

## Learning Culture Policy

### 1. Introduction

At GEMS Founders School - Dubai South (GFD) we are a mindful school who puts wellbeing first. We want our students to be honest, respectful and hard-working individuals who take responsibility for their own actions, learning and achievements. We aim to create a culture which ensures all aspects of our provision supports learning. This policy describes the GFD approach to learning culture and the importance of responding well to others.

The key principles are:

- We recognise our emotions, use strategies to moderate our response to them and reach out for support when needed
- We accept that we are always developing and that everybody will make mistakes. We commit to working to rectify mistakes
- We all have a voice and we deserve to feel heard
- We feel a sense of belonging at GFD and we feel pride in our school community
- We are open to new learning opportunities and embrace challenges
- We respect our school and the environment we occupy

The key student expectations are:

- To follow adult instructions the **first time, every time**
- To use words and actions that **help** and don't hurt
- To **respect** other people and their property
- To move **safely and sensibly** around the school

### 2. Purpose of policy

The Learning Culture Policy is to ensure that all members of our school community feel safe, feel understood and feel a sense of belonging. We understand the importance of building positive relationships to improve support learning.

### 3. Aims and objectives

The expectation at GFD is that all students, staff and parents behave in a respectful manner. Standards are high and it is everybody's responsibility to remind individuals of our expectations. The main objective of this policy is to ensure the expectations listed below are clear to all.

- Be **respectful** of each other at all times
- Be **polite** and well mannered
- Be **courteous** to each other at all times
- Be **considerate** of each other's feelings
- Be **positive** in supporting friends and colleagues
- Uphold and represent **GFD values** inside and outside school.



## 4. Rewards

At GFD, we believe that rewarding students is far more effective than punitive strategies. These are not restricted to class activities. Rewards are a feature in each part of the school and are adapted to ensure the correct age appropriateness.

### *Discovery Points*

#### EYFS

Children will receive **Discovery Points** for demonstrating excellence attitudes and through their learning. They will receive a sticker (if relevant) to wear and share with their parents. Teachers will transfer **Discovery Points** to GO4Schools each week.

#### Key Stage 1 - Key Stage 3

No. of <b>Discovery Points</b>	Reward/Certificate	Presented by
50	Bronze	Class teacher / Form tutor
100	Silver	Class teacher / Form tutor
150	Gold	Class teacher / Form tutor

<b>Flourish Fund</b>	
200	Senior Leadership Team
300	Senior Vice President – Education

- **Discovery Points** will be collated on GO4Schools. Every Friday an announcement will be made informing of the weekly winner.
- **Discovery Points** will also be given during various competitions and co-curricula activities throughout the year. They will also be given on for demonstrating high levels of responsibility on school transport.

## 5. Restorative Practice and Relationships

**Mutual Respect** - At GFD, we believe that everybody deserves respect. When communicating to one another, we are respectful in our volume, tone and speech.

We understand that learning culture is best supported through strong relationships. We aim to follow the Establish-Maintain-Restore (EMR) method when developing and maintaining student-staff relationships.

- **Establish** – Intentional practices to cultivate a positive relationship with each student (i.e., build trust, connection and understanding)
- **Maintain** – Proactive efforts to prevent relationship quality from diminishing over time (i.e., ongoing positive interactions)
- **Restore** – Intentionally repairing harm to the relationship after a negative interaction (i.e., reconnecting with student).

**Conflict resolution** - Restorative practice is a way of working with conflict that puts the focus on repairing the harm that has been done. It is an approach to conflict resolution that includes all parties involved. It requires active listening and restorative questions as communication. A plan of action is created to solve the cause of the conflict and move forward using the restorative practice conversation



scaffold. When necessary, the approach should be adapted to the individual's needs. This could include but is not limited to: pastoral support, welfare or counselling support or a positive report card.

## 6. Proactive strategies

At GFD, we believe that the consistent use of strategies is the most effective way to ensure there is a positive learning culture in school. We ensure that staff are trained to understand the different approaches that students may need based on their stage of development. Their stage of development informs learning strategies to ensure effective relationships are established and maintained across all areas of the school.

## 7. Inclusion including reference to SENDo, EAL and Advanced Learners

We recognise that students of determination may need an individual approach to manage learning. Where consideration for additional support is needed, the Inclusion Team will work alongside the student's teachers and parents to develop a personalised support plan for the individual.

Where a language barrier exists, the inclusion team will support teachers to ensure they can communicate effectively with the student to help them to follow the learning culture policy.

## 8. Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing – Welfare and Counselling Teams

We believe that the learning culture of a school thrives when all members of the school community have access to wellbeing support. The purpose of the welfare and counselling teams at GFD is to implement a welfare strategy which promotes positive mental health and ensures that all stakeholders have equitable access to wellbeing support. The counselling team works alongside the safeguarding leads and welfare team to ensure that individual cases are triaged effectively. Where needed, they offer 1:1 counselling sessions for students across the school. The welfare team provide mental health first aid support for students as and when needed. They offer 1:1 wellbeing sessions with students who have been triaged by the counselling team. Our trained adult mental health first aiders offer support for adults within the school community.

## 9. Strategies to encourage positive attitudes

Concern	Examples	Strategies
Low-level disruption	Shouting out, not listening, not following instructions	A student-teacher conversation to establish clear expectations moving forward. Where there is repeated low-level disruption, teachers should log this. This may result in sanctions.
Lack of accountability	Missing work, lateness, lack of pride in work	A student-teacher conversation to establish why we are all accountable for our own success. Motivate and encourage. This may result in sanctions. For example, reflection time.
Serious incident - Please see section below for more details	Violence, harmful language	Consequences may include suspension or exclusion where necessary. In the occasion of a suspension, on the student's return, a reintegration meeting may be included with their teacher, a relevant pastoral leader and a parent/guardian to develop a reintegration plan to restore positive attitudes.



## **Extreme concerns**

The following are examples of extreme concerns:

- Repeated breaches of the school rules
- Any form of bullying or cyberbullying
- Sexual assault / child on child abuse
- Vandalism
- Theft/selling of items
- Fighting
- Racist or discriminatory language
- Leaving the classroom without permission
- Repeatedly ignoring teacher's (staff members) instructions leading to harm of themselves or others
- Any concern which violates UAE laws

## **Serious Incidents**

Serious incidents will require SLT intervention. Below is a chronology of actions which will be enacted:

- As soon as the incident is witnessed by or reported to a member of staff, that person must inform a member of SLT
- The member of SLT leading the investigation may seek support from a senior colleague and can ask colleagues to assist with the investigation
- The investigation will gather as much information about the incident (e.g what happened, what was said, who witnessed it, times, dates, locations)
- Parents of all children involved are informed before the end of the day that a serious incident has taken place and an investigation is underway
- When the investigation is concluded, parents are invited in for a meeting to discuss the findings
- Any sanctions or disciplinary action is communicated to parents
- Restorative conversations take place
- All serious incidents are logged, with disciplinary actions included

## **Incidents of cyberbullying and inappropriate use of ICT, including social media**

Cyberbullying is defined as bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites. Cyberbullying is not tolerated and will be treated as a serious incident.

Examples of inappropriate use of ICT include:

- Recording a person on a device without consent
- Creating and posting media content which clearly identifies a child in GEMS Founders uniform
- Creating and/or sharing media content which occurred on school grounds
- Accessing illegal online content
- Accessing sexual online content
- Sharing media content which can be harmful or hurtful to others (e.g. airdropping a video or picture)

This is not an exhaustive list and any inappropriate use of ICT may be treated as a serious incident. Staff must report any instances of cyberbullying or inappropriate use of ICT to a senior leader.



## Incidents of racial language

Racial harassment will not be tolerated and must always be reported. At GFD we promote and celebrate diversity. Staff members who witness an incident must inform an SLT member immediately. The school records all racial incidents. Developing appropriate attitudes is supported through the schools' Moral Social Cultural Studies and PSHE curriculum.

## 9. Parental Involvement

We believe fully in working in partnership with parents to ensure our learning culture policy is adhered to by all members of the school community. We take regular feedback from the parent community to ensure we can support students to have a positive and successful experience at GFD.

## 10. Assessment and recording

All **Discovery Points** and concerns must be recorded in GO4Schools and monitored by leaders across school. Relevant leaders should regularly monitor trends and patterns in their areas of the school and act when needed to ensure our learning culture policy is adhered to. While we understand that unpredictable events can happen, we believe in using a range of data to frequently review the learning culture of the school. This includes but is not limited to the following data sets: attendance, punctuality, clinic records, achievement points, concerns, student, parent and teacher voice and observational data.

### Monitoring and review

Signed *Kunningham* ..... Date 17/07/2024  
**Head of Primary**

Signed *C. Seymour* ..... Date: 17/07/2024  
**Teaching and Learning Coach**

Signed *LaRU* ..... Date: 17/07/2024  
**Principal/CEO**

### Next policy review dates:

February 2025

June 2025