



MULTILINGUAL POLICY



Reviewed by	Mr. Naveed Iqbal	Reviewed Date	August 2025
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Introduction

GEMS acknowledges the vibrant cultural and linguistic diversity of its student body as a fundamental characteristic of its educational network in the UAE. This policy stands on the foundational principles of Quality First Teaching and Inclusive Education, aiming to address the distinct needs of each learner to foster a truly inclusive academic setting and reflects GEMS's ethos for **Multilingualism** (MLL):

"To ensure all students feel comfortable and supported, providing them with equal opportunities to learn through language and reach their full potential."

At GEMS, we embrace multilingualism, as it emphasizes the strengths and assets of students who speak multiple languages. It highlights their ability to build proficiency in more than one language, which is seen as a strength rather than a deficit. Multilingualism acknowledges and celebrates the cultural and linguistic diversity of students. It recognizes that students bring valuable linguistic and cultural resources to the classroom, which can enhance their learning and the learning environment for all students. Learning is planned so that each child can aspire to the highest level of personal achievement, and we believe all students, no matter their starting point and initial barriers to learning, can go on to achieve high performance.

At GEMS MTS school we believe that fostering an inclusive environment is not just the responsibility of the Inclusion Department but a shared commitment of the entire school community.

Together, we strive to create an inclusive educational environment that celebrates diversity and empowers all learners to become confident, knowledgeable, and globally minded individuals.

Aims & Objectives

- To enable students to have full access to the curriculum (and other educational opportunities), ensuring that they fulfil their academic potential.
- To ensure that all our students attain curriculum levels and public examination grades appropriate to their abilities.
- To create awareness among staff, students and parents about students receiving learning support, the nature of learning differences and how they can best be supported within an inclusive community, including providing students with the opportunities to study in their home language.
- To provide clarity to teachers, parents and students on the benefits and importance of multilingualism.
- To provide information to staff on the process of assessing language proficiency of English language and the referral procedure.
- To increase the level of communication and consistency between the ELL department, classroom teachers, form tutors and Key Stage Leaders.
- To help new teachers/students/parents adjust to supporting multilingual students in class.
- To ensure that we recognise and meet the needs of pupils who require English language support.

Definitions

The KHDA (Knowledge and Human Development Authority) Inspection Framework defines EAL students as ‘students for whom the language of instruction is an additional language.’ In the UAE, we have an increasing proportion of students whose home language is not English. These students have a range of English language proficiency and not all EAL students require ELL provision.

Multilingualism – Multilingualism refers to the presence and use of multiple languages in schools. This can include students who speak languages other than the language of instruction at home, as well as schools that offer instruction in more than one language. GEMS Education recognizes and embraces the linguistic diversity of students, providing them with the opportunity to develop proficiency in multiple languages and a deeper understanding of different cultures.

Celebrating home language is an integral part of a child’s multilingualism, contributing to their cultural identity, cognitive development, academic success, and social well-being. Embracing and valuing the home language as part of multilingualism can lead to positive outcomes for individuals, our families, and communities.

These students have a range of English language proficiency, and not all multilingual students require ELL provision.

ELL – An English Language Learner (ELL) student at GEMS Metropole refers to an individual whose primary or dominant language is not English and who requires support to develop proficiency in English for academic purposes. ELL students typically have varying levels of English language proficiency and may face challenges in accessing the curriculum and with participating fully in educational activities conducted in English.

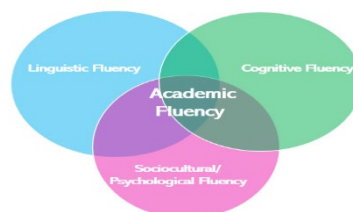
A student would be classified as an ELL student if they have **one or more of the following characteristics**:

- They are in the process of acquiring proficiency in the English language, whilst also developing their content knowledge and academic skills.
- They have varying levels of proficiency in English, ranging from beginner to advanced.
- They are students who struggle in accessing the curriculum due to language barriers.
- They are students with limited vocabulary, grammar, and language skills, which impacts their communication, comprehension, reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities in an academic setting.

Fundamental Principles of Multilingual Provision

At GEMS we believe that there are three dimensions which need to work together to achieve academic English fluency: Linguistic fluency, Cognitive fluency and Sociocultural/ Psychological fluency.

These dimensions were first identified by Kern in 2003, who argued that all three must be addressed by schools for all students to reach their true potential.



To help our students achieve **Linguistic fluency**, we need to help them understand:

- How language works, including grammar rules, word formation, and intonation
- When and where to use different genres and writing forms, tailored to purpose and audience
- How to structure and organize a variety of text types, using features such as discourse markers and cohesive devices
- Key academic vocabulary, especially high-utility words that appear across subjects—for example, analyze and explain

To help our students achieve **cognitive fluency**, we need to teach them:

- Critical thinking skills
- Higher order thinking skills
- How to identify fact from opinion
- How to read texts critically
- How to write and speak persuasively using evidence
- How to reflect on their own language acquisition
- How to evaluate and monitor their own learning

To help our students achieve **Sociocultural/Psychological fluency** we need to expose students to:

- “Social and cultural norms, values, beliefs, attitudes, motivations, interests, behaviors, practices, and habits” (Scarcella 2003)
- “The particular conventions and norms that characterize the people who use it” (Scarcella, 2003)

Gee (1996, 2002) points out that students learn these conventions by “participating in specific ways of being and acting in academic contexts.” **Socio-cultural/psychological fluency is learnt through communicating in classrooms and cannot be taught explicitly.** This is why **we strive to keep learners in the mainstream as much as possible.**

Identification of ELL students:

During the admission process, the following *may* indicate a student needs some level of English language support:

- ELL is indicated on the admissions form.
- The student is currently attending a school in a non-English speaking country.
- The student is currently attending a school where English is not the medium of instruction.
- The student demonstrates low levels of English proficiency or literacy based on reports.
- The data from the admissions test (CAT4) or Language Screener or the information in the admissions file indicates that the student is operating at a significantly lower level than the expected year group in Literacy.

For any of the above, the Admissions team will refer the student to the ELL Coordinator for any further assessment and recommendations.

Band Assignment

At GEMS MTS we use the **CEFR framework** to check the language proficiency of our students. The CEFR was published in 2001 in English and French after a period of development from 1992 to 1996 and piloting from 1997–2000. It has been translated into 40 languages and is now accepted as the **international standard for language teaching and learning**.

Mapping of levels to CEFR (See Appendix for CEFR level descriptors)

	Basic User		Independent User				Proficient User				
CEFR	A1		A2		B1		B2		C1		C2
IELTS	0 - 4		4.5	5	5.5	6	7	8	8.5	9	
Bell Foundation	A		B		C		D		E		
	New to English		Early Acquisition		Developing Competence		Competent		Fluent		
WIDA	1		1		2_3		4_4.5		5+		
	Entering		Beginning		Developing		expanding		Bridging		

ELL Support

All teachers are teachers of English Language Learners and as such they continue to remain responsible for the teaching and learning for their students. Teachers and assistants use support strategies to ensure that students can access the curriculum.

All teachers are responsible for identifying students who are experiencing challenges with learning, and in collaboration with the inclusion team, will ensure that those students requiring different or additional support are identified at an early stage (if they have not been identified through our admission process).

It is important that all data is correctly captured for these students and routinely updated to track progress.

Students can be referred to the **ELL Coordinator** on entry or at any point during their education. In line with our SEN graduated approach, we recognise that there is a **continuum** of ELL needs. Students identified as ELL through the language screener or referral are assigned to one of three tiers of support.

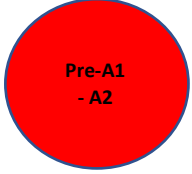
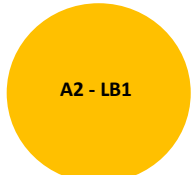
Additional Fees:

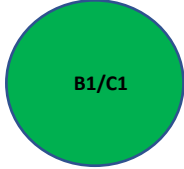
All additional fees charged by GEMS Metropole have been approved by the KHDA and are clearly referenced in our School Fees Fact Sheet. Each additional service will be accompanied by a signed parent contract and the relevant KHDA documentation where required. These documents are uploaded to the KHDA portal where required to ensure full transparency and mutual agreement between the school and families.

ELL Fees:

Students requiring targeted English Language Learning (ELL) support will participate in four small-group ELL sessions per week. This service is charged at AED 1,000 per month.

Language Support Interventions

<p>Tier 3</p>		<p>Intensive Interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Specialist Pull-Out Support: Targeted English language instruction is provided through small-group or one-to-one sessions outside of the mainstream classroom. This support incurs an additional cost to parents. Full details are outlined in the ELL contract.</p> <p>Individual Language Plan (ILP): Each student receives a personalised ILP tailored to their specific language needs. ILPs are reviewed and updated on a termly basis to reflect progress and adjust support strategies accordingly.</p> <p>Collaborative Support with Mainstream Teachers: Regular communication is maintained with mainstream subject teachers to ensure alignment between intervention strategies and classroom instruction. Effective strategies and current progress are shared to support consistency across all learning environments.</p> <p>Ongoing Home-School Communication: Weekly updates are provided to parents, celebrating student successes and addressing any ongoing challenges. This ensures transparency and encourages parental engagement in the language development journey.</p> <p>Progress Monitoring and Reporting: Student progress is formally assessed at key intervals using both formative and summative tools. Reports are shared with parents and teachers to guide next steps.</p> <p>Targeted Goal-Setting: Short- and long-term language goals are clearly defined in the ILP and reviewed regularly with the student to foster ownership and motivation.</p> <p>Integration Support: Students are supported in applying new language skills in real classroom contexts to bridge the gap between intervention and mainstream learning.</p>
<p>Tier 2</p>		<p>Semi-intensive interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Tier 2 Literacy Support: Students receive targeted literacy intervention through scheduled small-group pull-out sessions. These sessions focus on developing key reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills necessary for accessing the mainstream curriculum.</p> <p>Individual Language Plans (ILPs): Where appropriate, students will have a personalised ILP that outlines their specific language learning goals. These plans are reviewed regularly and updated to reflect individual progress and evolving needs.</p> <p>Collaboration with Mainstream Teachers: Ongoing communication with mainstream teachers ensures that effective classroom strategies are identified, shared, and reinforced. This helps create a consistent learning experience across all subjects.</p> <p>Home-School Communication: Weekly or bi-weekly updates are provided to parents, outlining student successes, current focus areas, and any challenges. This encourages a collaborative approach between home and school to support the student's development.</p> <p>Progress Tracking: Student progress is monitored using appropriate assessment tools, and</p>

		adjustments to intervention strategies are made based on data and teacher observations.
Tier 1		<p>Tier 1: High-Quality Teaching (Graduated Approach)</p> <p>This tier represents the universal support available to all students, including those with and without Special Educational Needs (SEN).</p> <p>At Tier 1, students' needs are met through high-quality, inclusive teaching—often referred to as Quality First Teaching. Teachers proactively accommodate individual differences in ability, learning styles, and behaviour through differentiated, personalised classroom practice.</p> <p>Tier 1 provision may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalised planning and tailored learning resources • Use of assistive technology to support access and engagement • Targeted in-class interventions led by the class teacher, ELL coordinator, or members of the leadership team • Cross-curricular collaboration to monitor progress and share effective strategies for each student

Language Proficiency Requirements for Upper School Entry

For students entering Year 9 and above with an English language proficiency level of A1 or A2, parents will be formally notified that their child’s current level of English may significantly limit access to the curriculum at MTS. This may also restrict eligibility for external examinations

Students entering with a proficiency level of B1 or B2 may be offered a conditional place, subject to the successful completion of an approved English language course. Proof of course completion and certification must be submitted to the school. In such cases, parents will be required to sign an agreement outlining the school's expectations to support the best possible academic and social outcomes for their child.

For students entering Years 7, 8, or 9, the following additional recommendations may be made, alongside any appropriate interventions from Tiers 1, 2, or 3.

Assessment Accommodations

Accommodations											
25% extra time	ELL 25% ET & Dictionary (NOT L&L / LA)	Reader	Scribe	Assistive Technology	4 Function Calculator	Modified Paper	Separate Room (Achievement Centre)	Restbreaks	Preferential Seating-minimize distractions	Use of Aid	Focus Prompts

Accommodations in red require an **official report from an educational psychologist** (if applying for official exams).

Official exam accommodations allow **bilingual dictionaries**, word to word only (not a dictionary with any definitions)

25% additional time/ separate room (if it helps reduce anxiety)

Responsibilities

The Corporate Head of Multilingualism for GEMS and the wider Children's Services Team is responsible for the GEMS ELL provision and strategic development of this policy. The Corporate Head of Multilingualism supports all schools in delivering the best possible provision and outcomes for English Language Learners.

At GEMS Metropole our Head of Inclusion has responsibility for the ELL provision within the school. This involves working with the Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Year and specific subject ELL nominated members to determine the strategic implementation of this policy.

Responsibilities

- ELL students are identified in accordance with the agreed school-wide criteria.
- The ELL Register is maintained accurately and updated at least once per term.
- Classroom provision for ELL students is purposefully planned, inclusive, and effectively supports language development.
- Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) are created to support, monitor, and track student progress, enabling teachers to implement targeted strategies that help students access the curriculum.
- ILPs are reviewed and updated regularly to reflect each student's progress and changing needs.
- The effectiveness of ELL provision is monitored and evaluated through structured learning walks and observations.
- Parents and students are kept fully informed about progress, planned provision, and any adjustments to support.
- Records for ELL students are accurate, regularly updated, and aligned with school policy and safeguarding expectations.
- Relevant professional development opportunities are provided to staff to build capacity for supporting ELL students in mainstream settings.
- The Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF) includes a clear and accurate evaluation of ELL provision, highlighting both strengths and areas for development.
- All teaching staff have access to essential information about ELL students and are expected to plan and deliver appropriately differentiated learning experiences.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the ELL Coordinator and will be reviewed yearly if necessary.

		A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
U N D E R S T A N D I N G	Listening	I can recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
	Reading	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.
S P E A K I N G	Spoken Interaction	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.
	Spoken Production	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
W R I T I N G	Writing	I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	I can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate needs. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select style appropriate to the reader in mind.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.