills to optimise their achievements.

We remain firmly committed to ensuring that progress in the areas of improvement is clear for all to see. I encourage you to read this document carefully in order to fully appreciate the work which is going on in school, and to contact us if you require any further information. Our aim is now to start the journey in becoming an 'Outstanding' high performing school. We look forward to working with you closely during the years to come as we continue our mission in 'creating tomorrow's successful and caring citizens today'.

Best wishes

Akram Tarik

Principal / CEO



1. **Area of Improvement 1:** *Embed recent improvements in Islamic Education and Arabic so that standards of teaching, learning and achievement are at least good across all phases.*

Why is this an area of priority?

- *Teaching and learning in Arabic A/B and Islamic studies have undergone significant improvements, underscoring the importance of maintaining high standards of excellence across all lessons at GFM.*
- *The focus is now to embed these recent improvements as a continued fundamental objective to ensure that every aspect of the curriculum and teaching meets the needs of all learners.*
- *The focus on Arabic B standards is of significance importance, in ensuring the learning experience and educational outcomes for students improve.*

What are we doing?

- We will continue to develop the GEMS Arabic Literacy framework in FS ensuring a focus on speaking and reading and the development of extended sentences for our EYFS children.
- We will increase Islamic values throughout the curriculum and in all phases of the school.
- Teachers are receiving additional professional development on the four skills of Arabic Language, personalisation of learning and how to further develop student research skills within lessons and in the wider curriculum.
- The Arabic / Islamic Department will work closer with the English team, as to enhance the standards of teaching in Islamic Education and Arabic.

Progress to date:

Actions and Intentions	October	December Update
We will continue to develop the GEMS Arabic Literacy framework in FS ensuring a focus on speaking and reading and the development of extended sentences for our EYFS children	Actions completed and now monitoring impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increasing proportion of Arabic and Islamic observations are rated Good or better, with an increasing proportion of students making progress from their starting points. • Teachers have participated in peer observations, focusing on refining teaching strategies and enhancing classroom practices. • Personalised Teacher Professional Development and Training and one-on-one support have significantly improved the quality of teaching and learning within the Arabic and Islamic department. • Formal observations indicate a growing percentage of lessons achieving a good or better rating • A review of student notebooks revealed strong progress, with many displaying excellent presentation, meeting expectations for grammar and spelling corrections, and showcasing effective marking and feedback practices.
We will increase Islamic values throughout the curriculum and in all phases of the school.		
Teachers are receiving additional professional development on the four skills of Arabic Language, personalisation of learning and how to further develop student research skills within lessons and in the wider curriculum.		
The Arabic / Islamic Department will work closer with the English team, as to enhance the standards of teaching in Islamic Education and Arabic.		



How you can support:

- Please attend any workshops / parent meetings as arranged by the Arabic and Islamic Team
- Read our weekly newsletters and discuss the content with your children.
- Encourage daily practice of Arabic language skills and Islamic teachings at home to reinforce classroom learning.
- Encourage your child to participate, work independently and respond to the teacher requirements within the newsletters.
- Engage with the school community and participate in cultural and religious events to deepen understanding and appreciation.
- Provide access to supplementary resources, such as books, educational apps, and online courses, to support and enhance their learning journey.
- Please continue to give us your feedback on how things are going by completing our live ongoing survey: <https://forms.office.com/r/UvBf1kJ1Mi>



2. Area of Improvement 2: *Develop further differentiated planning of learning to personalise provision more effectively for individual students in lessons – most notably for higher attainers.*

Why is this an area of priority?

- Learning tasks are not always differentiated enough to ensure sufficient challenge, especially for higher attaining students.
- Teachers can use assessment information further to track students' progress and personalise learning tasks.

What are we doing?

- Teachers will receive additional support and training from FS – Year 13 on planning, personalisation and the use of assessment data. This will focus on adaptive teaching and learning strategies.
- Schemes of learning will be reviewed and updated.
- The school will start tracking and checking the quality of work in books of High Ability students to ensure they are being challenged in their learning.
- We will introduce further Digital and AI Tools to provide all students with challenging tasks and research-oriented opportunities.
- Increase our BYOD Chromebook strategy to even more students to support the use of adaptive learning software.

Progress to date:

Actions and Intentions	October	December Update
Teachers will receive additional support and training from FS – Year 13 on planning, personalisation and the use of assessment data. This will focus on adaptive teaching and learning strategies.	Most actions are completed and/or on track	• Teachers have received additional Professional Development on personalisation, differentiation, and data-driven strategies. Weekly checks of planning and peer observations ensure continuous improvement, with learning walks showing increased use of talk partners and cold calling.
Schemes of learning will be reviewed and updated.		• Observations and book checks indicate strong progress, especially among High Achievers (HA) and students of determination.
The school will start tracking and checking the quality of work in books of High Ability students to ensure they are being challenged in their learning.		• Students access adaptive homework via Century, supported by AI tools like Perplexity.AI for research and challenge activities. Sixth Form students use innovation lab resources for research, with BTEC teachers leveraging digital tools effectively.
We will introduce further Digital and AI Tools to provide all students with challenging tasks and research-oriented opportunities.		• Star reading assessments set personalised reading targets, and Reading Diplomas are driving engagement in KS3 and KS4.
Increase our BYOD Chromebook strategy to even more students to support the use of adaptive learning software.		• Sixth Form mentors provide 1:1 support for students with reading deficits,



How you can support:

- Please attend any workshops / parent meetings as arranged by the school.
- Read our weekly newsletters and discuss the content with your children. Parents should routinely check Evidence Me, SeeSaw and Google Classroom apps
- Please feel free to contact your child's teacher or Head of Inclusion to design a personalised learning plan that aligns with your child's interests and abilities, ensuring they are both challenged and supported.
- Encourage your child to read for pleasure.
- Foster a home environment that encourages curiosity and independent learning, providing resources and opportunities for exploration beyond the school curriculum.
- Encourage your child to participate, work independently and respond to the teacher requirements within the newsletters.
- Celebrate achievements and progress in personalised areas of learning to motivate continued growth and development, recognising both academic and creative accomplishments.
- Provide access to supplementary resources, such as books, educational apps, and online courses, to support and enhance their learning journey.
- Please continue to give us your feedback on how things are going by completing our live ongoing survey: <https://forms.office.com/r/UvBf1kJ1Mi>



3. Area of Improvement 3: *Improve further students' learning skills to optimise their achievements.*

Why is this an area of priority?

- We want our students to have further routine opportunities for group / collaborative practice, that leads to meaningful discussion and thinking.
- We want our students to develop skills further to use technology to support their learning.
- We want to reduce any passive engagement of some students and develop independent learning skills.

What are we doing?

- Provide more opportunities for students to undertake independent research.
- To improve teachers' questioning skills so that they can lead and manage more perceptive discussions and reflection in lessons.
- To ensure teachers always provide comprehensive and diagnostic feedback to students about their learning – both orally and when marking their work

Progress to date:

Actions and Intentions	October	December Update
Provide more opportunities for students to undertake independent research.	In Progress and under review	A 25-day action plan by Heads of Year focuses on SMART targets, such as developing independence in tasks like wearing aprons and accessing provisions, alongside tracking progress and researching personalized learning based on children's interests.
To improve teachers' questioning skills so that they can lead and manage more perceptive discussions and reflection in lessons.		Teachers attended targeted CPD on differentiation, cold calling, and questioning techniques like "Pose, Pause, Bounce, Pounce." Learning walks show high implementation rates, with most teachers effectively using cold calling and almost all incorporating questioning strategies into lessons.
To ensure teachers always provide comprehensive and diagnostic feedback to students about their learning – both orally and when marking their work		<p>Personalised Learning for High Achievers: Independent research was introduced for High Attainers/G&T students as part of seating plan annotations.</p> <p>Self and peer assessment are widely practiced, especially in Maths. Book looks show strong use of purple pen for feedback and effective self-assessment. Visualisers are now commonly used for live marking and modeling work.</p> <p>Chromebook usage have increased across the school. Staff have been trained on setting Mode A homework using Century Tech, while KS3 students use the GFM Prompt Engineering Guide for research projects.</p> <p>Reflective logs have been introduced for all Sixth Form students help track effort and set targets to support high attainment. Heads of Departments have been trained to embed the VESPA concept into the KS5 curriculum.</p>



How you can support:

- Please attend any workshops / parent meetings as arranged by the school.
- Read our weekly newsletters and discuss the content with your children. Parents should routinely check Evidence Me, SeeSaw and Google Classroom apps.
- Support your child's critical thinking and problem-solving abilities by engaging in discussions and activities that challenge them to think deeply and find solutions independently.
- Encourage your child to read for pleasure.
- Encourage the development of organisational and time management skills by helping them establish a routine and dedicated study space.
- Please continue to give us your feedback on how things are going by completing our live ongoing survey: <https://forms.office.com/r/UvBf1kJ1Mi>



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