



# Secondary Community Handbook 2014-15

### WELCOME TO GEMS AMERICAN ACADEMY – ABU DHABI

GEMS American Academy is a school poised and ready to move forward in our collective quest to become a school well known throughout the international school community for its high quality college preparatory program and inviting school community.

Upon entering our school, one can immediately feel from the quality of our daily interactions and connections, that our school is built upon the strength of relationships among students, parents and highly-skilled teachers. Such a collaborative and supportive environment supports our greater goal to foster a Culture of Kindness throughout the school. Our high expectations for each student's learning are well matched within an environment of caring and support, and can be best described as a *student-centered* approach to learning.

To prepare our students for a quickly changing world, we must anticipate the skills that students will need in an uncertain future. As educators, we are charged with the task of preparing our students for a new age in which exciting possibilities and unsettling questions exist for them. Our students must develop adaptable skills today to greet the jobs, opportunities, technologies and uncertainties that await them tomorrow.

In response to this challenge, we know that our students will need to practice living within a Culture of Kindness, develop flexibility of thought and ability in an ever-changing world context, embrace differences, and consider the ideas of others. And, we know that they will need to gain skills that will enable them to communicate, create, debate, innovate and collaborate. Fluencies for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century also include the ability to think critically, solve novel and complex problems, and communicate in multiple languages.

We not only want our students to gather all the tools and abilities they will need to thrive in the future, but we want them to develop social and emotional intelligence as well. We want them to develop a sense of personal responsibility, care for others and serve as stewards of the environment. We want them to care, commit, act, respond and engage with the global community. We want our students to become whole-minded thinkers with uncompromising character. *We want to inspire and prepare every student to make a difference.*

With our GAA Mission and Core Values, we will ensure that every student achieves academic growth as well as personal growth within our Core Values of World Citizenship, Universal Values, Leadership Qualities, and Forward Thinking.

We are proud to establish the International Baccalaureate this year as an important step in establishing ourselves as a strong member of the international school community, offering a relevant curriculum and program for students who will one day engage in and lead the global community.

The 2014-2015 school year holds exciting possibilities for teaching and learning.

We welcome you to join us in the journey ahead.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Miner, D.Ed.  
Head of School

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to the 2014-2015 school year at GEMS American Academy Abu Dhabi. This is going to be an incredibly exciting year of growth for the Secondary School as we celebrate the first graduating class of GAA Abu Dhabi. Now an IB World School, GAA provides a comprehensive education with academics, arts, activities, and athletics at its core. This year the academic program at GAA takes on even more meaning for students as they prepare for admission into prestigious universities all over the world.

To the students: The single most memorable thing you can do in Secondary School is get involved. Be part of the school beyond the classroom and the school day. Your participation in the activities offered at school will only serve to make school a better place and you a better and more well-rounded person.

To the Parents: We would like to thank you in advance for your support of the programs and activities GAA offers. Each time you encourage your child to participate or adjust the family schedule to make it possible for your child to be at school late or on the weekend, you are being a supportive cog in the partnership of your child's success. All the research shows that students get higher grades when they participate in after school programs. Without your support, it would not be possible to field sports teams, send students on a Model United Nations' trip, perform a concert, or host a tournament, for example. GAA is truly a community school and it takes a community to build and maintain world-class standards.

I think a lot about what we want GAA to be about, what we want the school to represent. The phrase 21<sup>st</sup> Century learner comes up a lot nowadays and sounds great, like something we want to strive to be, but the meaning can feel vague. To me, 21<sup>st</sup> century learner means helping our students to develop and possess timeless traits and personal characteristics that will lead to success in the adult world. I believe the embodiment of these traits is the IB Learner profile. These IB Learner Profile traits are Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Open-Minded, Caring, Risk Takers, Balanced and Reflective. As GAA embarks on its first year as an IB DP school I am excited to have the opportunity to build on the PYP program and continue to help our students develop these. As a quality Secondary School I believe our job is to strive to embody these traits on a daily basis. As teachers and administrators we will strive to model these learning traits and work on a daily basis to help instill them in our students.

On the occasion you might like to speak with us, please feel free to call the Secondary School office to schedule an appointment (02 5574880 extension 431). Scheduling an appointment ahead of time will ensure a chance to meet with me.

Again, welcome back to a new school year GAA Wildcats.

Sincerely,

Craig Randall  
Secondary Principal

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## GEMS CORE EDUCATIONAL VALUES

### World Citizenship

Our students learn about the world and the people in it, 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 both independently and with others developing 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.



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## IB LEARNER PROFILE

The aim of all IB programs 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/Courageous:** 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

#### MISSION STATEMENT

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.

#### GAA ABU DHABI: STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

GAA promotes high standards of scholarship, citizenship and responsibility within a supportive international community. We undertake a student-centered approach to teaching and learning. We rely heavily for our success on teamwork and collaboration among students, teachers and parents. Our goal is for our students to develop, and commit to, the understandings, skills and dispositions of citizenship, leadership, creativity and sustainability.

##### We offer:

- an American-based curriculum 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 strong pedagogical 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 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.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

Our Secondary School provides a responsive and nurturing environment. This program addresses the unique needs of adolescents and young adults aiming to make learning worthwhile and rewarding. Students learn to take initiative, to think and act with intelligence, to express ideas and feelings in a socially acceptable manner and to accept responsibility for their actions and the consequences of them. We promote honesty and integrity together with developing citizenship and leadership skills.

The Secondary program is based on US and International aims – with a focus on deep understandings and transferrable skills. The core academic program intends to build skills and understandings around literacy, numeracy, creativity and sustainability. This core is supplemented by instruction in Art, Music, Information Technology, World Languages and Physical Education.

## SCHEDULE

GAA Secondary School follows a rotating eight day schedule with 8 x 40 minute periods per day. Many subjects prefer “doubles” of 80 minute blocks and these will be shown on your child’s individual schedules. Passing time of 5 minutes is provided between lessons.

**2014-2015 Secondary School Timetable**

Start	Stop	Time		Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
7:45	7:50	0:05	Attendance								
7:50	8:30	0:40	Period 1	A	I	G	O	E	M	C	K
8:30	8:35	0:05	pass/break								
8:35	9:15	0:40	Period 2	B	J	H	P	F	N	D	L
9:15	9:20	0:05	Pass								
9:20	9:40	0:20	Homeroom/Sunday assembly								
9:40	9:45	0:05	Pass								
9:45	10:25	0:40	Period 3	C	K	A	I	G	O	E	M
10:25	10:30	0:05	Pass/break								
10:30	11:10	0:40	Period 4	D	L	B	J	H	P	F	N
11:10	11:15	0:05	Pass								
11:15	11:55	0:40	Period 5	E	M	C	K	A	I	G	O
11:55	12:00	0:05	Pass/break								
12:00	12:40	0:40	Period 6	F	N	D	L	B	J	H	P
12:40	12:45	0:05	Pass								
12:45	13:05	0:20	A: Lunch B: Recess								
13:05	13:25	0:20	A: Recess B: Lunch								
13:25	13:30	0:05	Pass								
13:30	14:10	0:40	Period 7	G	O	E	M	C	K	A	I
14:10	14:15	0:05	Pass/break								
14:15	14:55	0:40	Period 8	H	P	F	N	D	L	B	J
14:55	15:00	0:05	Dismissal								

**HOME TRANSPORTATION**

If a student wishes to change the method of home transportation to the school bus then the Secondary Office must be informed. Parents are required to contact the Secondary Office by email before noon in order that this can be approved by the Secondary Principal/Vice Principal and communicated to the Transportation Office. Changes will only be approved if there is enough room on the bus (please see page 30 for additional information).

**HOMEROOM**

Homerooms are organized by grade according to the four Houses: Lions, Panthers, Pumas and Tigers. Homeroom serves as a "home base" for students and allows for some time to check in with each student, to address any questions or concerns a student may have and to provide a place for students to obtain school information and announcements. There will be House competitions throughout the year as a means of drawing the school together in a spirit of healthy and positive competition.

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## LUNCH

Students have the option of bringing lunch from home or purchasing a school meal. The ordering of food from outside establishments is not permitted. We encourage students to eat healthy foods. Menus for each month are posted on the school website. Water is provided for all students, and students are required to bring their own refillable water bottles. We encourage students to bring healthy snack from home to eat during the morning break. We suggest any food sent to school should be low in refined sugar and not contain any nuts or nut products. Carbonated and energy drinks are not to be brought to school.

## RECESS

Students have scheduled recess times at lunch and 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 any equipment being used.

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## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

In a school such as GAA, the faculty and staff attempt to provide students with many opportunities to develop their particular interests and abilities. This association with students who share the same interests allows for camaraderie that fosters an increased sense of purpose and a feeling of belonging outside of the classroom. Athletics, school government, class organizations and special interest clubs provide hands-on opportunities for students to learn and participate in leadership skills. Student pride and school spirit promote good citizenship that carries over to future community involvement and citizen participation. Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of after school activities and advisors attempt to minimize scheduling conflicts.

## CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

At GEMS American Academy we offer both non-competitive and competitive sporting opportunities for our students. In addition we also offer a wide range of academic and creative pursuits to enrich students schooling experience. These activities are designed to provide an opportunity for students to socialize with each other in a fun atmosphere. Some after school activities may incur an added fee due to various factors and this will be communicated before the activity begins. Students who participate in the non-competitive programs should be picked up promptly at 16:00 at the end of the activity.

Students not participating in an after school program are required to go home by their normal mode of transport at 3:05 p.m. Parents who are waiting for activities to finish are encouraged to take siblings outside to the playground. Students participating in after school activities are able to sign up for a late bus service. Please help us keep halls and the Reception area quiet as they are working environments, even during after school hours.

### COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES

Are for students in Grade 2 and above and specific information about when these opportunities are available will be communicated by the Athletic and Activities Director. Grades 2 through 6 competitive activities are inclusive in nature and as much as possible will allow all students to be become involved. Competitive programs in Grade 7 through 12 are more competitive in nature and involve tryouts, league games and end of season tournaments. Students are expected to commit for the entire season.

Further information about the activities program at GAA is available in the Athletics and Activities Handbook. Please contact the respective receptionist for a copy to be forward to yourself.

The school offers a wide range of activities outside school hours. These range from soccer to newspaper; basketball to origami and many others. Some activities are very popular while others are more selective. The programs offered vary seasonally, as well as from year to year, depending on supply and demand. A few of the more specialized clubs require a fee but most are provided within the school framework at no extra charge.

The success of each activity depends very much on the enthusiasm and commitment of the student and their parents. Students are encouraged to attend at least one activity per term.

### ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY POLICIES

#### STUDENT CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY HONOR

Students participating in co-curricular programs are considered to be in positions of leadership; therefore, it is an honor to represent GAA, not a right. They represent the school and community.

In order to participate in co-curricular activities at GAA, a student cannot be earning more than one grade below a C. Eligibility will be reviewed three times a year at the following times:

- First mid-semester progress report issued
- First semester report card
- Second semester report card (to determine eligibility for 1<sup>st</sup> season following year)

Students are eligible to participate in co-curricular activities under the following guidelines: Students may not have an 'F' in any subject and must have a minimum grade point average of a C or 2.0 in all courses. Eligibility will be tracked during the season of the activity. The 'Eligibility Day' will be set at the beginning of each season. If a student is deemed eligible to participate on this given day they are deemed eligible to participate and travel for the remainder of the season. Report cards from the previous reporting period may also be used to determine eligibility.

When teachers turn in their grades for eligibility, any grades of D or lower will be noted by the teacher if they feel the students' eligibility should be reviewed. Questions regarding participation may also occur if a student is involved in academic dishonesty, violates the disciplinary code or is excessively absent from school. The school is aware that each student has a specific set of needs – some excel academically, some excel athletically or artistically, some excel at both. The purpose of the School's eligibility policy is not to deny students the opportunity to participate in an area where they excel due to poor academic performance. Rather, the goal is to review each student's case and to make a decision based on input

provided by the professional and personal counsel of the student's teacher and parents. The Principal will then make the decision for eligibility. The following factors will be taken into consideration.

- the student has been working to the best of his/her ability;
- all homework has been completed on a timely basis;
- the student demonstrates a desire to improve;
- it is in the best interest of the student;
- illness or uncontrollable absence has negatively affected the student's grade.

## STUDENT COUNCIL

The Secondary School Student Council is dedicated to providing leadership opportunities for students, providing services to the school and community and making the lives of students more enjoyable. The organization serves as a link between students and teachers, organizes social activities and assists the greater school community in various events and activities throughout the year. Students from grades 6-12 are eligible to serve on the Student Council. It is considered a privilege to be selected, and students involved with the student Council are leaders who demonstrate the qualities of exceptional and successful students.

## FIELD TRIPS

Students may be asked to participate in educational field trips during the year. Teachers will always request parental permission for their children to take part in such events well in advance.

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## SCHOOL UNIFORMS REGULATION

### DRESS CODE: SECONDARY

COMPULSORY UNIFORM FOR ALL STUDENTS

2014-2015 School Year

DAILY SCHOOL UNIFORM						
Grade	Gender	Tops	Bottoms	Tie	Shoes	Belt
Grades 6 to 12	Boys	Boys BLUE OXFORD SHIRT SHORT SLEEVE w/ LOGO	NAVY STRIPE TROUSER FOR BOYS	STRIPE TIE	BLACK SHOES	BLACK LEATHER BELT
	Girls	Girls BLUE OXFORD SHIRT SHORT SLEEVE w/ LOGO	NAVY STRIPE TROUSER TAILORED FOR GIRLS, OR NAVY STRIPE SKORTS FOR GIRLS, OR NAVY SKIRT FOR GIRLS	STRIPE TIE, OR STRIPE GIRLS BOW TIE	SOCKS- SOLID BLACK, BLUE OR WHITE	

**ACCESSORIES**

ACCESSORIES	
REQUIRED	OPTIONAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>P.E. BAG with GAA logo</li> <li>BASEBALL CAP with GAA logo</li> <li>Navy Swim Cap (for students with long hair)</li> <li>If students wear sweater over uniform shirt: V – NECK SWEATER WITH LOGO (for Boys) or CARDIGAN SWEATER WITH LOGO (for Girls)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GAA SWIMMING COSTUME / TRUNK</li> <li>GAA BACK PACK</li> <li>If girls wear LEGGINGS/STOCKINGS/PANTYHOSE/TIGHTS FOR SKORTS OR SKIRTS FOR GIRLS instead of socks, color must be SOLID NAVY BLUE or BLACK.</li> </ul>



## P.E. UNIFORM GRADES 6 TO 12

PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNIFORM				
Grade	When to wear	Tops	Bottoms	Shoes
Grades 6 to 12	Students will wear regular school uniform to school every day. At the beginning of PE class, they will change into this PE uniform. At the end of class, they will change back into regular school uniform.	SKY BLUE POLO Shirt with GAA logo	NAVY MICRO SHORTS	QUALITY ATHLETIC SHOES (NOT UNIFORM)  WHITE SPORT SOCKS

GAA may not require uniforms whilst participating in after or out of school activities or on designated special dress days. However, students should be properly dressed in a manner that is not offensive to our host country. The following rules will apply:

- No tight clothes.
- No spaghetti strap shirts.
- No exposed mid-riff.
- No hoodies
- No offensive logos or expressions on clothing.

The Secondary Administration may require a student to return home for the purpose of changing clothing. Our policy is: *Wear clothing that is respectful to yourself and others.*

### Personal Presentation:

Students are expected to arrive at school and depart from school in full school uniform. During school hours and while in school uniform the following rules apply:

- No excessive make up or jewelry is allowed.
- Students with pierced ears may wear one pair of studs or tiny hoop earrings.
- Rings should be small without sharp edges or loose parts.
- Necklaces should not be visible.
- Except for tasteful natural color highlights, students are not allowed to dye their hair.
- No visible body piercing.
- Non-regulation outerwear may not be worn in school; it should be kept in lockers.

## CURRICULUM

### OVERVIEW

In GAA, courses in grades 6-12 are in three different categories:

1. GAA Core Courses/IBDP Courses
2. ADEC Required Courses
3. GAA Elective Courses

Each student's program is made up of a combination of these different categories of courses.

Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) requirements vary depending upon a child's nationality and religion. Our school uses information provided by parents during the school registration process. Requirements for Arabic Language, Islamic Studies and UAE Social Studies courses vary according to each student's registered nationality and religion. In order to comply with ADEC regulations, every student has specific course requirements according to one of the following four categories:

- Group 1 – Arab Muslim
- Group 2 – Arab Non-Muslim
- Group 3 – Non-Arab Muslim
- Group 4 – Non-Arab Non-Muslim

### HOMEWORK

Students will receive regular but manageable amounts of homework which will be given in class. Students will also be provided with an agenda in which they can record their homework.

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## ASSESSMENT

### ASSESSMENT PHILOSOPHY

GAA assessment beliefs and practices provide a positive, continuous and supportive mechanism that promotes and improves student learning and achievement, guides instruction and practice and evaluates both program and instructional effectiveness.

### GRADING PROCEDURES

Semester examinations are taken by all students in Grades 9 through 12. Time is set aside at the end of the first and second semester for semester examinations or appropriate summary assessments. A special exam schedule with lengthened exam periods is created for these exams. Students will take no more than two exams per day. First semester exams will cover all the material taught in the first semester;

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second semester examinations at the end of the year will cover all second semester material and may cover concepts, topics and information from the entire year's work.

Semester grades are determined using the following formula:

- Semester work = 80%
- Semester examination = 20%
- Semester grade = 100%

## GRADING SYSTEMS 6-12 & GRADE POINT AVERAGE SCALE 9-12

Letter grades (A to F) are awarded for all courses. A standard 4.0 grading scale conversion is used to convert letter grades to a grade point average. The following grading scale shows the letter grade and grade point average (GPA) equivalent.

Grade Point Average Scale 9-12	
Grade	GPA
A+	4.3
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
D-	0.7
F	0.0

Note that the GAA scale is aligned to the ADEC scale, where an F is 0-49%.

IB courses will receive a weighted GPA acknowledging the rigorous demands of those courses.

## REPORT CARDS

At the end of each semester a full report card will be sent home. We encourage parents to contact teachers if they have questions or concerns about student progress.

### STANDARDIZED TESTS

Two times each year, in the fall and spring, students in Grades 1-10 sit the MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) test. This is an adaptive standardized comprehensive test that measures a student's abilities and achievements in Language Arts, Mathematics and Science. This test is given to students in a growing number of international schools around the world. Scores are reported to the parents and will eventually become part of the student's school records.

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### ATTENDANCE

The school day for all grades commences at 7:45am. Dismissal time is 2:55pm. The hours for after school activities vary. Most activities start at 3:00pm and finish at 4:00pm. 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 parental supervision while on school premises before and after these times.

### ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

It is expected students will attend class every school day. All teachers will report attendance each period as well as keep an accurate record for each class. If a student arrives late to school, they are required to go directly to the Secondary Office immediately after arriving on campus in order to obtain a Student Late Pass. School clerical staff will record every time a student is late to school. The only excuse that will be accepted is a dated parent/guardian note, or a stamped and signed note from the doctor/agency the student visited that morning. School administration will take necessary steps to modify the behavior of students frequently late to school.

#### **ADEC Requirements:**

Article 48 of the Bilo of Private Education Law (ADEC, 2001) states that students shall be expelled for the following non-disciplinary reason: "If the student is absent from school for no reason or for unacceptable reason for 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days." Article 47 states: "The absence days by an acceptable excuse shall not be calculated from the total absences which lead to ban the student from an examination or expel him/her from the school."

#### **GAA Minimum Requirements:**

GAA will maintain a minimum requirement of attendance for each semester. Students must miss no more than seven (7) periods of a course meets per semester to receive credit in the course. Any student who misses eight (8) or more classes per semester will not receive credit in the course for that semester. All absences from class, whether excused or unexcused, with the exception of field trips or school sponsored activities/sports, are considered as absences for the minimum attendance policy. In an effort to help our students maintain good attendance, Secondary administration will contact parents at four (4), six (6) and seven (7) absences to discuss the importance of attending school regularly. Every effort must be made by the student and the parents/guardian to see that students are in all their classes every day. Extraordinary situations will be reviewed and considered by the administration.

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## LATE ARRIVAL - TARDY/EARLY PICK-UP

Students are expected to be in class on time. Teachers will direct tardy students to the Secondary Office.

Each semester students are given an allowance of four (4) tardies. After these four are exhausted, students are assigned to and expected to serve an afterschool detention for each additional tardy thereafter through eight (8). The ninth (9) will result in a half day in-school "Saturday" detention. Any tardies received after that will be dealt with at the discretion of the Secondary School Administration. Experience tells us that four "pre-excused" tardies per semester allows for the unpredictable nature of morning traffic. Therefore, students who exceed the four may not be excused from detentions.

Parents must notify the Secretary by phone or email if their child is going to be absent or needs to leave school early.

**Attendance and student participation in learning activities is important; therefore parents are urged to schedule medical, dental and other appointments after school hours or during vacations. Good attendance is essential if the student is to be successful and faculty can best help students learn when students meet this expectation.** Excused absences include only school sponsored field trips. If a student is sick, he/she must contact their teacher to see what was assigned. It is the student's responsibility to complete all work he/she has missed.

### Planned Absence other than School Holiday

There are times when an absence is unavoidable. In such cases, the parent is responsible for contacting the school. Assignments and examinations often cannot be given in advance and will have to be completed upon the student's return. These absences are included in the attendance policy

### Unexcused Absence from Class

If a student skips a class, his/her parents will be informed, and the student will meet with the Principal, who will take appropriate action.

Truancy/Cutting class will not be tolerated under any circumstances. The consequences for truancy/cutting class are for the 1st offence: Saturday School, 2<sup>nd</sup> offence: out of school suspension.

A student is considered truant if he/she:

- Is absent without knowledge and consent of parent/guardian
- Falsifies parental notification regarding absence
- Leaves school without signing out at the office
- Is absent from class without permission
- Obtains a pass to go to a certain plan and does not report there
- Fails to attend scheduled meetings, assemblies, etc
- Is absent from class, after arriving on campus, without the consent of the school
- Leaves class and does not return.

## CODE OF CONDUCT - SCHOOL BEHAVIOR

We believe that a positive academic and social climate is necessary for student learning. We also believe that responsibility for establishing this climate is shared by each student, faculty member and parent. We value having students follow reasonable rules and it is important for students to understand their purpose. Part of the learning process involves making decisions and sometimes making mistakes. However, we expect that students will learn from their mistakes and demonstrate growth. Our code of behavior is reflected in the following statements:

**RESPECT YOURSELF  
 RESPECT OTHERS  
 RESPECT YOUR SCHOOL**

At GAA a proactive and collaborative approach is used to solve discipline issues. Students, parents, teachers and administrators are committed to working together to maintain high standards of behavior. Students are expected to abide by school rules and procedures whenever they are at school, including after-school and evening activities, and on weekends.

### STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following table is a statement of responsibilities and rights. It is through mutual acceptance of responsibilities that rights exist. A right exists only to the extent that there is a responsibility on the part of others to respect that right.

STUDENT RIGHTS	STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES
EVERY STUDENT HAS A RIGHT to relevant education.	EVERY STUDENT HAS A RESPONSIBILITY to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ take materials to class</li> <li>✓ complete and turn in assignments on time</li> <li>✓ give every task their best effort</li> </ul>
EVERY STUDENT HAS A RIGHT to be safe and secure in the school community.	EVERY STUDENT HAS A RESPONSIBILITY to respect the security of others and deal with conflict in an appropriate manner.
EVERY STUDENT HAS A RIGHT to expect reasonable and socially responsible behavior from others.	EVERY STUDENT HAS A RESPONSIBILITY to treat themselves and others with respect by speaking and acting in a socially responsible manner.
EVERY STUDENT HAS A RIGHT to a positive learning environment.	EVERY STUDENT HAS A RESPONSIBILITY to follow class rules by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ being seated by the time class starts.</li> <li>✓ listening attentively.</li> <li>✓ following directions.</li> <li>✓ giving others an opportunity to learn.</li> <li>✓ remaining in class until dismissed by the teacher.</li> <li>✓ moving through the buildings in an orderly manner.</li> </ul>
EVERY STUDENT HAS A RIGHT to be part of a school of which they can be proud.	EVERY STUDENT HAS A RESPONSIBILITY to take pride in their school by helping maintain the campus, the buildings and all materials and equipment.

EVERY STUDENT HAS A RIGHT to his/her good name.

EVERY STUDENT HAS A RESPONSIBILITY to respect the reputation of others.

## BULLYING PREVENTION

### 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 do you do if you are bullied or you notice others bullying?*

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. 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. 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.

## DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

GAA is a school that honors and promotes respect for others, inclusiveness, individual differences, and appropriate behavior. We believe that ethics and values are essential in a principled community, and expect behavior that upholds the dignity and self-worth of all community members.

The primary responsibility for a student's behavior rests with the individual student. Students not adhering to GAA rules / policies will be subject to disciplinary action. Any Secondary school students who draw attention to themselves for behavior that does not cast a positive light on themselves, their peers, or GAA will also be subject to disciplinary action.

### Compliance with Rules

Students shall comply with all rules and regulations adopted by GEMS American Academy which will be enforced by school administration and staff. The following rules identify, but do not limit, the types of activities covered by the school rules and regulations.

- On the school grounds or in the vicinity of the school during and immediately before or immediately after school hours.
- On the school grounds or in the vicinity of the school at any other time when the school is being used by school groups.
- Off the school grounds at a school activity, function, event or any school-sponsored trip.
- Off the school grounds in any case involving local law, provincial, or national authorities.

### Honesty / Ethical

We strive to have all of our students live up to the high standards at GAA and it is imperative that students always tell the truth when speaking to any adult at school about a behavior issue. Consequences for not being immediately honest with an adult regarding a behavior issue will result in consequences being doubled.

Failure to abide by the rules and regulations in this handbook may result in detention, Saturday School, suspension or expulsion.

- **Detentions** are held after school hours from 3 - 4pm. Consequences of failing to attend a detention will result in a further detention. Consequences of failure to attend at detention will result in a re-scheduled detention. Failure to attend the second detention will result in two further detentions and on the third non-attendance a Saturday School detention will be issued.
- **Saturday School** is held from 8 – 12 pm. Failure to attend three Saturday schools without an acceptable reason, such as illness supported by a medical certificate, will result in an out of school suspension, which is recorded on the student's transcript.
- **Suspension** can be in or out of school and the student is responsible during the period of suspension for obtaining and completing the assignments given during the period of absence from classes.
- **Expulsion** may be the consequence for serious and/or repeated infractions.
- Any behavior or activity out of school that is illegal or brings disrepute to GAA may result in suspension or expulsion from school.

## SCHOOL RULES

### GENERAL BEHAVIOR

It is the responsibility of each student to evaluate the appropriateness of, and to be accountable for, all of his/her actions. Any indecent, discourteous or disruptive act is inappropriate and unacceptable. This includes any action inside or outside the classroom which interferes with the educational process or the well-being of others. The following list of unacceptable actions and definitions is provided as a guide but is not intended to be a complete list.

### Leaving Campus

Students are to remain on campus at all times during the school day. If students must leave because of illness, the School Nurse will call the parents. Students will not be allowed to leave the campus gates without approval from the Secondary office.



## Damage to School Property

School property is to be respected, used and enjoyed by all members of our community. Please treat property with respect and care. Students will face disciplinary consequences and will provide financial restitution for school property that is damaged.

## Textbooks Musical Instruments and Other Resources

Are provided to all students on a loan basis. Students are held responsible for books checked out by them and must pay for lost or damaged books. Students will also be charged for deliberate damage (including writing and graffiti) to books. Secondary School students supply their own notebooks, paper, pencils, pens and other school supplies. Lost text books should be reported to the Teacher Resource Center Clerk as soon as possible. The student will be charged the cost of the book plus shipping, processing and handling costs. Once a receipt for payment from the Accountant is handed to the Teacher Resource Center Clerk, the book will be replaced.

## Lockers

Each student has a locker assigned upon arrival at GAA. Each student must bring their own lock which must be used at all times. Students must ensure the safety of their personal belongings as GAA will take no responsibility for any valuables, money, mobile phones, games, etc. that are lost at school.

## Mobiles

Mobile phones distract from the learning environment and are not to be used without teacher permission during class time. Phones on display, and in use, during class without permission will be confiscated and turned into the Vice Principal. GAA assumes no responsibility for replacing these items if brought to school.

- 1st Offense: Kept until the end of the day.
- 2nd Offense: Kept until the end of the next school day.
- 3rd Offense: Kept for 5 school days.

## Discrimination

GAA does not tolerate discrimination. All students will be treated respectfully regardless of gender, ethnicity, abilities, etc. Likewise students are expected to treat all adults with respect.

## Pool/Gymnasium Safety

Students are expected to abide by all pool and gym safety procedures explained by adults and supervisors.

## Supervision Before and After School

Students are expected to leave the campus promptly upon completion of their scheduled classes and after school sponsored activities.

## Visiting Students

GAA students wishing to bring friends, relatives and/or family members to join them during a given school day MUST obtain permission from the Secondary office at least two (2) full days before the visit day.

## Littering

GAA is a clean, GREEN campus. Students found littering will be required to assist any cleanup duties resulting from their actions.

## Elevator Use

Students are not permitted to use the elevator at any time unless specific written permission has been given to the student by the Nurse and/or Secondary Administration. Consequences for unauthorized use will range from detention to Saturday School.

### **Gum Chewing**

Chewing gum is not permitted on campus on school days from the time a student arrives on campus until he or she departs. The consequences range from a warning to after-school-detention.

### **Candy and Carbonated Drinks**

Candy and carbonated drinks are not permitted in the cafeteria as per UAE Law. Energy drinks are not permitted in the school.

### **Bullying**

Any written or verbal language or physical gesture directed at a teacher or at another student, which is insolent, demeaning, abusive, or implicitly or explicitly implies a threat of bodily harm is totally unacceptable, shall be deemed harassment, and will be dealt with as such. This includes actions in online e-forums such as social networks, chats, blogs and the like. (Bullying and Intimidation). The consequences for bullying range from after school detention to out of school suspension.

### **Fighting**

To contend through physical contact or altercation, all who participate, regardless of who initiates the contact are guilty. This includes "fooling around" or "play" fighting. Consequences for fighting range from Saturday School to expulsion.

### **Profanity**

Profanity, whether expressed in written form, verbal comments, or through hand gestures, will not be tolerated. The consequence for using practicing profanity is after school detention.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is defined as "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone from or in the educational setting." This can also include, but is not limited to, sharing inappropriate pictures via email and on the Internet and inappropriate sexual advances conveyed in online forums such as social network, chats and email. School policy makes it clear that a student may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion if the Head of School determines that the student has committed sexual harassment.

### **Stealing/Vandalism**

Theft and vandalism will not be tolerated. Students will be held responsible for behavior (regardless of their intent) which results in the damage or loss of school property or the personal property of another student. Consequences will range from restitution to expulsion.

### **Smoking**

Students will neither be allowed to smoke nor be in possession of tobacco products under any circumstances on the GAA campus, including all of the parking lots. This also applies to all school related functions whether on or off campus. Anyone caught smoking will automatically be given an out of school suspension.

### **Drug Free Environment**

Unlawful possession, use, or sale of any controlled substance or alcoholic beverage (including being under the influence of) is a serious matter, and a violation of the laws of our host country, the United Arab Emirates. Any infraction, including possession of drug paraphernalia while under the supervision of the school subjects a student to expulsion. GAA reserves the right to monitor its students' health through medical testing for illegal substances should it be deemed necessary by the school administration.

## Weapons /Look a-like Weapons

Use or possession will result in recommendation for expulsion.

## Public Displays of Affection/Inappropriate Physical Contact

Public displays of affection and inappropriate physical contact include, but are not limited to, hand holding, arms around each other, kissing, hugging, sitting in between the legs of another. Public displays of affection are not appropriate in the UAE and therefore not at GAA. Consequences range from a warning to detention, to Saturday School to suspension.

## CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

In order for students to make the most of their educational experiences they must assume the responsibility to:

- Report promptly to classes, assemblies and other required student activities.
- Bring appropriate textbooks and supplies to class with them.
- Not chew gum, or bring food or drink (except water) to the classroom.
- Be attentive to teacher instruction, work on assigned tasks, participate in class activities and complete all assigned work to the best of their ability.
- Be respectful of the staff, other students and the learning environment.
- 

Failing to follow these rules may result in an after school detention.

## DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

When a student's behavior violates school rules, he/she will be subject to a range of disciplinary consequences at the discretion of teachers and school administration. Repeated violation of school rules and procedures may make a student subject to expulsion. The following is a range of disciplinary actions that may be taken:

- College Application Reporting
- Verbal reprimand / student conference
- Parent/Guardian Contact
- After school appointments
- School Service
- After School Detention
- Saturday School
- In-School Detention
- Out of School Suspension (OSS)
- Expulsion

## College Application Reporting

On school reports provided to university admissions offices, specifically those associated with The Common Application, **GAA is bound by an obligation to report disciplinary violations from the ninth grade forward**, whether related to academic misconduct or behavioral misconduct that results in

disciplinary action. These actions could include, but are not limited to, academic malpractice (including plagiarism and academic dishonesty), academic probation, suspension, or expulsion.

### School Service

Required tasks for students who have shown an inability or unwillingness to follow school rules, e.g. wiping Dining Hall tables, picking up litter, cleaning desks.

### Detention

Teachers as well as administrators may issue detentions. Detention is after school which will be served between 3.00 and 4.00 on Sunday and Wednesday. During detention Students will thoughtfully and completely fill in the provided behavior reflection form then they will work on homework not requiring the use of electronic devices.

### Saturday School

Administrators may issue a Saturday School Detention which will be served between 8:00 am and 12:00 noon on an assigned Saturday. Students assigned Saturday School should report to the Secondary office before 8:00 AM in school dress code and prepared to work on school assignments.

### In School Detention

Students may be assigned either a half or a full day In-School Detention. Students in In-School detention are provided with assignments and required to spend their time reading and writing. They may complete their assignments for full credit.

### Out-of-School Suspension

Suspension is the temporary removal of a student from school for various reasons which include but are not limited to disrespect for an adult, lack of cooperation, or disrupting the teaching and learning process. Students who are suspended out of school are not allowed on the school campus until they have been reinstated. Suspended students are not allowed to participate in school activities.

### Behavioral Probation

Behavioral probation is determined by the administration for chronic or serious violations of school conduct. Behavioral probation includes a designated period of time, usually with disciplinary sanctions, given to the student to prove him/herself as a responsible member of the student body. Students on behavioral probation are restricted from participation in school activities unless Principal approval has been given.

### Expulsion

Expulsion is permanent removal from the student body. Only the Head of School, following the policy stated in the school board policy handbook and after recommendation of the Principal, has the authority to make the decision to expel a student. Students who are expelled for disciplinary reasons are not allowed to return to campus to attend any activities, nor may they re-enroll at a later date.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

GAA expects and requires that students will uphold the highest standards of ethics and academic excellence. The Academic Honesty Policy represents our effort to guarantee that students are committed to building and maintaining a learning community of the highest integrity by carrying out academic tasks with honesty in all situations.

Definition: “Academic dishonesty” includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Plagiarism (i.e., using someone else’s ideas or words without giving credit to that person, including direct quotes, paraphrasing, or summarizing)
- Copying by any means other students’ homework (students who are observed in common areas looking at their own and another student’s lab notebook, worksheet, or any other homework assignment would be assumed to be in violation of this rule regardless of the exact wording of their work. Equally, students submitting assignments with identical phrases in free-response sections would be assumed to have violated the policy)
- Allowing one’s homework to be copied. In this regard, all homework is considered individual work unless otherwise stated by the teacher. As such, no student should physically give his/her homework to another student. If copying occurs, it will be presumed that the student who gave his/her homework to the copying student allowed the homework to be copied.
- Using written formulas, hidden reference sheets, notes, codes, or key words on one’s person or objects for use on any test, quiz, presentation, or assignment without prior permission from the teacher; also, carrying such materials with the intention of using them on a test or exam
- Looking at another student’s test or quiz during its administration or using programmed material in watches, calculators, phones, MP3 players, or computer programs without permission from the teacher
- Giving answers or questions to another student during or after a test or quiz; receiving answers or questions from a student who is or has already taken a test or quiz (students engaged in any form of unauthorized communication while in the possession of a test or quiz may be presumed to be in violation of this rule)
- Using the Internet, laptop computers, text messaging, phone cameras, MP3 players, or other modern technology to plagiarize, copy, or share work with another student (including but not limited to copying and pasting in whole or in part material from the Internet, purchasing material from the Internet to be submitted as one’s own work, using a translation program for a world language class, presenting lab data found on the Internet as one’s original work, using e-mail to share individual homework assignments)
- Taking credit for work done by someone else (e.g., family members or tutors) including submitting rough drafts or similar created by another person
- Presenting invented data (e.g., lab results for lab activities that have not actually been conducted), information, or cited sources (in a bibliography) as authentic
- Any deceitful means used on a test, quiz, or assignment, including but not limited to stealing electronic or paper copies of tests from teachers’ classrooms or computers; receiving copies of

tests, quizzes, or assignments from students who took the class in previous years; possessing unauthorized teachers' materials; taking credit for work not completed (as in group assignments); submitting the same assignment for credit in multiple classes without teachers' permission

- Any other behavior that could be reasonably construed as academic dishonesty, including class-specific expectations explained in teachers' syllabi.

Note: On cooperative work: all written work is individual work unless otherwise stated by the classroom teacher. Although it is acceptable to talk with classmates, friends, and family members about what you are studying and thinking, do not compose written work collaboratively, and make sure that written work you submit for credit is presented entirely in your own words when quotation marks are not used.

### Consequences for Acts of Academic Dishonesty

All academic honesty violations will be reported to the principal, Principal and/or Vice Principal and counseling office. A record of the violation will be put in the student's permanent file. In cases of significant or repeated offenses, GAA will report acts of Academic Dishonesty to college admission officers.

#### First offense at GAA:

1. Student will receive a zero for the assignment, test, quiz, project, or exam.
2. Student will be required to meet with the Principal and/or Vice Principal to discuss the importance of academic integrity.
3. Student's parents will be informed of the violation.
4. Student will receive an after-school detention.

#### Second offense at GAA:

1. Student will receive a zero for the assignment, test, quiz, project, or exam and may receive a failing grade in the class where the violation occurred.
2. Student's parents will be informed of the violation.
3. Student will be required to meet with the Principal and/or Vice Principal to discuss the importance of academic integrity.
4. Student will receive Saturday School Detention.

#### Third offense at GAA:

1. Student will be subject to receive a failing grade in the class where the violation occurred.
2. Student's parents will be informed of the violation.
3. Student will be required to meet with the Principal and their parents to discuss the importance of academic integrity.
4. Student will be suspended from all sports and extra-curricular activities for the duration of the season or quarter.
5. Student will receive a 2 day out-of-school suspension from school.

#### Additional offenses at GAA:

Additional offenses will result in expulsion from the GEMS American Academy.

Note: If a student facing expulsion for an academic honesty violation has had no acts of academic dishonesty for at least one full calendar year, the school may choose, at the Principal's discretion, to allow the student to present information to support their ability to continue attending school and/or school related events.

### Academic Dishonesty & IB

It is the responsibility of GAA as an IB World School to uphold the integrity of all IB Examinations and internal assessments (IAs). As such, our academic honesty policy is in line with the IB expectations of and requirements for us as an IB World school. Our policy is clear and has straight forward procedures and penalties. It is in line with the IB General Regulation's expectations.

The IB Learner Profile is embedded into GAA's daily life and is the corner stone of this policy. Further guidance comes from the IB Publication's *Academic honesty: Guidance for Schools, September 2003*. In developing GAA's academic honesty policy we encourage our students to be:

- **Inquirers** – who acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research
- **Knowledgeable** – who explore concepts, ideas and issues
- **Principled** – who act with integrity and honesty, take responsibility for their own actions
- **Open-minded** – who are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of **view**
- **Risk takers** – who are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs

These qualities when applied to learning and student work will establish skills and behaviour which support good practices to be found in the classroom, used for homework and continued to examination level. The good practices are expected to be introduced, modelled and used throughout the school.

### BUS REGULATIONS

Students using the school bus, either regularly or as a guest 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 or use disrespectful language at any time on the bus.
- 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.

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## ACCEPTABLE TECHNOLOGY USE AGREEMENT

Access to the school network and the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Access is available only for educational and administrative purposes. GAA's technology resources are to be used in accordance with this Acceptable Use Policy and all users will be required to comply with its regulations. Non-compliance may result in loss of privilege and disciplinary action. The following guidelines are intended to help users understand appropriate use. The school may restrict, suspend or terminate any user's access to the school's computer systems upon violation of the AUP.

This policy applies to all technology at GAA, including the facilities in the Theater and the Gym, not just computers and equipment in IT labs.

## BYOD (BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE)

As a school of excellence, we aim to enable teaching and learning to extend beyond the traditional confines of school based resources and benefit from the innovative integration of learning technology that is possible with the use of personal devices.

Students in Grades 6-12 are expected to bring their own laptop to school as part of the GEMS initiative to support student learning through ICTs. This program, often referred to as a “bring-your-own” model, enables students to develop a range of skills that increases their ability to use the same piece of technology in different contexts. The benefit of an ICT rich learning environment is the opportunity for students to conduct authentic research, produce high quality publications and participate in collaborative online communication.

The laptop must suit the needs of our curriculum and therefore, as a guide, we have created a set of suggested minimum specifications (also available through the ICT site).

These suggested minimum specifications **only apply to secondary:**

<b>Platform</b>	PC or Mac
<b>Operating System</b>	Windows 7 Pro or higher / Mac OSX or higher
<b>Screen Size</b>	11 inches or more
<b>Processor</b>	Intel i3 or higher / AMD Athlon II or higher
<b>RAM</b>	3GB or higher
<b>Hard Drive</b>	120GB or higher
<b>Wireless</b>	802.11g or higher
<b>Ports</b>	2 USB ports / Audio in/out / In-built microphone / VGA or HDMI
<b>Battery Life</b>	4+ hours (4+ cell or higher)
<b>Warranty (highly recommended)</b>	3 year warranty with damage protection

In everyday language, the laptop must be in good condition and less than three years old. iPads and Android based devices are very popular but at this time do not meet the minimum requirements for a student owned device at GEMS.

Students must register their device with the IT Department to be given permanent access to the GEMS network. They will be required to log in to the network using individual login details. It is expected that each student will be able to connect two devices - their laptop and a tablet devices. Phones will not be connected to our network.

A letter for parents is included in the appendix of this handbook.

## ETHICAL CONDUCT

It is the responsibility of all users:

- to recognize and honor the intellectual property of others.
- to comply with legal restrictions regarding plagiarism and the use and citation of information resources.
- to restrict the use of GAA’s technology resources to the mission of the school; the use of computer systems for personal use unrelated to the mission of the school or for private gain is prohibited.



- to help maintain the integrity of the school network and equipment; deliberate tampering, or experimentation is not allowed.

It is a violation to modify and/or copy any protected system files, system folders or control panel files without prior approval of the Network Administration or IT Coordinator.

## EDUCATIONAL USE

Users are responsible for the ethical and appropriate use of their network accounts:

- School related files are the only files to be saved in your folder. Storing commercial software, music, games or hidden files to your folder is not permitted.
- Saving to the hard disk drive is granted only by permission of instructor (for students) or IT Coordinator (staff).
- Playing commercial/online games is not permitted.

## RESPECT FOR OTHERS

Users should respect the rights of others using the technology resources.

- Use assigned workstations, if required by teacher.
- Always log off your workstation.
- Avoid deliberately attempting to disrupt network performance or interfering with the work of another user.
- Leave equipment and room in good condition for next user/class.

## RESPECT FOR SECURITY

Accounts on the systems at GAA are considered secure - although absolute security of any data cannot be guaranteed. Teachers can be provided access to student files for instructional or evaluative purposes.

- Use only your account/password. It is a violation to give access to your password to any other user.
- Reading, modifying or removing files and/or mail owned by other users is not allowed without prior approval by the instructor or IT Coordinator.
- Any attempts to transmit software designed to compromise the operation or security of the network is prohibited.

## RESPECT FOR PROPERTY

### Software Installation

Software may only be installed on the school information systems (including all individual workstations) with prior approval from the IT Coordinator.

### Software Copyright

- The only software, other than students' projects, to be used on the school's computers are those for which the school owns a valid license.
- Licensed/copyrighted software is not available for borrowing and may only be used at other sites with approval of IT Coordinator.
- Copyrighted software shall not be downloaded from the Internet or further transmitted in any form without compliance with all terms of a preauthorized licensing agreement. Infringement or violation of U.S. or international copyright laws or restrictions will not be tolerated.
- Any attempts to circumvent the licensing control or the copying of software from the network without the IT Coordinator's permission is prohibited.

### Hardware

- Report equipment problems immediately to instructor/Tech Assistants/Network Administration/IT Coordinator.
- Leave workstations and peripherals in their designated places.
- Keep work areas neat and clean and free from food and drink.
- Any attempts to move, repair, reconfigure, modify or attach external devices to existing information and network systems without the Network administration and/or IT Coordinator's permission is prohibited.
- Borrowing of school hardware is not permitted unless email authorization has been given from the IT department.

### Audio Visual Hardware

If a person checks-out or borrows a piece of audio visual equipment, they are responsible for replacing it or repairing it if it is lost or damaged. All equipment must be properly signed-out and documented.

## INTERNET/WORLD WIDE WEB USAGE

Internet access is available to all students and teachers at GEMS American Academy. We believe these communication links offer vast, diverse and unique resources to both students and staff and their availability outweighs any possible access to information that is not consistent with the educational goals of GAA. Expected standards of conduct include:

- The acknowledgement that access to the Internet is a privilege and not a right.
- Respect for the use of copy written materials.
- Respect for the rights and privacy of others.
- E-mail is allowed during school hours only in connection with a classroom assignment.
- Downloading of unauthorized programs is not allowed.
- Compromising the security of the school in any manner is unacceptable.
- Respect for the values and ethics of the local host culture.

A violation of the above standards and any others included in the Acceptable Use Policy will result in a denial of access and possible further disciplinary action.

### Responsibilities:

- All users are prohibited from accessing portions of the Internet that do not promote the instructional mission of GAA.

- All school web pages are subject to initial approval of the Administration. All school web pages should reflect the mission of the school and adhere to the GAA Web Page Guidelines.

## CYBER-BULLYING

This involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behavior, by an individual or group, which is intended to harm others.

Students will be held accountable for Cyber-Bullying, even if it occurs off-campus, during the school year and negatively impacts the academic environment at GAA.

### Consequences of Violations:

- First violation: Denial of access to Network and/or Internet for one week.
- Second violation: Meeting with IT Director and Division Principal, denial of access to Network and/or Internet for one month and possible detention.
- Third violation: Meeting with IT Director, Division Principal, denial of access to Network and/or Internet for remainder of the year and possible suspension. This means that the user will not be allowed to have personal equipment, of any kind, on campus for the year.

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

### GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES

The goal of Secondary Counseling at GAA is to create an environment that will:

#### Help students:

- develop self-insight and self-understanding as they progress through school.
- develop an understanding of the worth and dignity of others.
- select and enter school courses and activities.
- select and capitalize on educational opportunities beyond high school.
- participate meaningfully in the opportunities of the school.
- develop interpersonal relationships.

#### Help teachers:

- understand the students for whom they are responsible.
- understand and utilize the services of the guidance program.

#### Help administrators:

- understand the characteristics of the school's student population.

#### Help parents:

- understand their children's educational progress.

- understand the opportunities available to their children.
- understand and utilize the services of the guidance program.

If you would like to discuss a specific issue with the Counselor, please contact Secondary Secretary to schedule an appointment.

### STUDENT SUPPORT TEAMS

The Student Support Team (SST) consists of members from a variety of teaching, administration, and support service positions within the school. The team meets regularly with the purpose to support students' academic, social, emotional or transitional needs. The team aims to establish an understanding of a child's strengths and to define our concerns so that we can discuss ways to adapt or 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 (such as accommodations, modifications, enrichments; out-of-school tutoring; a referral for a medical examination; 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 confidential and not part of a child's permanent school record.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL)

The English Language Learners (ELL) program provides services to students whose primary language is not English and who may not yet be proficient in English. The program provides support focused on children's English language acquisition, literacy development, and academic achievement. Within the ELL Department, we focus on the development of the four skills areas of language learning (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

ELL is a recognized, credit bearing class. ELLs attend English class with an ELL teacher. In addition, ELLs participate in a Directed Studies Class during the Modern Language Block. During Directed Studies, students receive tutoring, content based support, and homework help. Individual language instruction is also provided with credit arranged as appropriate.

ELL teachers may also provide in-class support for students and teachers in Math, Science, and Social Studies. Screening and placement tests are given at time of a student's enrollment, throughout the year (as needed, and at the end of the school year. Students may exit the ELL program based on the ELL teacher's recommendation, test scores, and consult with the core content teachers. The ELL program is fee based and may be conditional for some students.

### LEARNING SUPPORT (LS)

Services are provided to students that need extra academic support in core academic classes. Services may include pull out, push in and small group settings. There may be costs associated with services depending on the level of need.

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## LIBRARY

### OVERVIEW

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, magazine subscriptions, technology carts 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

- The main library is open between 7:30 am and 3.30 pm for the school community.

There will be occasions when the library is closed earlier due to whole school events (e.g. Parent/Teacher conferences, staff meetings) or library practices such as inventory. After school, students and parents utilize this time for the purpose of homework, borrowing and leisure reading. Overall the library lends itself to flexible and active use by class groups and individuals.

### BORROWING RESOURCES

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

### SCHEDULED LIBRARY VISITS

Secondary library times are flexible depending on the needs of the students and subject-area teachers. Students are encouraged to drop by the Library for research and book check-out at appropriate times during the school day.

### 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 shipping and handling.

### Collection Management Policy

The Collection Management Policy for the GEMS American Academy Library will adhere to all relevant legislation as directed by both the UAE government, Abu Dhabi Education Council and GEMS Education.

## HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Great schools provide parents with timely information so that they can be informed participants in the learning process. With our move to embrace 'blended learning' we must communicate well and build capacity in parents to support a very different kind of 'home work'.

- **Admin +:** Provides a parent portal for parents to view assignments and grades.
- **The GAAzette:** Communication between parents and school is a high priority at GAA. Parents will receive notices throughout the year about school events as well as the GAAzette, a school-wide bi-weekly (fortnightly) newsletter sent by email.
- **Back-to-School Night:** In September, a Back-to-School Night is held to introduce parents to classroom expectations, a description of the year's curriculum, grade level policies on homework and other details of the functioning of each class.

## GAAPA (GAA PARENT ASSOCIATION)

Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the school. GEMS American Academy has an active parent association (GAAPA). GAAPA is an important part of our school community and we encourage all parents to get involved and/or support the Association's activities throughout the year. In the past, these have included fund-raising activities, coffee mornings, movie afternoons, Iftar dinner during Ramadan and the very popular International Food Festival. In addition to GAAPA, volunteers are always welcome to help in the library and in the classrooms.

## STUDENT/PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Student, parent and teacher conferences take place in November and April for all Grades KG-12 on the same days for parental convenience.

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. Parents are expected to attend parent/teacher conferences.

## EXTENDED PARENT ABSENCES

GAA students should always have proper home supervision by a parent. If, due to an emergency, you will be out of town and your child will not be under your direct supervision, please send a formal letter to let us know who will have guardianship responsibilities.

## 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 neither release records nor issue a Transfer Certificate.

Parents who wish to hand carry their children's records may do so. However, they should notify the school of this intention with ample time to assemble records. Hand carrying of transcripts at the end of the year may be delayed due to scoring of exams - in this case, transcripts and/or records will be sent to the new school or to the parents. Parents should leave their forwarding address and a stamped envelope at the earliest possible date. Records cannot be released until all outstanding fees are paid.

### 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 1<sup>st</sup> of November each year, students in all grades require a Transfer Certificate to move schools. GEMS American Academy will be pleased to prepare a Transfer Certificate for all students who have completed the Withdrawal Process described above.

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

## SAFETY

### SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

When on campus, students are expected to follow school rules even after school and on weekends.

We operate a daily attendance system for all students arriving or departing school between 7.45 am and 2.55 pm. Telephone calls will be made to confirm all absences – usually before 8.30 am each morning. Students arriving after 7.45 am must sign in with the Secondary Secretary and receive a 'tardy slip' before going to class. Students wishing to leave before 2.55 pm must provide notification to the school from their parents. Please note that we do not provide adult supervision before school in the morning and after school in the afternoons.

### STUDENTS LEAVING SCHOOL DURING THE DAY

Parents who require their children to leave school for any reason during the school day must contact the Secondary Secretary and students must report to the Secretary who will issue a note for Security to allow the student out of the school gate.

### 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 at the rear of the sports field.
3. Emphasis is placed on staying quiet and observing rules and directions during the fire drills.
4. Lock down drill will be practiced immediately following fire drills early in the year so that students are familiar with the term and the procedures of getting inside and under cover.

### SECURITY

Security officers are on duty on the school campus at all times. Their duties include assisting families on weekends and making certain that academic buildings are properly locked during non-school hours. The security officers have access to a telephone for use in an emergency.

## HEALTH

### 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 and 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. Students needing to visit the nurse during school have to report to the Secondary Secretary who will issue a yellow Clinic Pass.

If a student has special health needs (medication, chronic illness or condition, allergies or requires a 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.

Several first aid kits are located throughout the campus (gymnasium, offices, art rooms, science labs, etc.) and certain teachers and members of staff are qualified to administer first aid.

### EMERGENCY CONTACTS/CHANGE OF CONTACT DETAILS

The School Registrar, the School Office 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. When able, make sure your child knows how to reach you during the day. 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 School Office, preferably by email or a note in the passport.

The Emergency Care Form will be utilized for 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.

A physician-signed form to use or administer an inhaler or Epi-pen will be required if a student is asthmatic or has a life-threatening allergy. 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.)

If your Middle School or High School student athlete plans to participate in competitive sports at school, then a Pre-Participation Examination Certificate must be completed by a medical provider and submitted prior to the commencement of that sport.

### 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 must 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 out of date. Over-the-counter medication to be held in the clinic must be in a sealed, unopened, new bottle. (For short interval dosage, ask a pharmacist for a separate bottle to be kept in the clinic to prevent missed doses.)
- The parent/guardian, not the student, must deliver medication to the school clinic.
- All medicine must be picked up by a parent at the end of the school year.

In the case of students with asthma, severe allergic reactions or diabetes - they may self-administer their inhaled asthma medication, auto-injectable (epi-pen) medication or insulin. 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 (not prescription) medication. 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 must 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 conjunctivitis/Pink Eye; 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.

Before students return to school after surgery, injury or trauma the nurse and parents must meet to formulate a care plan and carry out a risk assessment (including a fire/evacuation risk assessment).

At times the medical advice provided for a student may be in variance with the school's recommendations. In all cases, the school nurse is the final arbiter and, if necessary in discussion with the Head of School, will signal when a child is "safe" to return to school.

### IMMUNIZATIONS

The Health Authority of Abu Dhabi (HAAD) promotes a successful immunization program and the Emirate 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.

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## HEALTH SCREENINGS

Per HAAD, the clinic promotes the screenings recommended annually. This consent form is part of the annual school health forms given out at the beginning of the school year. Please refer to the sheet 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. Without a hat, your child will sit out for recess.
- Please inform the school if your child has any allergies. Nuts are not banned at GAA, but we ask that any food brought in for sharing is 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.

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## MISCELLANEOUS

### LOST AND FOUND

Personal items found in the school are collected and passed along to 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 semester, all lost and found items are donated to charity.

### CHARITABLE CAUSES/ COMMUNITY SERVICE

Our school community supports a growing number of organizations and charitable causes. These provide valued opportunities to our students to demonstrate initiative and further develop their skills and understandings of citizenship and leadership. Charitable drives and Community Service activities are often organized through the Student Council. 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 and/or service should be brought to the attention of Secondary Administration for presentation to the Student Council and, with their endorsement, to the School Leadership Team and the GAA Parents' Association. Generally, these groups will come together early in the school year to decide what charities will be the foci of activities and events for the school year. However, proposals can be considered at any time of the school year, particularly if the proposal relates to an emergency aid situation.

## APPENDICES

### I: ADMISSIONS POLICY

A student applying for admission must be accepted by the Head of School, 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.

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

### II: PROCEDURES FOR ASSIGNING CLASS PLACEMENT

We believe strongly in the importance of well-balanced mixed groups – we want students 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 school 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 student. A well-balanced learning environment has to take into account many different factors. The obvious ones are gender, nationality, whether new or returning family and level of English fluency but just as important are social relationships, emotional and physical needs, academic levels, learning styles and past experiences.

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 student. 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: GAA SECONDARY PE STUDENT EXPECTATIONS POLICY

**Course Description:** Students in grade 6 to grade 12 will participate in a wide range of different of game and fitness based units. These courses emphasize regular participation in a variety of enjoyable physical activities that promote lifelong healthy active living. Students will learn movement skills and principles, ways to improve personal fitness and physical competence, and safety and injury prevention. These units include but are not limited to the following: Volleyball, Swimming, Basketball, Rugby, American Football, Soccer, Fitness, Softball, Athletics, tennis, Badminton and Gymnastics.

### **PE Student Uniform:**

Grade 6 through grade 12, Student PE uniform requirements:

- Shirts with GAA logos
- Navy Micro shorts
- Quality Athletic Shoes (non-marking soles)
- Water Bottles must be brought to class
- If hair is longer than collar length it must be tied up in the back
- No Jewelry or watches are allowed to be worn during PE class and valuables must be left in student lockers. PE Teachers accept no responsibility for personal items.
- If it is a scheduled Swimming lesson, they are to wear appropriate swimming apparel, in which will be explained by PE teacher

A register of attendance will be taken at the start of each lesson. When a student is unable to participate in class, a conversation with that student will be initiated and the reasons for non-participation in class will be discussed. In the case of a forgotten PE uniform, secondary PE teacher's work on a 3 strikes policy (bullet description below). Students should be aware that participation mark levels are affected if non-compliance to uniform policies are not adhered to. In the case of a medical complaint supported by a note from parents / guardian, the student is asked to participate in a supporting role (e.g. observation / evaluation, peer mentoring, clean-up, etc.) and in this case student's marks will not be affected by his or her lack of participation.

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: Verbal warning toward student and a mark in the teacher's attendance book. Student is still expected to participate in PE Class, unless it is a swimming lesson
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: Verbal warning toward student, a mark in the teacher's attendance book and contact made with parents via e-mail or phone call home. Student is still expected to participate in PE Class, unless it is a swimming lesson.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: After school or lunch detention on teacher arranged time and place.

**Changing:** During an 80 minute time frame afforded to secondary PE, students are asked to change from their school uniforms to their respective PE uniform in 7 minutes from the start of the period. Students will be provided 13 minutes to shower and change back into their school uniform at the end of the class. Students must change back into their school uniforms under all circumstances unless the student is participating in a sport related after school activity, in which PE occurs during the last period of the day. The aim of this policy is to maximize 60 minutes of physical activity in an 80 minute lesson.

### **PE STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:**

- Arrive and leave promptly and in an orderly fashion.
- Behave in changing rooms appropriately and that changing rooms are not left in a mess.
- Arrive correctly equipped to every lesson and that the PE sanctions policy is clearly understood.
- Follow the correct procedure in terms of non-participation which will be advised by the respective PE Teacher.
- Respect the environment i.e. the area and equipment being used, as well as the work of others.
- Offer politeness and respect to all.
- Perform to the best of your ability

**Sanctions and rewards:** The PE teaching team will have a common and consistent approach to dealing with students: Good work will be suitably acknowledged and, where appropriate, rewarded depending on reward policy. General breaches of the expectations set for in lessons above such as low level disruption, should lead to one 'strike'. After three strikes the teacher concerned should contact their parents by email. Should this be the case the PE Coordinator and class teacher should also be informed. In more serious instances the student(s) may be referred to the PE Coordinator to be dealt with.

**Assessment:** Students will be assessed in a variety of different ways including self-assessment of performance and behaviors, game and movement skill/fundamental tests and written or verbal assessment facilitated by the PE teacher. PE teachers will record and document student's effort levels, and the progress of skills and attitude from the beginning of the unit until its completion

#### **IV: 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 the following 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 can be resolved in this way. If the matter cannot be resolved between the parents and teacher, it may be necessary for the Division Principal to be contacted.
2. Any complaint made directly to the Division Principal will normally be referred back to the relevant teacher unless the Division Principal deems it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.
3. Teachers and the Division Principal will keep anecdotal records of concerns and complaints on the date when they were received and reviewed. The Division 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). After considering the complaint, a decision will be made on 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. Parents will be informed of the decision, with an explanation, in writing.

## QUESTIONS? WHO TO CALL FIRST:

GAA Telephone: +971 (0)2 557 4880  
GAA Fax Number: +971 (0)2 557 4990

### Email

Head of School and CEO	Dr. Kathy Miner	<a href="mailto:k.miner_gaa@gemsedu.com">k.miner_gaa@gemsedu.com</a>
Secondary Principal	Craig Randall	<a href="mailto:c.randall_gaa@gemsedu.com">c.randall_gaa@gemsedu.com</a>
Secondary Vice Principal	Dr. Tim Fryer	<a href="mailto:t.fryer_gaa@gemsedu.com">t.fryer_gaa@gemsedu.com</a>
Secondary Secretary	Lynne Brown	<a href="mailto:l.brown_gaa@gemsedu.com">l.brown_gaa@gemsedu.com</a>
IB/Curriculum Coordinator	Jaimala Quinlan	<a href="mailto:j.quinlan_gaa@gemsedu.com">j.quinlan_gaa@gemsedu.com</a>
College Counselor	Sharice Welch	<a href="mailto:s.welch_gaa@gemsedu.com">s.welch_gaa@gemsedu.com</a>
Registrar	Dina Morad	<a href="mailto:registrar_gaa@gemsedu.com">registrar_gaa@gemsedu.com</a>
Accounting	Saikrishna Shetty	<a href="mailto:s.shetty_gaa@gemsedu.com">s.shetty_gaa@gemsedu.com</a>
Guidance Counselor	Najia Sabeen	<a href="mailto:n.sabeen_gaa@gemsedu.com">n.sabeen_gaa@gemsedu.com</a>
Nurse		<a href="mailto:nurse_gaa@gemsedu.com">nurse_gaa@gemsedu.com</a>
Parent Relations Executive	Kathryn Reynolds	<a href="mailto:k.reynolds_gaa@gemsedu.com">k.reynolds_gaa@gemsedu.com</a>
Executive Secretary	Olga Carrillo	<a href="mailto:o.carrillo_gaa@gemsedu.com">o.carrillo_gaa@gemsedu.com</a>
Main Reception		<a href="mailto:reception_gaa@gemsedu.com">reception_gaa@gemsedu.com</a>

## School Related Issues

I.B. Diploma	Curriculum Coordinator
After School Activities Program	ASA Coordinator via Reception
Facilities Usage	Manager – School Operations via Reception
Finance/Tuition	Accountant via Reception
Health	Nurse's office
Bus Transport	Transport Manager via Reception
Food Services	Leave a message with Reception
Classroom teacher	Leave a message with Secondary Secretary

### Communication

Activities/Calendar

GAAzette Newsletter

Parent Association (GAAPA)

Reception

Parent Relations Executive

GAAPA representatives



## GEMS AMERICAN ACADEMY PARENT & STUDENT CONTRACT

*(This form will be provided separately for return to school upon completion)*

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 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.

I have read and understood both the Parent and Student Contract and the Community Handbook. I have read and agree to adhere to the guidelines and expectations set out in the Secondary Community Handbook.

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SECONDARY SCHOOL CALENDAR 2014-2015