

أكاديمية جيمس الأمريكية – أبوظبي
GEMS American Academy
ABU DHABI



Elementary Community
Handbook 2013-14

Dear GAA Learning Community,

Welcome to the 2013-2014 school year. Whether you are a parent, a student, or a staff member, we welcome you to our learning community.

Our vision at GEMS American Academy is: *Inspire, Educate, Lead, Innovate*

Our Mission is:

GEMS American Academy provides a rigorous academic program to our international learning community. As a selective international school, our mission is to inspire, educate, lead and innovate. In our GAA learning community we....

- **Inspire** through a well-balanced educational experience that celebrates cultural diversity.
- **Educate** through high academic standards, global values and unique approaches to learning.
- **Lead** through cutting edge learning tools, environments and experiences.
- **Innovate** through creativity, inquiry and a common desire for a better future.

We strive to inspire, educate, lead and innovate within a culture of kindness that promotes success for all.

We have developed this community handbook to help us reach this mission and vision. We hope it is a valuable source of information for all members of our learning community. If you have suggestions for improvement, please let us know.

We look forward to a very successful 2013-2014 school year. Have a great year!

Sincerely,

Dan Keller

Head of School & CEO

Elementary Community Handbook

Welcome to the 2013-2014 school year at GEMS American Academy. With over 65 nationalities, we pride ourselves on being truly international while delivering the best of what American education has to offer through our enriched American curriculum. Since its founding six years ago, both the Academy's reputation of excellence and its student body continue to grow. Our premium international school in the Khalifa City 'A' area of Abu Dhabi provides an exceptional learning environment and is an all-round great place for kids.

Our purpose-built facility is cutting-edge. Complete with the UAE's only in school 3D planetarium, it also houses numerous classrooms, library spaces, specialist teaching spaces, science labs, recording studios, MAC labs, a double gymnasium, fitness center, dance studio, indoor pool, auditorium, soccer pitch, tennis courts, cafeterias, and a parent café. These facilities demonstrate our understanding of the importance of intellectual, physical, and emotional balance in achieving personal well-being. The Academy is forward thinking and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) feature prominently in both the design of our educational environment and teaching and learning in all classrooms. A focus on 21st century skills provides for a powerful authentic learning experience.

The Academy received a judgment of 'outstanding' in our inspection by the Abu Dhabi Education Council. We are accredited by the Council of International Schools and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and will have our International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program verification visit this year. The validation from these agencies, along with student results on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing, demonstrates the value of the overall GAA experience and the quality of teaching and learning at our school.

We thank you for choosing GEMS American Academy as the school for your child and supporting them in achieving their full potential as global citizens and leaders of the future. This year will be full of educational engagements, memories, and friendships that will last a lifetime.

Elementary Community Handbook

We look forward to partnering with you to inspire learning and encourage personal excellence for your child.

Sincerely,

Ben Voborsky

Elementary Principal

GEMS American Academy – Abu Dhabi

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GEMS Core Educational Values

World Citizenship

Our students learn about the world and the people in it from an early age, developing an awareness of different cultures and countries. By exploring the world, they become socially, culturally, economically and environmentally aware and learn about their responsibilities as world citizens. They learn to adopt a global perspective and understand how they can make a difference in the global community.



Universal Values

Our students develop the values, principles and ethics that are respected, admired and accepted in all cultures around the world. Students learn healthy social attitudes and a spirit of humanity, providing them with the ethical foundation and solid social skills to guide them through life.

Leadership Qualities

Our students practice leadership and build the skills of collaboration and communication. Our academic program builds self-confidence through exploration, experimentation, problem-solving and decision-making. Students learn to work well independently and with others and they develop a pre-disposition for action.



Forward Thinking

Our students apply their imagination and creativity when viewing circumstances and offering solutions. Students develop proficiency in the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a powerful learning and communication tool.

IB LEARNER PROFILE

At GAA - Abu Dhabi the IB student strives to be:

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet help to create a better and more peaceful world.

Inquirers:

They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

Knowledgeable:

They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers:

They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators:

They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

Principled:

They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Open-minded:

They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring:

They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

Risk-takers:

They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced:

They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective:

They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

OVERVIEW OF GAA ABU DHABI

Our vision at GEMS American Academy is: *Inspire, Educate, Lead, Innovate*

Our Mission is:

GEMS American Academy provides a rigorous academic program to our international learning community. As a selective international school, our mission is to inspire, educate, lead and innovate. In our GAA learning community we....

- ***Inspire*** through a well-balanced educational experience that celebrates cultural diversity.
- ***Educate*** through high academic standards, global values and unique approaches to learning.
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- ***Innovate*** through creativity, inquiry and a common desire for a better future.

We strive to inspire, educate, lead and innovate within a culture of kindness that promotes success for all.

We offer:

- an American-based curriculum for students aged 3 to 11 within an international context

The success of our program is based on:

- teamwork, collaboration and the broad participation of our community
- the pool of diverse ideas, experiences and values which our community offers
- a thorough awareness of educational ‘best practices’ throughout the world
- continuous learning and professional development

We provide:

- each student with the opportunity and support to reach their full potential
- A kind environment, built on mutual respect and dignified treatment, that encourages self-confidence and the embracing of others whose ideas and experiences differ.

We believe that:

- each student is a unique individual with equal potential to make a positive contribution to our school community
- it is important to instill an enthusiasm for life-long learning in each student along with the skills and dispositions necessary to prepare them for the challenges and changes which will be faced in their future
- our students must develop the skills and understandings that will enable them to become responsible, contributing citizens of the global community
- Learning and the GAA experience are improved when parents are actively engaged in the learning of their child/children.

We support our philosophy through:

- high standards of achievement and performance
- a developmental, student-centered approach to teaching
- a comprehensive and varied curriculum aimed at the acquisition of transferable skills and enduring understandings
- the development of independent learning skills and self-reflection in the learning process

- constructive feedback for learning
- nurturing a strong sense of self-esteem, personal integrity and a respectful, caring attitude toward others
- developing an understanding of, appreciation for, and willingness to accept people whose ideas and experiences differ from our own
- facing problems within a framework of fairness and shared values
- nurturing a sense of responsibility for our environment

Description of the Kindergarten and Elementary School:

All classes follow a full day program, although there is a half day option available to KG3 students. KG3 students have a “quiet time” after lunch. Target class sizes are 20 students in KG3 and 25 students in KG4 to Grade 5. Each class up to Grade 2 benefits from both a teacher and a teaching assistant (TA), and Grades 3 – 5 each share teaching assistants (TA) across the grade level.

In KG3, students attend Movement and Music classes, which are taught with the assistance of a specialist teacher. Otherwise the children stay with their class teacher and TA throughout the instructional day. Starting in KG4, students attend specialist classes in Arabic, Visual Art, Drama, Dance, Library, Music, Physical Education and Swimming. These lessons are taught by specialist teachers who supplement and enrich the Elementary school program.

The KG3 and KG4 curriculum is based on the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP) framework and the Creative Curriculum for Preschool. The curriculum for KG5 is aligned with the rest of the Elementary school and based on the US Virginia Standards delivered within the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP) framework.

The Kindergarten program at GAA provides classroom environments arranged to incorporate a variety of interest areas that offer multiple opportunities for children to explore, discover and learn. Interest areas include block play, dramatic play, toys and games, art, discovery, library, sand and water, music and movement, computers, cooking and outdoor learning. Classrooms are safe and welcoming environments that provide areas for large and small group times, individual storage and classroom displays.

Outdoor play is essential for the health and well-being of children. Beyond just physical development outdoor learning helps children develop skills in each of the four core domains; physical development, social-emotional development, literacy development and cognitive development. While participating in small and large group games students develop their vocabulary, communication skills and cooperative skills. Outdoor time encourages children to explore and take risks, and learn to appreciate the natural environment.

The Elementary curriculum is based on the US Virginia Standards delivered within the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP) framework, and modeled on the American system of education. We take advantage of our international student community and the cultural diversity that it offers. We celebrate and learn about different countries' cultures, traditions, habits and holidays. The local community is embraced within our program and this is reflected in the choice of concepts and topics underpinning the program of inquiry.

The Elementary school community is warm and nurturing. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the daily education of their children. GAA also has a very active and supportive Parent Association (GAAPA).

THE SCHOOL DAY

School Hours

The school day for all grades commences at 7:45am. Dismissal time is 3:00pm. The hours for after school co-curricular activities vary. Most activities start at 3:05pm and finish at 4:00pm or 4:30pm. Some activities conducted off-campus may finish later than this.

The school cannot supervise students before 7:30am or after 3:05pm. We request that students are under active parental supervision while on school premises before and after these times.

Attendance

Parents are expected to call the school between 7:30 - 8:00 a.m. when their child is absent from, or will be late to, school. Attendance and student participation in learning activities is important, so parents are urged to schedule medical, dental and other appointments after school hours or during vacations.

All students are expected to abide by the school schedule and attend school on the days before and after vacations.

Parents are expected to attend conferences on the scheduled parent/teacher conference days in the fall and spring as well as Parent Engagement functions to build shared skills and understandings in support of learning at home.

Late Arrival/Early Pick-Up

Parents are expected to sign students in or out of school at the Reception if they arrive after 7:45am or depart before 3.00pm. If a student is late arriving at school, parents must accompany their child/children to the Reception to sign in. If a student is leaving school early, parents must come to the Reception before collecting their child from the class.

Change to Regular Home Transportation

If a child is going on a play date, two notes must be sent to school, one from the parent whose child is going to the friend's house and the other from the parent who is hosting the play date. These notes are best sent to the teacher through the students' PASSPORT booklet. If this involves using the school bus, the parent must call the school transportation department to ensure there is space on the bus (Please see page 22 of this book for additional information).

Lunch/Snack

At GAA we encourage students to eat healthy, nutritious foods. Monthly menus for our cafeteria are posted on the school website. Water is provided for all students, and students are required to bring their own refillable water bottles. Children should bring a healthy snack from home to eat during the morning break. Any food sent to school should be low in sugar, fat and not contain any nuts or nut products. Also avoid processed foods as they are often high in preservatives and unhealthy elements. If a classroom teacher identifies a student who is repeatedly bringing in unhealthy foods, their parents will be notified to adjust this as we are promoting a healthy lifestyle.

KG3 Students are required to bring a healthy packed lunch from home. Students from KG4 upwards have the option of bringing lunch from home or purchasing a school meal.

Recess

Students have scheduled recess times. Each division has a dedicated playground area with appropriate outdoor educational equipment. Depending on

scheduled use by PE classes, the soccer pitch and/or tennis courts may be available for play during recess times. All students are expected to play safely and fairly and to be respectful of each other and of the equipment.

Assemblies- Community Sharing

Elementary Community Sharing is held Thursday of each week on a rotational basis. Community sharing helps us to promote community, foster school pride, and celebrate learning and success. Parents are invited to attend, and dates are announced in the class newsletters or Grade level Weebly site.

Birthdays

Birthdays are able to be celebrated in the *Kindergarten only* from 2.30pm.

Snacks:

Please bring in individually sized cupcakes, cakes or donuts only.

Drinks:

Water is preferred. Please be aware that no soft drinks are allowed.

Cups, plates or napkins:

Please arrange as the school does not provide these items.

Please arrange this with the classroom teacher a few days in advance. In connection with our 'healthy food' initiative, parents are encouraged to make appropriate choices when planning the celebration for their child. For birthdays we prefer snacks to be individually wrapped or in individual portions, such as cupcakes, please do not send in of hats, balloons, party favors or gift bags, as these items will not be distributed at school.

Invitations to out of school birthday parties can only be sent via school if all students in the class are invited. If you plan to invite only a few classmates, please be aware that this can cause uncomfortable or awkward situations, and/or hurt feelings. Please ensure that all treats do not have any nuts or nut products.

Birthday celebrations in Grade levels above Kindergarten are not allowed as these celebrations take away too much time from our teaching and learning.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Co-curricular Activities

We offer a wide variety of activities for students in KG4 and beyond who choose to participate. Parents are required to collect their child from class and escort them to and remain in attendance for the duration of the after school activity. These activities are designed to provide an opportunity for students to socialize with each other in a fun atmosphere. We strive to provide activities offering enrichment in sporting, creative and academic pursuits. Some after school activities may incur an added fee due to various factors. Students who participate should be picked up promptly at 4:00 or 4:30 p.m. at the end of the activity.

Students not participating in an after school program should go home by their normal mode of transport at 3:05 p.m. No supervision can be provided after school for students not participating in an after school program. Parents who are waiting for activities to finish are encouraged to take siblings outside to the playground.

Students in Kindergarten who are attending after school activities must be collected by their parent(s) from their classroom and taken to their activity where parents are asked to wait for them for duration of the activity.

Students participating in after school activities are able to sign up for a late bus service. This is not available to students in Kindergarten.

Please help us keep halls and the Reception area quiet as they are working environments, even during after school hours.

Student Ambassadors –Student Government

Student Ambassadors are selected from their class to be a part of a student leadership team within the Elementary school. Student ambassadors are often asked to take part in important policy decisions as well as fulfilling other important roles.

Field Trips

Throughout the year, field trips, which are authentically linked to each unit of inquiry, are arranged including - theaters, museums, historic buildings, etc. They are considered part of the program and participation is required. Permission

forms must be signed by a parent or guardian. The student will pay for all transportation, entrance fees and guided tours.

Standards of dress and behavior are the same on field trips as during a regular school day (school uniform) and students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately.

Occasionally some students remain in school rather than taking part in the trip. These are extraordinary situations. Students who are excused from the trip are expected to attend school and work will be provided by the class teacher.

Grade Level Extended Field Trips

Much social development takes place during adolescence and our upper Elementary program encourages social-emotional development as well as academic learning. We want students to become risk-takers and to experience new things first hand. To this end, we take advantage of our local and regional environment by visiting historic sites in the region as well as engaging in team-building exercises. These trips are a required part of the School Program. We are unable to include the cost of these trips in school fees.

Students are expected to behave in a safe and considerate manner during extended field trips. Rules are established to protect the rights and safety of all students and may vary according to the particular trip. Students who do not follow the rules will be excluded from activities or will be sent home at their parents' expense. In the case of a serious infraction, it is likely that a student will be excluded from future school trips and face disciplinary action upon return to school.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

GAA uniform guidelines are communicated at time of admission. The student uniform is compulsory.

Please Note: Students can wear the PE uniform for the entire school day on days when the student has PE classes scheduled.

On swim days, students should wear uniform and bring the recommended school swim kit.

Recommended swim kit includes;

- dark blue/navy swimwear
- dark blue/navy swim cap for long hair below collar line
- towels to dry off
- no watches or bracelets
- flip-flops/sandals should be brought to be used in case of fire alarm, school shoes will be used in lieu of forgotten flip-flops/sandals
- goggles are recommend
- plastic bag is recommended to put wet suit in after class

All uniform items are available from Zak's Uniform Shop, 2nd Floor, Al Raha Mall. The store's contact number is 02 556 5340. A map to Zak's is available on the school website.

Any concerns about a students' uniform then it will be brought to the student's attention and they will be asked to address it.

Concerning Kindergarten:

All kindergarten students need to have an extra set of clearly labeled uniform clothing (shirt, shorts, underwear, and socks) sent to school in a Zip Lock bag in case a spare is needed.

Each day the children need to bring their: communication passport, hat, water bottle, snack and lunch. These items should be labeled and fit inside a small backpack. If your child rides the bus, please make sure that they are able to carry their backpack independently.

CURRICULUM

School Scheduling

The school week runs from Sunday through Thursday, with each day's attendance numbered one through eight. The school follows an 8-day cycle of daily schedules which ensures that no specials are missed due to holidays. Cycle days are only assigned to days of student attendance.

Special Area Classes

Our Specialist teachers integrate their programs with the grade level curricula in order to expand children's understanding of concepts taught in the classroom.

From KG4, students attend specialist classes, such as Arabic, Art, Physical Education, Drama/ Dance, Swimming and Music. Some students will also receive specialist instruction in Islamic Education and UAE Social Studies.

Physical Education

Each Elementary class participates in physical education classes. Students are required to attend all physical education classes unless we are provided with a written statement that details a sound reason for release from a particular physical education activity, including swimming.

English Language Learners (ELL)

ELL classes are designed to enable non-native speakers of English to reach a sufficient degree of proficiency in the English language to be able to participate fully in mainstream classes. Most ELL students are pulled from class while their classmates study the Language curriculum. The ELL curriculum is aligned with mainstream programs but modified to meet the needs of students still learning the fundamentals of listening, speaking, reading and writing in English. The ELL teacher also provides support for the mainstream subjects by reviewing class assignments, giving further explanations and reinforcing concepts and subject specific terminology.

Placement tests are given whenever a child enters GAA and diagnostic tests are made throughout the year to determine the student's readiness to move into mainstream classes. We appreciate the financial and social implications of enrolment in our ELL program, however this program is not optional but rather a condition of enrolment in our school. The ELL teacher working with the Student Study Team is the final arbiter of student readiness to exit ELL and enter mainstream classes.

Homework

All students are expected to complete homework on a regular basis. Teachers follow the daily time allocations as follows:

Grade One	30 minutes
Grade Two	30 minutes
Grade Three	50 minutes
Grade Four	60 minutes
Grade Five	60 minutes

Homework might be work that was not completed during the school day; reinforcement of skills introduced that day or project work. If a child cannot complete a homework assignment because of illness or other extenuating circumstances, the parent should write a note requesting that the student be given extra time to complete the work.

Homework is an integral part of the learning process. Homework is to be completed so that students are prepared for classes. Chronic failure to complete homework will be brought to the attention of the Student Support Team.

Additionally, parents should also include time after school to read with your child and time to play math games.

LIBRARY

GAA Library Overview

Hours: 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

GEMS American Academy is committed to helping students develop a solid foundation of information literacy skills and a lifelong love of reading. With online database subscriptions, breakout learning spaces, a collection of approximately 20,000 books, a laptop cart, magazine subscriptions, an ipad cart and more, we are well-equipped for exploration and discovery. In addition to the resources we offer within the school, please remember that many of our resources and services are available 24/7 around the world.

Library Visits

Students in Kindergarten-Grade 5 have a minimum of one 40-minute period of scheduled Library time in an 8-day cycle. Flexible scheduling provides additional time for projects and special events. Students are encouraged to drop by the Library for research and book check-out at appropriate times during the school day. We ask that Elementary students be accompanied by an adult during after school hours.

Borrowing Resources

All members of the GAA community—students, staff and parents—are encouraged to check out Library resources. A maximum of 5 resources may be checked out at any one time for a period of 2 weeks; exceptions may be made in certain instances by the Head Librarian.

Overdue Materials

We ask that materials be returned on a timely basis to enable access by all community members. Students who fail to return books on a regular basis may have their borrowing restricted. Students leaving the school must have a form signed by the library acknowledging the return of all materials. Year-end report cards will be issued once all library books have been returned or accounted for.

Lost and Damaged Items

Any community member who loses or damages an item beyond repair will be billed for the original cost of the item plus 25% for shipping and handling.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

The school maintains close relations with parents which facilitates communication and cooperation. Keeping abreast of regular school communication is essential and parents are required to actively read the various modes of communicating through the: Student Passports, Newsletters via GLG Weebly, Grade Level Weebly and the GAAzette.

At the beginning of the academic year, an orientation day for new students and a *Back to School* evening are held to introduce parents to the faculty and the general curriculum. Student-parent-teacher conference days are scheduled at the end of each term to discuss progress toward agreed student goals. Written grades and comments are sent home prior to these conferences.

Parents are invited to community sharing and other special engagements throughout the year. The school encourages parents and teachers to communicate with each other by telephone, note, email or conference at any time. Conferences with the teacher, guidance counselor or principal may be arranged by appointment. The school keeps parents informed of upcoming events and school news through weekly grade-specific and school-wide newsletters.

Visits to the Classroom

During the academic year, parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom. Please arrange a convenient time to visit with the classroom teacher in advance. Individual appointments should be scheduled during the teacher's non-contact time. Please avoid discussing your child when other students are present.

If you must contact your child or his/her teacher without a prior arrangement, please contact reception in the first instance. Please do not go directly to the classroom during school hours as this disrupts in-class learning.

Parental Engagement

GEMS American Academy has a firm understanding of the benefits of Parental Engagement. We believe in an organic approach, where the bridge between home and school is open and collaborative. Working together we become 'a school without walls' where students learn and grow in all surroundings.

GEMS American Academy is focused on giving families the skills and resources to engage meaningfully in the learning and growth of their children. GAA is committed to partnering with parents in this endeavor, for the benefit of all our students.

Parents can stay informed of their children's learning and progress through online programs such as Weebly and Edmodo, along with engaging in conversation with the school's staff and faculty. GAA is dedicated to developing our teaching practices to allow for more blended learning where students become rich in knowledge from sources beyond just the teacher. GEMS American Academy also offers workshops throughout the year to assist parents with the skills to be able to engage with their children's learning.

The GEMS '3-A-Day' campaign is also supported by GEMS American Academy. GEMS encourage parents to make family learning part of their lifestyle by reminding them to do three of the most effective engagement activities everyday:

- 1. Talk about learning...**
- 2. Share learning...**
- 3. Encourage learning...**



Room Parents

Every GAA classroom has a Room Parent. The Room Parent serves as a representative for the classroom and will be the link between the teachers and the parents. They also take on the role of organizing class activities such as holiday and end of the year parties, helping with class trips, and other needs as requested by the homeroom teacher. Lastly, a Room Parent will also serve as a liaison between the parent association GAAPA, and the families.

Each classroom should have one Room Parent only. Each Room Parent may in turn request the help and support of additional parents but only one person will take the main role of Room Parent.

Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences

Student/Parent/teacher conferences are an important part of our educational program and provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss with the student personal goals as well as overall progress, and celebrate achievement.

These conferences are supported by our *Hopes and Dreams Day*, which is held within the first month of school. This is an opportunity for parents to share aspirations of their child with teachers and children to set goals for the year. Parents are expected to attend and participate in all conferences. There is no school for students on these days.

Report Cards

KG

Transition Reports- identifying needs/concerns

Students in all three levels of Kindergarten receive a *Transition Report* at the end of the first 4 weeks of school. The intention is to share with parents a

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“snapshot” of how the child is settling into their new environment. Behaviors that warrant immediate communication with parents are as follows:

Social- Emotional Needs/Separation Concerns; Aggressive Behavior(s); Toileting Concerns; Biting

KG1 and KG2-4 Report card timeline

Level	Transition Report	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
KG1	End of first 4 weeks	Narrative	Narrative	Continuum Based/ with Narrative comments
KG2-4	End of First 4 weeks	Continuum Based/ with Narrative comments	Continuum Based/ with Narrative comments	Continuum Based/ with Narrative comments

Elementary (including KG2-5)

At the end of each term, parents receive an evaluation of their child’s performance and effort in all subjects. We also evaluate and report on work habits and social development. All grades are supported by teacher comments. The language used in report cards differs across the 2 divisions but intends to provide parents with (1) more detailed/precise insight into what is being learned in all subjects at each grade level, and (2) the most consistent quality of learning demonstrated through assessments by their son/daughter. The language of achievement is always:

- Level 1: *Below Expectation*
- Level 2: *Below but Approaching Expectation (without promotion)*
- Level 2+: *Below but Approaching Expectation (with promotion)*
- Level 3: *At Expectation*
- Level 3+: *Exceeding Expectation*
- Level 4: *Exceptional Performance*

Level 4 achievement is extraordinary and very few students are able to perform consistently at this level.

A strong level 2 is required for promotion at the end of the year. Generally a student who does not achieve strong level 2 results in Mathematics and Language at the end of the year will be recommended for retention. Discussions will be held with the parents and the classroom teacher as soon as concerns about a student's success become apparent.

Standardized Tests (MAP)

Twice a year, students in Grades 3 and up sit the MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) test, which is an adaptive standardized comprehensive test that measures a student's abilities and achievements in language, mathematics and science. This test is given to students in a growing number of international schools around the world. Scores in the form of percentile ranks are reported to the parents. These scores will eventually become part of the child's school records.

Appointments with the Principal or Guidance Counselor

If you would like to discuss a specific issue, please contact reception to schedule an appointment.

Student Study Teams

We have introduced this year a structured process called the Student Study Team (SST) to support children with academic, social, emotional or transitional needs. The team includes the parent, the teacher, LS practitioners and the counselor. They may be joined by other involved teachers and the Principal, if deemed necessary. The purpose of this process is to establish an understanding of a child's strengths and to define our concerns so that we can discuss ways to modify the school program or to design a more efficient and appropriate means of maximizing success at school. This plan may include further classroom options or modifications, or out-of-school tutoring. The plan may also include a referral for a medical examination or an assessment by an educational psychologist, an occupational therapist, or a speech and language therapist. Support from a guidance and counseling professional may also be recommended by the team. Reports generated from any of those referrals are not part of a child's permanent school record.

Change of Contact Details

The School Registrar, the Reception and the School Nurse should always have current details of your address, email, telephone number and mobile number(s). The accuracy of this information is vital in the case of an emergency. We also request a phone number of a friend we can call if we cannot reach the parents. At the start of the school year we will send an Emergency Contact Sheet home with your child, please return this as quickly as possible.

If your details change, it is your responsibility to give the updated information to the Reception, preferably by email or a note in the passport.

Withdrawing from School

All notices of withdrawal must be in writing to the Registrar. The school requires a minimum of two weeks notification of withdrawal. Parents are responsible for completing and returning a Student Clearance Form. In the event of outstanding books, fees or fines, the school will not release records nor issue a Transfer Certificate.

Transfer Certificates

The Ministry of Education in the UAE requires that all students from Grade 2 onward submit a Transfer Certificate when they change schools. After the 1st of November each year, students in all grades require a Transfer Certificate to move schools. GEMS American Academy – Abu Dhabi will be pleased to prepare a Transfer Certificate for all students who have completed the Withdrawal Process previously mentioned.

For students new to the school, please see the Application Package (available from the Registrar or online) for more information about Transfer Certificates.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

School Clinic Information

A Registered and Health Authority of Abu Dhabi (HAAD) licensed nurse is on duty during school hours. The nurse provides health screenings; assesses and manages chronic and acute illness; administers medications; provides first aid for school-related injuries; promotes health and safety; maintains student medical records. The nurse is available to consult with parents as needed, regarding health concerns of students, either in person, by telephone or e-mail.

If a student has special health needs (medication, chronic illness or condition, allergies, or requires special procedure or intervention), the parent is encouraged to schedule a time to meet with the school nurse to arrange for these needs to be taken care of during the student's school day. All medications and treatments require clear, written instructions by physician's order, as needed, and a parent/guardian's signature. The school nurse will assist the parent by preparing a plan of care for their child and advising them as to what supplies the student will need at school.

Emergency Contacts

Parents are encouraged to keep the school and the clinic informed of current work, cell, and home phone numbers, and any other means whereby they can be contacted during the school day should the need arise. When able, make sure your child knows how to reach you during the day. The Emergency Care Form will be utilized in many ways, from school trips and events, as a quick contact resource to get in touch with parents, for emergency personnel if the student is transferred to an emergency care facility; or to ensure that the parents/guardians have authorized emergency medical treatment.

Forms

Each year school health forms will be required for all students. They are: Health information Form; Emergency Care Form; Medication Consent Form; School Screening Form. New students will be required to fill out an Immunization Record to accompany their child's personal Immunization Record. If your child is asthmatic or has a life-threatening allergy, a physician-signed form to use or administer an inhaler, or Epi-pen will be required. If your child has a short-term or chronic illness which requires any medical intervention/procedure during the school day, a Special Procedure Form will be required. (For example: blood glucose monitoring, dressing change, tube/catheter management, etc.)

Medication

Administration of medications, especially short term, should be done at home whenever possible. However, if a student is required to take prescription or non-prescription medication during the school day, the following guidelines must be met:

- Physician, dentist, or practitioner prescribed medications should be clearly transcribed, and all medication forms should state the student's

name, the name of medication, the dosage, the time, the route (oral, inhaled, patch, etc.), and the duration of time that it is to be given (e.g., one week, the school year, etc.), along with the parent's/guardian's signature. Medication forms are available for your convenience in the school clinic.

- Medication must be in the original packaging by the pharmacy and not outdated. Over-the-counter medication to be held in the clinic must be in a sealed, unopened, new bottle. (For short time medication, ask a pharmacist for a separate bottle to be kept in the clinic, to prevent missed doses.)
- Parent/guardian must deliver medication to the school clinic, not the student.
- All medicine must be picked up by a parent at the end of the school year. If medication is to be hand-carried, a back-up should also be kept in the school clinic. These situations require written health care plans, along with other specific details for care. When necessary, the nurse will accept verbal consent via phone to administer an over-the-counter medication (not prescription). Medication will not be dispensed without written parental permission.

Illness or Injury

If you are contacted by the school to pick up your sick child, please make every effort to do so promptly. If your child visits the clinic and we recommend you follow-up, or be informed of an intervention, you will receive a written note from the clinic. You will also be informed if your child sustains a head or neck injury while at school. If the nurse requests follow-up by your doctor for illness or a school-sustained injury, you will receive a Medical Referral Form. This is a formal way to receive a specific diagnosis and treatment plan while your child is at school.

Students with contagious infections need to stay home so they will not expose others. If your child is home with a communicable illness, please contact the school nurse so the parent(s) of other classmates may be alerted of symptoms.

As a rule of thumb, your child should stay home for any of the following:

- A fever > 37.7 C (100 F); must be fever-free for 24 hours without fever medication
- Vomited more than once; feeling of nausea

- Diarrhea (return to school after 48 hours or 24 hours on medication)
- A frequent cough; productive cough
- Persistent pain (ear, stomach, etc.)
- A widespread rash; contagious rash or skin spots
- Head lice (Pediculosis) please notify the school nurse to be given proper instructions
- Bacterial Pink Eye/Conjunctivitis; awakens in the morning with thick or sticky eye drainage; eye lashes stuck; redness of the whites of the eyes throughout; can return to school after 24 hours of physician prescribed treatment

Injuries that happen at home or over the weekend should be taken care of prior to returning to school, along with a physician's note with instructions and limitations if needed. If your child has an out-patient procedure or surgery, you must provide a physician's certificate stating when they can safely return to school and with any limitations/instructions.

In all cases, the school nurse is the final arbiter and, if necessary in discussion with the principal, will signal when child is "safe" to return to school.

Immunizations

The Health Authority of Abu Dhabi (HAAD) promotes a successful immunization program and is free from vaccine-preventable diseases. Parents are required to submit applicable vaccination documents to the School Nurse (or registrar) for record purposes. Any parent, who wishes to discuss their child's immunizations with the school nurse, is welcome to do so.

Health Screenings

Per HAAD, the clinic promotes the screenings which are recommended annually. This consent form is part of the annual school health forms, which is given out at the beginning of the school year. Please refer to that form with specific guidelines for your child's grade.

Helpful Reminders:

- Encourage your child to eat breakfast every day before school.
- Make sure your child gets 8 or more hours of sleep each night.
- Always send your child to school with a refillable water bottle.
- Sneakers or tennis shoes are preferred for active participation and safety.

- Encourage good hand-washing; before and after meals, after toileting, etc.
- The school has a “No Hat, No Play” policy or your child will sit out for recess.
- Please inform the school if your child has any allergies. Nuts are not banned at GAA, but any food brought in for sharing must be free of nuts/nut products.

Please contact your school nurse if you have any questions or concerns. By working together, we can strive to ensure the health and well-being of your children so that they can gain the most from their experience at school.

Fire Alarm/Lock-Down Drills

The buildings on the campus are fitted with a fire alarm system. Periodically throughout the year, fire drills will take place in order to familiarize pupils with the procedures of emergency evacuation.

1. When the alarm is sounded, students and visitors should leave the building immediately in an orderly fashion using the designated exit.
2. After leaving the building, students and visitors should report to their designated assembly point for an attendance check. The assembly point for all students is the field.
3. Emphasis is placed on remaining quiet and observing rules and directions during the fire drills.

Lock down drill will be practiced immediately following

Supervision of Students

A parent or a responsible adult must actively supervise Kindergarten and Elementary students when on the school campus outside regular school hours. When on campus, students are expected to follow school rules even after school and on weekends. They must be with an adult at all times.

We operate a daily attendance system for all elementary school students arriving or departing school between 7:45am and 3:00pm. Telephone calls and/or SMS messages will be sent home to confirm all absences – usually before 8:30am each morning. Students arriving after 7:45am must be walked to the Reception to be signed in by a parent. Parents must also sign students out for

early dismissal. Please note that we do not provide adult supervision before school in the morning and after school in the afternoons.

GAA STUDENT DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

KG3

Students in KG3 have the option to dismiss before lunch at 12:30 pm. Students who stay for the full day will be provided a “quiet rest time” between 1:00-2.00 pm. After the rest period the students will have an additional outdoor play time, afternoon snack, free choice center time and a closing circle. Regular school dismissal procedures will be followed for KG3 students who elect to stay for the full day.

Description of “quiet rest time” in KG1:

Quiet rest time for KG3 students is between 1:00-2:00pm. Students in KG3 are provided with a rest mat during the quiet rest period. It is the responsibility of the parent to send in a small blanket (that fit’s in the child’s cubby) labeled with the child’s name. Rest blankets should be sent to school on Sunday morning and will be sent home on Thursday afternoon. For the health and safety of all children we ask that bedding be laundered each week before it is returned to school.

KG4, KG5 and Elementary

The GAA school day finishes at 3:00pm. While students should not expect to be dismissed before this time, it is vital for the smooth running of the bus service and the After School Activities Program that teachers do not keep their classes late. Once dismissed from class, students will be handed into the care of a parent or guardian or will follow the bus collection procedure which is detailed below.

The class TA will escort those students who use the bus service to the bus waiting area. There will be a muster point for each bus: clearly visible bus number signs are posted in the area. The TA will hand students over to the respective conductors in turn. Once students have been handed over to the care of the

conductors, they will sit quietly until all students have arrived. When it is confirmed that all students are present, the conductors will escort the students to their buses and make sure they are safely buckled before the buses move.

In Grade 4 and up, where Teaching Assistants work with more than one class, the TA will escort those classes for which he/she is responsible to the bus waiting area.

Bus Regulations

Students who use the school bus either regularly or as a guest at any time on special occasions must observe the following rules:

- Students are expected to demonstrate respect for the driver, the conductor and other passengers.
- Students must be seated with a buckled seatbelt at all times.
- Students are not permitted to shout or engage in horseplay (kind hands and feet) or use disrespectful language at any time on the bus (kind words).
- Students are expected to keep the buses tidy and not dispose of rubbish on the bus.
- Students are not permitted to eat or drink on the bus.

Students may ride home with another child if there is enough room on the bus. Parents should check before noon with the Head of Transport to confirm that there is space. Both the driver and the classroom teacher must be notified in writing of any alteration to normal bus arrangements.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Lost and Found

Personal items found in the school are collected and passed along to the GAAPA. Parents are encouraged to label all items, especially water bottles and lunch boxes and to check the Lost and Found frequently. Unattended school books will be returned to the TRC/Library for processing. At the end of each Term, all lost and found items are donated to charity.

Telephones

The telephones are for official use only. In the case of emergency, the Receptionist will call the student's home. Please call the Reception when trying to contact a teacher. The teacher will call back as soon as he/she is free.

Security

A security officer is on duty on the school campus at all times. The officer is there to assist families on weekends and to make certain that academic buildings are properly locked during non-school hours. In case of an emergency, the security officers have access to a telephone.

Charitable Causes/ Community Service

Our school community supports a growing number of organizations and charitable causes. These provide valued opportunities for our students to demonstrate initiative and further develop their skills and understandings of citizenship and leadership. Charitable drives and Community Action activities are organized through the Student Leaders in combination with authentic action from different class inquiries. It is important that charity work is carefully planned and strongly supported so that activities can be integrated into the school calendar. Ideas for fund-raising should be brought to the attention of the Principal for endorsement. Proposals are considered throughout the school year in connection to the PYP units of inquiry and/or Global events.

SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR

Code of Conduct

In this school, a proactive and collaborative approach is used to solve discipline problems. The staff is committed to working together with children, parents, teachers and administrators to maintain high standards of behavior. Students are expected to behave appropriately and respectfully at all times. They must observe rules established with their teachers for classroom and playground activities.

Students are expected to abide by school rules and procedures any time they are at school, including after-school and evening activities, weekends and during any parent-sponsored events. Parents are asked to enforce these rules when on school grounds.

STUDENT RELATIONS POLICY (Code of Conduct)

Our aim is to create a community of learning in which every student has a right to receive an education in a safe and secure environment free from the threat of harm from others. GAA is committed to developing social awareness and reinforcing ethical and moral values among students so that they demonstrate respect for each other and value individual differences. We follow the Restitution Model of Student Behavior that focuses on value-based decision making.

Responsibilities

Students at GAA learn how to take personal responsibility for conducting themselves at all times so that their individual behavior does not intimidate or harass any other student for any reason whatsoever. Parents of GAA students are responsible for reporting to the appropriate teachers or administrators any instances of bullying or other forms of intimidation that may come to their attention.

The academic and administrative staff at GAA is responsible for taking immediate action when instances of bullying, intimidation or other anti-social behavior come to their attention, whether through personal observation or by a report from another student or a parent. Academic staff should regularly remind students of the standards of behavior that are expected of them.

The Effects of Anti-Social behavior

Anti-social behavior can take many forms ranging from the extremes of violence to less obvious acts such as deliberately excluding an individual from a group activity. Whatever forms this kind of behavior takes, it will be unwanted and unpleasant. Bullying and intimidation perpetrated by fellow students can have a very adverse effect on a student's self-esteem, learning effectiveness and general health and well-being.

Commitment

GAA commits to its students that all reported incidents of bullying, harassment or other forms of anti-social behavior by one student or group of students towards another will be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively.

What is bullying?

Bullying is the willful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten, frighten, intimidate or distress someone. Bullying can be:

<i>Physical</i>	pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching
<i>Verbal</i>	name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, persistent teasing
<i>Emotional</i>	excluding others, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating
<i>Racist</i>	racial taunts or gestures
<i>Sexual</i>	unwanted physical contact or abusive comments

For Students

What should you do if you are bullied or you notice others bullying?

Telling about bullying is not telling tales. Bullying is wrong and you should report it. You have the right to be safe from attacks and harassment and nobody should expect you to be silent when you or others are being tormented or hurt. You should tell your parents about what is happening. Also tell the principal, a teacher, your counselor, the school nurse or any other trusted adult. Explain who is involved and what is happening. You may want to take some friends with you for support, especially if they have witnessed the incidents.

For Parents

If your child is a victim of bullying:

Encourage your child to talk to you about their school and social life. Watch your child for signs of distress. Listen to your child and take seriously any reports of bullying. Do not keep the bullying a secret. Contact the principal or the counselor immediately. Check that your child is not inviting the bullying. Your child may have weak social skills. This does not justify bullying but may cause a child to receive negative attention. Work with the school to develop strategies to support your child.

If your child is responsible for bullying:

Never ignore it.

Make it clear that such behavior is unacceptable.

Work with the school to develop strategies to change behavior.

CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

When a student's behavior falls below the basic expectations of the school, disciplinary action will be positive rather than negative in its approach and, while maintaining respect for the student, will ensure that the classroom learning environment is preserved.

Failure to follow school rules and regulations is treated seriously. Our goal is for students to accept responsibility for their actions and begin to understand the link between their behavior and its effect on others.

Conferences and Problem Solving

Some concerns about student behavior are referred by teachers to the office. In order to gather information about a problem, it is normal for an administrator to schedule a meeting with the students involved. At this meeting, students discuss what occurred and they are counseled about their behavior. With serious problems or those that repeat, a conference between the parents of the child and an administrator is scheduled.

Loss of Social Time (Lunch, recess, breaks, before and after school)

If students demonstrate lack of control, they may be removed from the class activity or lose the privilege of socializing with their friends for a designated length of time.

In-School Suspension

GAA employs a progressive model of disciplinary consequences, and students who repeatedly violate school rules or where the behavior concerned is more serious may receive an in-school suspension. This takes place in school, under organized supervision. Students will complete work provided by teachers and will receive counseling and advice which relate to the reason for the suspension.

Home-Suspension

If a serious problem occurs where any student's safety is threatened or there are concerns which remain unresolved after other techniques have been tried, a student may be placed on suspension for a designated period of time while the matter is investigated and considered. In order for a student to be readmitted to school, a conference between the Principal and the parents will be required. During a home suspension, a student is not permitted to be on campus or to participate in any school related activity.

Expulsion

The school reserves the right to expel without refund of fees any student whose conduct seriously disrupts the academic program or exerts a negative influence on other students.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS AND LEGAL GUARDIANS

At GAA we recognize the importance of regular interaction between faculty and parents so that support for student learning and development is consistent. In the circumstance that parents have a complaint with a teacher, the school will treat it in accordance with its procedure.

1. Informal Resolution

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

1. If parents have a complaint or concern they should, in the first instance, contact their son's/daughter's teacher. In most cases, the matter will be resolved. If the teacher/parent cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to contact the Principal.
2. Any complaint made directly to the Principal will normally be referred back to the relevant teacher unless the Principal deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
3. Teachers and the Principal will keep anecdotal records of concerns and complaints on the date when they were received and reviewed. The principal/teacher will document the outcome in a letter to the parent/guardian.

Most complaints will be resolved informally. If this does not happen, parents will be advised that they may follow the formal procedure below.

2. Formal Resolution

1. If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then the parents should put their complaint in writing to the GEMS Director of International Schools (DIS) who will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take.
2. In most cases the DIS will contact the parents concerned, normally within 3 days of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible a resolution will be reached at this stage.

3. The DIS may need to carry out further investigations.
4. The DIS will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint.
5. Once the DIS is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The DIS will also explain the decision.

APPENDICES

I: ADMISSIONS POLICY

A student applying for admission must be accepted by the Principal, based on the school's ability to meet the educational needs of the student. While GAA can accommodate mild reading, learning and behavior challenges, it is not staffed or equipped to handle the needs of moderate or severely disabled children. Very few international schools make provision for very needy children and parents must consider very carefully the education options available before accepting an international post.

Age Requirements for Students Applying for Particular Programs/Grades:

Kindergarten 3: children must be 3 on or before September 15th

Kindergarten 4 or 5: children must be 4 or 5 on or before September 15th

Grades 1-5: In general, the Registrar places students according to their birth date. If the school has doubts regarding the child's placement, if records are not available or if the parents feel that the recommended grade placement is not suitable, then the school will determine the child's grade placement based on prior records and recommendations. MAP test results generated during the admissions process are an important indicator of student readiness and experience and will help inform the placement decision.

All students entering GAA are assessed before admission is granted. In Kindergarten this usually takes the form of a group assessment.

II: PROCEDURES FOR ASSIGNING CLASS PLACEMENT

We believe strongly in the importance of well-balanced mixed groups – we want children to work within a heterogeneous group so that all benefit from the diversity of backgrounds, talent and thinking skills that makes GAA a special place. It is important that each class is representative of the whole grade level and can be held accountable to the same academic standards. In order to create the optimal class environment, we need to know as much as possible about the social, emotional, physical and academic needs of each child. A well-balanced learning environment has to take into account many different factors. The obvious ones are gender, nationality, new or returning family, and level of English fluency. But just as important, are the social relationships, emotional and physical needs, academic levels, learning styles, and past experiences.

To facilitate our process of class placement, teachers fill out a card for each student that indicates important information that would influence the placement decision. The teacher summarizes the child's academic level, and describes any support or pull-out program the child needs or other special concerns or program modifications currently in place. This card gives a quick overview of each child. For new children, we use the report cards and records from previous schools to determine as much about the child as possible. This information is then used by the Registrar and Counselor to create balanced classes.

Parental input does play an important part in this process and we invite parents of returning students to submit a profile of their sons and daughters in May to help inform this process. More important, we hope that through the year you have formed a partnership with your child's teacher and you are confident that the teacher knows and understands the social and academic needs of your child. This knowledge of the child plays an important part in the negotiations and shuffling which eventually yields the class lists.

The ultimate task is to match teaching strengths and learning needs and to match teachers' management styles and students' management needs considering the teacher's observations, parental concerns and student input, while still keeping the balance of gender, nationality, and new and returning students.

Because our overriding value is to create balanced groups of students who will work well together, we are not able to entertain requests for placements with specific teachers. We ask that you refrain from asking for a particular teacher so that we are not being asked to compromise the integrity of this process for any child. You can be confident that all the teachers on any grade level work and plan together and provide similar learning opportunities and experiences for students.

Right up to the day school starts our student lists are changing, so we are not able to post class lists before the start of school. Despite the fact that we will have done the best job we can, not everyone will think his or her placement is ideal. We have found that the best advice we can give you if your child expresses disappointment with his or her new class group is to acknowledge a child's disappointment as genuine but to show your child that you have confidence in his or her social ability to live through the disappointment and to settle successfully in the new situation. Your child will be heavily influenced by your reaction!

This is an opportunity for social growth and independence. Trust your child to grow and learn. Children are so open to new and different experiences, relationships and learning when we encourage and support them in their efforts.

III: INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Laptop Computers

The use of a computer has many benefits, especially in the area of writing. Once students become familiar with the keyboard and learn to use editing and spell check tools written work often improves. Students are more easily able to revise, re-order and correct their work. The quality and quantity of their writing will often increase as they take increasing pride in their work. While GAA cannot take responsibility for expensive personal equipment that students bring to school, we do recognize that for many students the benefits of having access to laptop computers outweigh the potential problems and we therefore approve of the use of personal laptops in school. These are some practical issues around access to the school server. You should discuss these with the ICT Integration Specialist.

Internet Use at School

Students have age appropriate, filtered access to the Internet to conduct research and communicate about academic topics. Elementary School students must sign, along with their parents, our Acceptable Use Policy that outlines user privileges and responsibilities.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Use of the Internet is available to students at GAA through our network. The Internet expands classroom and library resources by making information and images, from places otherwise impossible to reach, available to students, teachers, library and media specialists. Access to these resources can yield individual and group projects, collaboration and the exchange of ideas. Internet access also makes contact with people all over the world a possibility, providing access to experts and expertise in every content area. GAA student Internet users and their families should understand that neither the School nor our faculty can completely control the content of the information obtained from other systems. There are always risks involved in internet use, but we believe used properly and intelligently, the advantages of access to the worldwide community outweigh the possible risks.

Use of the GAA network is a privilege extended to students who act in an ethical, considerate and responsible manner. Abuses of the Internet, including participation in chat lines; accessing personal email; plagiarizing the work of others; trespassing in another student's space; displaying or downloading information or images that are offensive, dangerous and/or objectionable; and giving our personal information, may result in loss of internet access privileges. Violations may also lead to disciplinary actions outlined elsewhere in this Handbook.

IV: ACADEMIC HONESTY GUIDELINES

Failure to credit information that is not your own, whether in a research paper, homework or test, is known as plagiarism. Such activity is discouraged in the Elementary at GAA.

Plagiarism is using the ideas or words of others without clearly acknowledging or crediting the source of that information. Plagiarism is regarded as a type of theft and there are laws against it. To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use:

Elementary Community Handbook

- another person's idea, opinion, or theory,
- a presentation that is not your creation,
- quotations,
- a paraphrased version of an original.

If a student is found to have presented the work of another as their own, he/she will be required to re-write the assignment during detention. Parents and the Principal will be notified and a record of the infraction will be maintained. Further offences will have serious consequences.

Elementary Community Handbook

Guidance Counselor

Leave a message with Reception

Communication

Activities/Calendar

Reception

GAAzette Newsletter

Parent Relations Executive (PRE)

Parent Association (GAAPA)

GAAPA representatives

GEMS AMERICAN ACADEMY PARENT CONTRACT

At GAA, we recognize that a successful partnership between school and home is one of the cornerstones to a child's educational success. We would respectfully ask parents to support to this partnership by completing and returning this Parent Contract to Reception.

In order to best support my child's learning, I will

- Provide him or her with a quiet, orderly place to study
- Ensure my child is prepared for class
- Deliver my child to school on time every day
- Attend special activities sponsored by GAA to build my understanding of learning outcomes and my capacity to support learning at home.
- Read all communications from the school: Student Passport, Class newsletters GLG, Weebly and GAAzette

I have read and understood both the Parent Contract and the Community Handbook.

Parent of: _____

Grade: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____