



Teaching and Learning Policy

School: GEMS Cambridge International School – Abu Dhabi

Reviewed: September 2025

Next Review: September 2026

1. Rationale and Vision

At GEMS Cambridge International School – Abu Dhabi, we believe that **high-quality teaching is the most powerful lever for improving student outcomes**. Our teaching and learning approach is rooted in research, driven by data, and centered on the needs of every learner.

We aim to develop learners who are:

- Confident and articulate communicators
- Curious, resilient, and independent thinkers
- Respectful, compassionate, and responsible global citizens

This policy outlines the **shared principles and expectations** that underpin teaching and learning across all phases of the school.

2. Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to:

- Ensure **consistency and excellence** in teaching and learning across all phases
 - Provide clarity around **what high-quality teaching looks like** at GEMS CIA
 - Support teachers through **professional development, coaching, and collaboration**
 - Align classroom practice with **ADEK expectations, The Teach Like A GEM framework, and GEMS priorities**
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3. Curriculum Framework

Teaching and learning at GEMS Cambridge International School – Abu Dhabi is underpinned by:

- **The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework (England)** for Foundation Stage
- **The English National Curriculum**, adapted to meet the needs of our international context, for Primary and Secondary
- **Cambridge International examination specifications** (IGCSE, AS and A Level), where applicable, as assessment pathways
- **ADEK National Identity Framework**, embedded across the curriculum
- **Teach Like a GEM (TLAG)** as the school’s shared pedagogical model

The curriculum is:

- Coherent and progressive
- Broad, balanced, and inclusive
- Adapted to meet the needs of all learners, including EAL and SEND students

4. Pedagogical Approach – Teach Like a GEM

Teaching at GEMS CIA is underpinned by **Teach Like a GEM**, which provides a shared language and evidence-informed approach to classroom practice.

All lessons are expected to demonstrate:

4.1 Purposeful Starts

- Effective **Do Now** activities that activate prior knowledge
- Clear routines that maximise learning time

4.2 Clear Learning Outcomes

- One clear, measurable learning outcome
- Outcomes shared and referred to throughout the lesson

4.3 High-Quality Instruction

- Explicit modelling (**I Do**)
- Guided practice (**We Do**)

- Independent application (**You Do**)

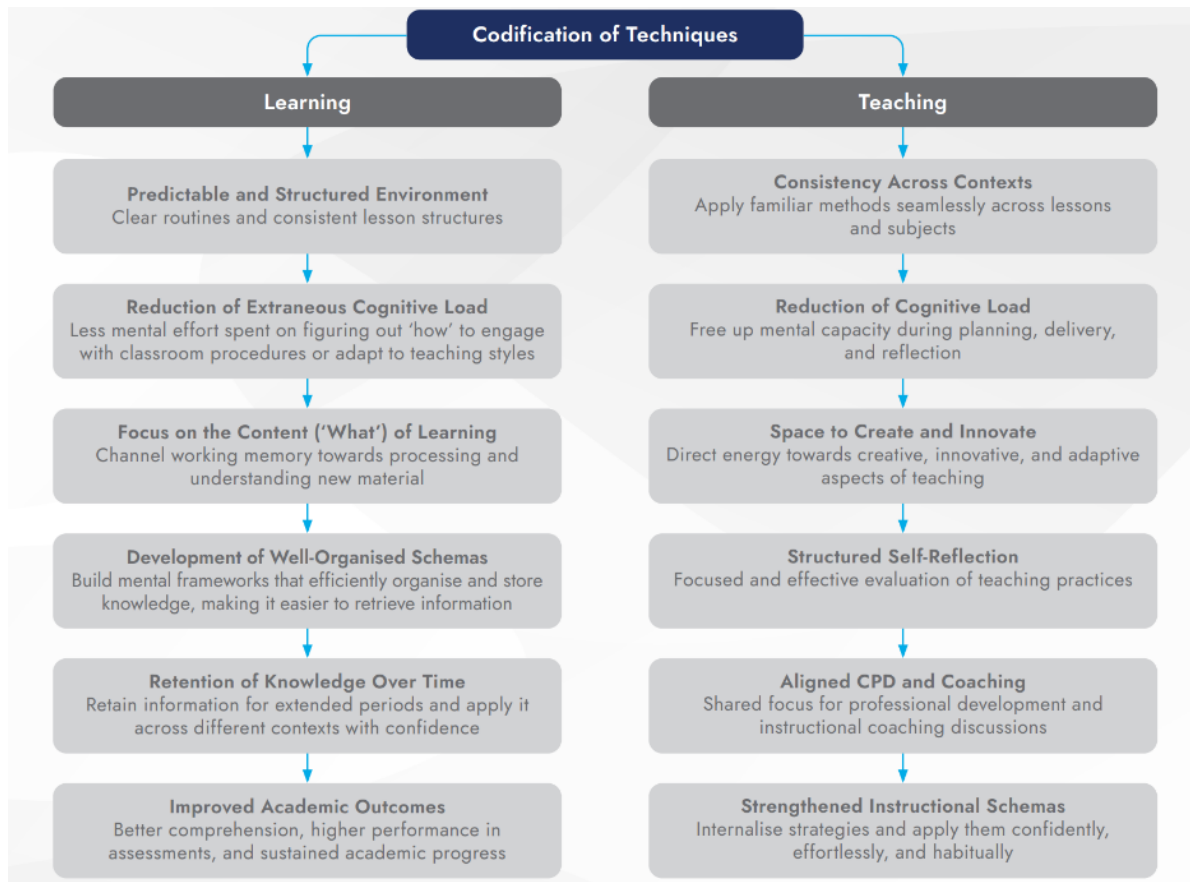
4.4 Checking for Understanding

- Frequent, purposeful checks for understanding
- Responsive teaching based on student feedback

4.5 Challenge and Support

- Appropriate challenge for all learners, including high attainers
- Scaffolding and support that promote independence

The ‘Teach Like a GEM’ playbook is implemented with maximum fidelity across the whole school with a focus on codifying techniques to support and manage the extraneous load of both students and teachers. The rationale for this and process is outlined below:

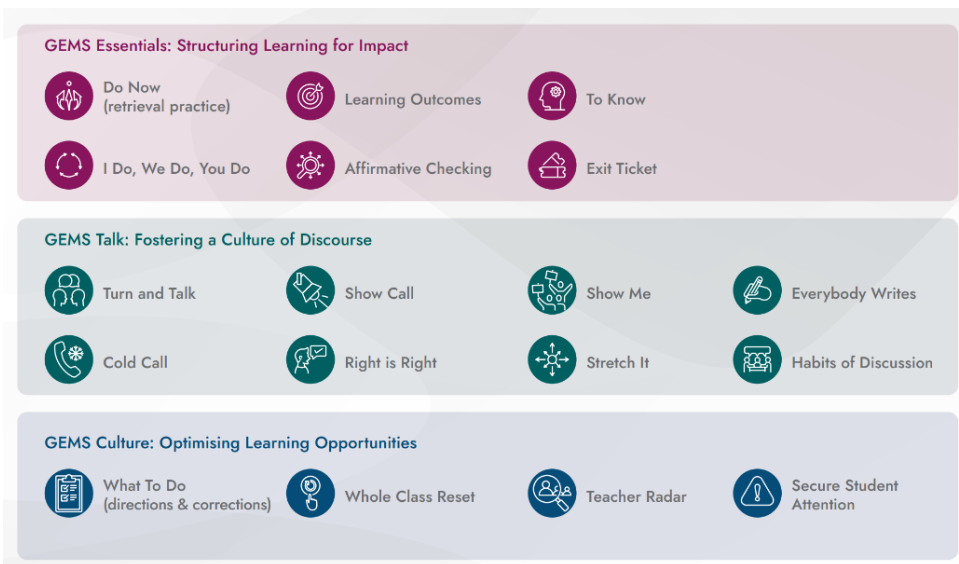


The ‘Teach Like a GEM’ playbook identifies 18 techniques that we encourage our teachers to utilise through the codification of language and deployment of the strategies to support our learners.

These 18 techniques are broken down into 3 categories:

- 6 ‘GEMS Essentials’ which must be present in all lessons
- 8 ‘GEMS Talk’ which promote communication, collaboration, and provide assessment for learning opportunities
- 4 ‘GEMS Culture’ which supports with behaviour for learning, which is complimentary of the ‘Be a GEM’ framework which is also deployed in the school.

An overview of the 18 techniques and their categorisation can be seen below:



5. Teaching and Learning Across Phases

5.1 Foundation Stage

Teaching in the Foundation Stage:

- Is play-based, child-centred, and inquiry-driven
- Promotes independence, curiosity, and social development



- Balances adult-led and child-initiated learning
- Uses continuous provision to deepen learning

5.2 Primary

Teaching in Primary:

- Builds strong foundations in literacy and numeracy
- Encourages collaboration, reasoning, and resilience
- Supports a gradual shift towards learner independence

5.3 Secondary and Sixth Form

Teaching in Secondary and Sixth Form:

- Develops subject mastery and critical thinking
 - Encourages debate, analysis, and academic rigour
 - Prepares students for external examinations and future pathways
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6. Inclusion, EAL, and SEND

GEMS CIA is committed to **inclusive education**.

Teaching and learning:

- Is adapted to meet diverse learning needs
 - Supports EAL learners through targeted strategies and visual scaffolds
 - Promotes high expectations for all learners
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7. Assessment for Learning

Assessment is used to **inform teaching and support progress**.

Teachers will:

- Use formative assessment to guide instruction
- Provide timely, meaningful feedback



- Use summative assessment to track progress and inform planning
- Ensure assessment is fair, accurate, and consistent

8. Professional Development and Collaboration

We believe that **teachers learn best when they learn together.**

Teaching and learning is strengthened through:

- Weekly **Practice Clinics**
- Instructional coaching cycles
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Moderation and collaborative planning

Professional development is aligned to:

- School priorities
- Teaching and learning data
- Individual and phase-specific needs

9. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

Teaching and learning is monitored through:

- Learning walks and lesson observations
- Book looks and environment checks
- Data analysis and progress reviews
- Student voice and parent feedback

Monitoring is:

- Developmental, not punitive
- Focused on impact and improvement
- Used to inform support and professional growth



10. Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers

- Plan and deliver high-quality lessons
- Engage in professional development and coaching
- Use assessment to inform teaching

Middle Leaders

- Monitor and support teaching within their teams
- Lead PLCs and moderation
- Support professional growth

Teaching and Learning Leads

- Drive teaching and learning priorities
- Lead professional development
- Ensure consistency and impact across the school

Senior Leadership Team

- Provide strategic direction
 - Support and challenge teaching and learning
 - Ensure alignment with ADEK and GEMS expectations
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11. Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains:

- Relevant
 - Effective
 - Aligned with inspection frameworks and school priorities
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Approved by: Senior Leadership Team

Date: September 2025
