



GAA Behaviour For Learning Policy

Reviewed Oct 2025

Approved by:	Dr. Ethan Hildreth, Superintendent/CEO	Date: Aug/2025
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Next review due:	May/2026	

Aligned with [ADEK Behaviour Management Framework](#)

Our Vision

We Inspire. We Challenge. We Innovate. We Care.

Our Mission

GEMS American Academy is a diverse and caring international learning community offering a rigorous, relevant, and holistic education. We develop global citizens who have the confidence and conviction to pursue their dreams and impact the world.

1. Policy Statement

At GAA, we are committed to nurturing a school environment where all students feel safe, respected, and empowered to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. We aim to promote behavior that reflects UAE values, mutual respect, and global citizenship, in line with the ADEK Student Code of Conduct.

2. Purpose

This policy establishes clear expectations for behavior, procedures for addressing misconduct, and a structure for providing support and intervention. It ensures alignment with ADEK's behavior regulations and reflects our shared responsibility to promote a positive learning culture.

3. Objectives

- To foster a safe and supportive learning environment.
- To promote positive student behavior through clear expectations and consistent practices.
- To ensure student well-being and safety across all school environments.
- To encourage a culture of respect, responsibility, and resilience.
- To align behavior expectations with the values and regulations of ADEK and the UAE.



- To prevent and address student misconduct fairly and consistently.
- To implement appropriate interventions based on student needs and misconduct levels.
- To uphold student rights while holding students accountable for their actions.

We will hold our students to the GEMS Values and Expectations as stated below. Consistent messaging will be shared across all grade levels in the school - using grade and age appropriate language.

4. GEMS Values

1. Always learning
2. One team
3. Excellence
4. Care

5. GEMS Expectations

- Be Present
- Be Ready to Learn
- Be the Best You Can Be
- Be Kind
- Be Focused
- Be Brave
- Be An Ambassador





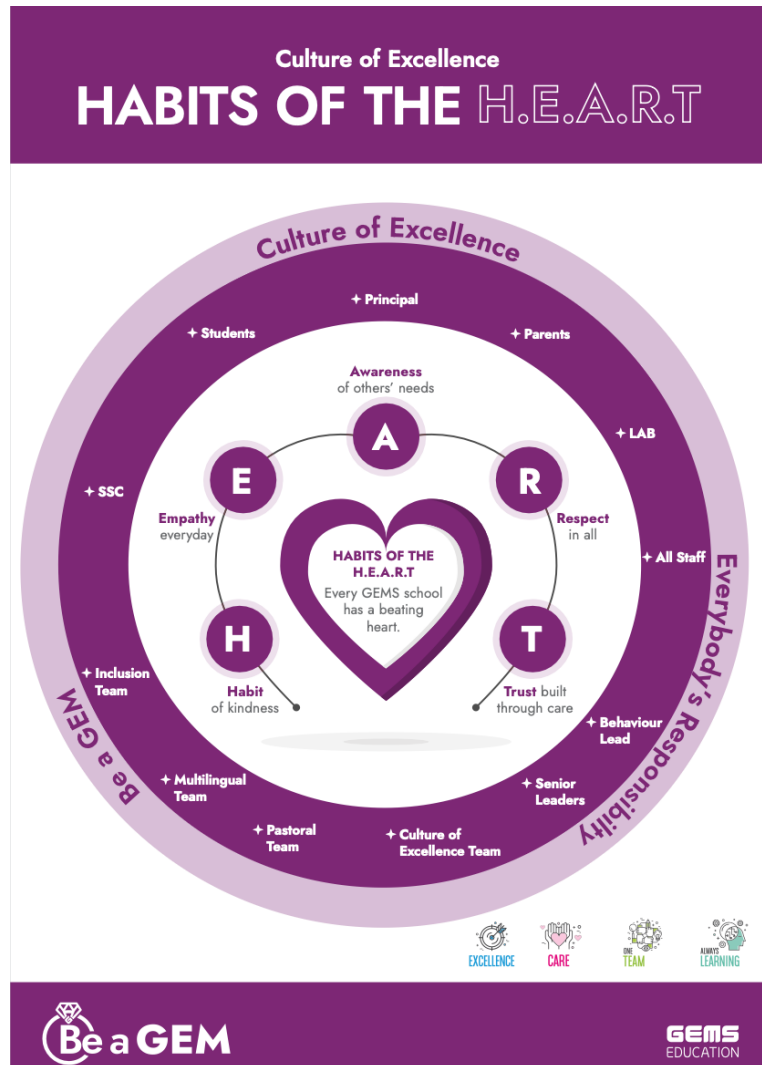
6. GAA Behavior for Learning Philosophy

The caring and supportive ethos of GEMS American Academy is embodied in our culture of kindness. We believe that each member of our school community should consistently practice care, consideration, and kindness towards one another. Our approach to behavior learning is firm and fair with a focus on student wellbeing, growth, and development. We emphasize education, holistic support of students, due process in review of misconduct, and natural consequences. Appropriate student behavior begins at home. We ask parents to contact their child's teacher or division administration immediately with any questions or concerns. This fulfills the **Parent-School Contract** and enables us to address student needs as a team. GAA and families will work together to bring successful support to students to strengthen their academic journey.

7. Culture of Excellence at GAA / HABITS OF THE H.E.A.R.T

The work of creating a caring and supportive ethos in the school will follow the Culture of Excellence Habits of the HEART as seen below. We will speak to these expectations in advisory and wellbeing lessons supported by counseling and Deans of Students leadership.

- **Habit of Kindness**
- **Empathy every day**
- **Awareness of Others' Needs**
- **Respect in all**
- **Trust Built through Care**





8. Strengthening Socio-Emotional Skills (Elementary and Secondary)

We develop socio-emotional skills in our students through our social-emotional learning curriculum. In Elementary, we use the 'Zones of Regulation' and in Secondary, 'Character Strong'. Character Strong is the curriculum platform that is used in the secondary department to teach social, emotional skills. The goal of using Character Strong is to reduce behavioral issues, foster self-management, and responsible decision-making. Implementation of this program will be nested in our Advisory programme, which starts on the day for each student in each grade 6-12.

Research recognizes that students feel safe when they have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. To ensure that this expectation is diffused across the learning environment, the GAA Behaviors below will be consistently communicated to all students.

9. GAA Behavior Routines

1. Traveling to and from the school
2. Arriving at school
3. Moving around the school
4. During lessons
5. Leaving the classroom
6. Break and Lunchtime (Lining up for food or socializing)
7. Ending the day positively
8. Reflection (Entry, during, and end of restorative conversation)

10. Our GAA Commitments

➤ ***GAA Commitments to Behavior for Learning***

- Guiding student educational excellence in a nurturing environment
- Caring for students in safe, encouraging, and supportive ways
- Practicing the culture of excellence.

➤ ***Student Commitments to Behavior for Learning***

- Treating community and self with respect and kindness
- Prioritizing learning while maintaining a healthy and balanced life
- Developing a vision with short and long-term goals

➤ ***Parent Commitments to Behavior for Learning***

Parents/guardians are expected to:

- Communicate with staff members in a timely and courteous manner.
- Use social media responsibly and respectfully, in accordance with UAE regulations.
- Support school procedures outlined in each division's handbook.
- Model respectful speech and behavior, demonstrating a willingness to resolve concerns professionally—both verbally and in writing (e.g., avoiding raised voices, offensive



language, or the use of social status to belittle or threaten others). Refrain from posting culturally inconsiderate or defamatory content about parents, students, or staff on social media, in line with the ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy.

- Seek to clarify their child's account of events with the school's perspective to work towards a peaceful resolution of any disputes.
- Address and correct their child's behavior (or that of children in their care) when it may cause conflict, unsafe conduct, or hinder the learning of others.
- Respect and comply with the school's general policies, and while on school premises, behave and dress in a manner that upholds UAE national identity, cultural values, and current legislation.
- Strive for excellent attendance and punctuality for their child, avoiding holidays outside official school breaks, monitoring academic performance, and respecting arrival and pick-up times.
- Uphold the school's policy on academic honesty and integrity by ensuring their child's work reflects their own ability (e.g., avoiding plagiarism, refraining from excessive assistance, not submitting fraudulent documents, or making false excuses for absences).
- Attend parent-teacher meetings when requested and maintain regular, constructive communication to support their child's growth and progress.
- Cooperate with the school's recommendations for additional learning support when deemed necessary for their child's educational development.

➤ **Non-compliance of expectations**

Failure to meet the above minimum expectations may result, at the school's discretion, in restricted access to the premises or denial of entry. Consequences are communicated in our student handbook. Teachers, Head of Grade, Deans of Students, and Administrators are points of contact for family and students when students need encouragement to help them align with our stated expectations. Non-compliance will be documented.



A CO-ORDINATED STRATEGY

The GAA Behavior for Learning Policy supports our GAA Strategic Plan, complies with GEMS & ADEK guidelines, and is, in turn, supported by our various policies, including those for bullying and the Parent Engagement and Code of Conduct policy.

The GAA Behavior for Learning Policy is the result of collaboration across our school community. Entities that assisted with the review and discussion of the GAA Commitments or the full document include the GAA Student Government, the GAA Senior Leadership Team (SLT), and the GAA Local Advisory Board (LAB), as well as the GAA Behavior Committee.

THE GAA CODE OF CONDUCT

GEMS American Academy approaches behavior learning with an emphasis on proactive education, followed by remediation and natural consequences when misconduct occurs. Examples of behavior education for students include, but are not limited to, moral education, guidance counseling lessons, assemblies, reminders on social media, and relevant information in divisional handbooks, the Parent Engagement and Code of Conduct policy, and the website.

GAA supports **the Teach Like a GEM** expectations from GEMS. These expectations are codified to mirror our goals for students educated at GEMS and ADEKs policy for supporting the learning and socio emotional journey of scholars who attend GAA. As part of their education journey, we educate students about appropriate conduct as well as the appropriate consequences for misconduct are the next important step, as students learn through experience that their personal decisions result in concrete outcomes. These outcomes might include a variety of consequences, such as counseling, mediation, detention, restorative actions, suspension, blocked re-enrollment, or expulsion in extreme situations. Consequences occur on a continuum of increasing severity. If students repeat offenses after receiving consequences for prior violations, the consequences increase accordingly. The progression of consequences is outlined in the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct applies to students on campus before, during, and after the school day. It applies equally on school buses, during school trips, and in the GAA athletics and activities programs. Students must remember that they represent GAA, their families, and themselves at all times when at school, during school activities, and when wearing GAA uniforms. If they commit conduct violations when in GAA uniform, whether during school events or not, students are subject to Code of Conduct consequences as they are representing the school through uniform.

Any behavior or activity undertaken outside GAA that is illegal or otherwise brings disrepute to GAA may result in disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension or expulsion from school.

If misconduct occurs off campus (online, offline) and outside school events, this is sometimes beyond direct school purview. The school will nonetheless undertake mitigating measures such as counseling and parental contact to promote student growth and behavior for learning. If off-campus misconduct negatively impacts school operations, the Code of Conduct applies. For off-campus



misconduct outside school purview, parents might choose to contact external authorities such as the police or cybercrime unit at their discretion.

GAA has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying in all its forms. *Bullying is the intentional intimidation of another person through emotional, physical, psychological, and/or cyber means.* Instances of proven and intentional and repeated bullying may result in immediate suspension of the aggressor from the school. In accordance with ADEK direction, the school may suspend a student for up to three days in case of a serious behavioral issue. In addition, GAA has the right to issue warning letters to a student for any behavioral issue, including bullying. In accordance with GEMS and GAA philosophy, consequences are progressive based upon the frequency and severity of violations.

In cases of severity or repeated violations, the school may block the re-enrollment of students for the following academic year. This will be documented through the issuance of dated warning letters and supporting evidence. This data will be submitted to ADEK in alliance to their expectations of school and students.

Disciplinary consequences and progression through the behavior levels are outlined below. Consequences will be administered as are developmentally appropriate per the child's grade, age and cognitive development.

Administrators retain the discretion to address unique circumstances of misconduct, including the possible increase of consequences across the four levels based on circumstances. The Code of Conduct is supported by the Behavior for Learning Policy as well as division handbooks and information referenced in the Appendix.

Searching and Screening:

In accordance with ADEK's Student Behavior Policy, the divisional Principal or designated staff may search a student's possessions if there are reasonable grounds to suspect the presence of prohibited or unsafe items. **Such searches will be conducted respectfully, safely, and confidentially, with a minimum of two staff members present. Whenever possible, parents will be informed prior to the search.** All confiscated items will be properly recorded, securely stored, and either returned to the student or disposed of in accordance with ADEK regulations. Complete documentation of each search will be maintained to ensure transparency and accountability.



ADEK Behavior levels and Consequences

Level 1 - Level one behaviors are typically dealt with by classroom/homeroom teachers. Level one focuses on primary behaviors and immediate solutions. Repeated Level 1 behaviors will lead to Level 2 consequences.

Behaviors <i>Examples merely serve as possible behaviors and are not limited to the list below</i>	Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unprepared for class - no stationery, computer charged, etc.• Inappropriate use of language• Poor sportsmanship• Disrespect• Littering• Pushing or tripping• Leaving class for an extended period of time• Low-level teasing• Sleeping or eating during class time without permission• Being repeatedly late in the morning• Not complying with the completion of homework• Dress code violation (including sports uniforms and lanyard).• Disrupting hallway, class, bus and/or school functions• Defying orders from School management and staff.• Off-task behaviors including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Viewing websites or social media that are not part of the assigned class work.○ Gaming during class○ Talking to peers or moving around the classroom without permission• Neglecting requested parent signatures• Misbehavior as determined by teachers and/or school administration• Misuse of school facilities – including pool, gym, elevator, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The student will be reminded of the behavior agreement and encouraged to modify his/her behavior accordingly.• Continued disruptive behavior in class, playground, or extracurricular activities will result in parent conferences, lunch reflections, and other forms of restorative actions.• Restorative conversation with the classroom teacher or the head of grade will take place• A formal log within PowerSchool• Parental contact will occur by the teacher/advisor who logs.



Level 2 - These behaviors are moderately serious behavior concerns or repeated Level 1 misbehavior. Any behavior that results in severe disruption to the teaching and learning environment or that may cause harm to self or others and or property damage. Logical consequences for Level 2 breach of conduct will be decided by the Head of Grade and/or Dean of Students in consultation with the classroom teacher.

A record of the incident will be recorded. Parents will be notified by the Head of Grade or Dean of Students.

Behaviors <i>These examples merely serve as possible behaviors and are not limited to the list below</i>	Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated level one behaviors • Skipping Class • Failing to attend school without an acceptable excuse • Sneaking into School after school hours without the presence of supervisors. • Dishonesty • Inappropriate display of affection • Having food delivered to school • Leaving or entering the classroom during class time without permission. • Repeated pushing/tripping • Inciting quarrels, threatening, or intimidating peers in the school • Discrimination/Mocking others • Verbal abuse or insulting a member of the school community • Causing minor damage to school or bus furniture • Viewing offensive material • Providing false documents (e.g. forging Parents'/Guardians' signatures). • Violation of Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy (Eg. Unauthorized online gaming, web browsing, etc) • Downloading programs and games that interfere with student learning or Acceptable Use Policy (This includes sharing games via USB sticks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formal log within PowerSchool • Restriction of privileges and activities • Athletics Director will be informed regarding extracurricular activities • Detention or making up for missed work at lunchtimes, after school or at home • Mediation sessions • Parent contact will occur • 3-way conference between a member of the pastoral team, student and parent. • Individual behavior plan/contract • Confiscation of unacceptable items • Individual counseling, with ongoing instruction in personal and social development. • School-based community service. • Replacement/repair of damaged property. • Internal or external suspension. • All actions taken with regards to the Behavioral Protocols and expectations are decided by the High School Leadership Team.



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sending unwanted and/or offensive (e)mail or messages (e.g. via chat)• Aggressive or constant teasing• Possession of items that are unacceptable in school• Taking out and/or using mobile phones at school without permission• Using, promoting, possessing, and/or distributing tobacco and other tobacco-derived products• Recurring unexcused tardies• Indirect bullying• Blatant or repetitive defiance of a staff member• Selling items in school- candy, caffeinated drinks, food etc• Encouraging/Provoking Unlawful Behavior	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mobile phones, smart watches and earbuds distract from the learning environment and are not to be used during the school day. Students are required to turn off all phones and Smart Watches and follow classroom protocol with regards to putting them away. This is without exception. Students are not allowed to use their phone at school.• GAA assumes no responsibility for replacing these items if brought to school. Phones/smart watches on display, in use and/or that ring or buzz during class, may be confiscated and turned into the Secondary Office and subject to consequences. In the event that a student's Phone/Smartwatch/Earbuds has been confiscated, it will be returned at the end of each day. Students must hand the phone/watch	



Level Three - Level 3 behaviors are serious breaches of the GAA behavior expectations and/or repeated behaviors of Level 2. A record of the incident may be recorded on the student's file. The Dean of Students, Vice Principal or Principal in consultation with the classroom or duty teacher, would initiate a follow-up with the student involved and decide on appropriate consequences. Parents will be notified by a member of the Secondary Leadership Team (Dean, Vice Principal, or Principal).

Examples of level three behaviors	Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeated Level 2 behaviors• Academic dishonesty• Compromising safety for self and/or others• Racist comments or actions towards a community member• Physical intimidation towards a staff member• Willful damage to, or destruction of, School and personal property.• Assaulting others in the school, on the bus, or during school activities off-site, without causing injury to the victim.• Exchanging any inappropriate materials, such as letters or photos.• Bullying - Physical/Verbal• Intimidation, harassment, and/or defaming them on social media.• Violation of Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy E.g. Sharing or taking unauthorized photos or recording video of others- this includes any school activity, and school infraction etc.• Cyberbullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3-way conference between administrator, student, and parent• Individual behavior plan/contract• Consultation with Counselor• School-based community service• Replacement/ repair of damaged property• Denial of privileges, activities, or participation within sports teams• Internal or external suspension• Referral to Principal for possible dismissal or nonrenewal• All actions taken with regards to the Behavioral Management Procedures are decided by the Pastoral School Leadership Team.



Level Four - Level 4 behaviors are the most serious breaches of the GAA behavior expectations and/or repeated Level 3 behaviors. Level 4 behavior is any behavior that results in physical danger to others, or which violates applicable laws in the UAE. A record of the incident will be recorded on the student's file. The Dean of Students, Vice Principal or Principal in consultation with the classroom or duty teacher will initiate a follow up with the student involved and decide on appropriate consequences. Parents will be notified by a member of the Secondary Leadership Team (Dean, Vice Principal or Principal).

Examples of Level Four behaviors	Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeated Level 3 behaviors• Distributing (or participating in the distribution of) pornographic material.• Possessing, using, or distributing weapons or explosives.• Assaulting others in the school, on the bus, or during school activities off-site, and causing injury to the victim.• Possession of Drugs / Alcohol on campus*• Sexual harassment/ assault*• Theft of property• Hacking• Gross or flagrant violation of school guidelines that endangers the reputation of the school or other students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3-way conference between administrator, student, and parent• Individual behavior plan/contract• Consultation with Counselor• School-based community service• Replacement/ repair of damaged property• Denial of privileges, activities, or participation within sports teams• Internal or external suspension• Referral to Principal for possible dismissal or nonrenewal• All actions taken with regards to the Behavioral Management Procedures are decided by the Pastoral School Leadership Team.



Disciplinary procedures at GAA

Elementary:

	First Time	Second Time	Third Time	More than three times
Level 1	Verbal Warning	Verbal Warning #2	Written Warning	Behavior Plan / Parent Meeting
	<p>The teacher reminds the student of the expected behavior.</p> <p>The student and teacher have a brief conversation to talk about what went wrong and how to make a better choice next time.</p>	<p>The teacher reminds the student of the expected behavior.</p> <p>The student and teacher have a brief conversation to talk about what went wrong and how to make a better choice next time.</p>	<p>The student completes a simple reflection form about their behavior.</p> <p>Parents are informed through a note, message, or email.</p> <p>The teacher and student talk again to set a goal for improvement.</p>	<p>A behavior support plan is created with the teacher, student, and a school leader.</p> <p>Parents are invited to a meeting to discuss how we can work together to help the student.</p> <p>Everyone signs a plan to show their commitment to helping the student succeed</p>
Level 2	Verbal Warning	Written Warning	Behavior Plan / Parent Meeting	
	<p>The teacher reminds the student of the expected behavior.</p> <p>The student and teacher have a brief conversation to talk about what went wrong and how to make a better choice next time.</p>	<p>The student completes a simple reflection form about their behavior.</p> <p>Parents are informed through a note, message, or email.</p> <p>The teacher and student talk again to set a goal for improvement.</p>	<p>A behavior support plan is created with the teacher, student, and a school leader.</p> <p>Parents are invited to a meeting to discuss how we can work together to help the student.</p> <p>Everyone signs a plan to show their commitment to helping the student succeed.</p>	



Level 3	Written Warning	Behavior Plan / Parent Meeting	Major Concerns
	<p>The student completes a simple reflection form about their behavior.</p> <p>Parents are informed through a note, message, or email.</p> <p>The teacher and student talk again to set a goal for improvement.</p>	<p>A behavior support plan is created with the teacher, student, and a school leader.</p> <p>Parents are invited to a meeting to discuss how we can work together to help the student.</p> <p>Everyone signs a plan to show their commitment to helping the student succeed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school leadership team and behavior team meet to review the situation and decide on next steps. Parents are invited to a meeting to revise the plan and ensure all supports are in place. A final written warning is issued if behavior does not improve. If a child's behavior poses a serious safety concern to themselves or others, the student may be asked to stay at home for a short time while we work with the family on a safe return plan. This is only considered after all other supports have been tried.
Level 4	Extreme or Ongoing Unsafe Behavior		Extreme or Ongoing Unsafe Behavior (repeated)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In extreme cases, or if the same unsafe behavior continues despite all support, the school may involve the Behavior Committee to determine additional actions. Parents will be part of this process and receive all communication and documentation. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expulsion is only considered as a last resort, and only with approval from ADEK, after every possible support and intervention has been provided. This will be highlighted in response to the Health and Safety aspect with the other student(s).

Behavior Response Levels – Elementary School

Our goal is to support students in learning positive behavior choices through guidance, clear expectations, and consistent consequences. When a student makes an inappropriate choice, we respond in a fair and supportive way to help them reflect and improve.

Our goal is always to help students grow and make better choices. We believe every child can learn and improve with the right support from home and school working together.



Secondary:

	First Time	Second Time	Third Time	More than three times
Level 1	Verbal Warning	Written Warning	Written Warning	Written Warning
	Discuss the expected change in behavior with the student.	Notify the parent in writing about the student's misconduct.	Notify the parent in writing and hold meeting(s) with them to agree on a reasonable joint home-and-school strategy. The parent is required to sign an undertaking to support the agreed strategy.	Notify the parent in writing and summon the parent together with the Behavioral Management Committee to agree on how to implement a set of strategies aiming at reducing the negative behavior.
Level 2	Written Warning	Onsite suspension	Onsite suspension	Expulsion
	Instruct the student to sign an undertaking not to repeat the offense. Summon the parent, who is required to sign an agreement to support their child in reforming their behavior.	Temporarily suspend the student up to 2 days and assign the student supervised study assignments inside the school with a notification to the parent. Notify both the student and the parent of a second written warning. Notify the Behavioral Management Committee to agree to a set of strategies for reforming the student's behavior. The parent is required to sign an undertaking to support the agreed strategy.	Temporarily suspend the student up to 3 days and assign the student supervised study assignments inside the school. Issue a final warning in writing to the student and the parent. Notify the Behavioral Management Committee to agree to a final set of actions for reforming the student's behavior. The parent is required to sign an undertaking to support the agreed strategy.	Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation for a maximum of 5 days, with a notification to the parent. The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions which may include expulsion. After following the prior steps, if the student continues to repeat the offense, the school is permitted to apply to ADEK to



				expel the student. In making an application to ADEK, the school shall include evidence that all the prior stages have been followed, including proof of having provided sufficient support and counselling as per their behavior strategy.
Level 3	Onsite suspension	Offsite suspension	Expulsion	
	Immediately suspend the student inside the school. The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and determine disciplinary actions. The school shall summon the parent immediately to inform of the disciplinary action and the requirement to sign an undertaking to support the agreed strategy.	Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation for a maximum of 5 days with a notification to the parent. The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions. Provide the student and the parent with a final written warning. Summon the student and the parent to the school to present the Committee's decision.	Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation for a maximum of 5 days with a notification to the parent. The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions, which may include expulsion. After following the prior steps, if the student continues to repeat the offense, the school is permitted to apply to ADEK to expel the student. In making an application to ADEK, the school shall include evidence that all the prior stages have been followed, including proof of having provided sufficient counselling as per their behavior strategy. The Behavioral Management	



			Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions which may include expulsion. After following the prior steps, if the student continues to repeat the offense, the school is permitted to apply to ADEK to expel the student. In making an application to ADEK, the school shall include evidence that all the prior stages have been followed, including proof of having provided sufficient support and counselling as per their behavior strategy
Level 4	Offsite suspension	Expulsion	
	Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation with a notification to the parent. The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of disciplinary actions and a corrective plan.	Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation for a maximum of 5 days with a notification to the parent. The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions which may include expulsion. After following the prior steps, if the student continues to repeat the offense, the school is permitted to apply to ADEK to expel the student. In making an application to ADEK, the school shall include evidence that all the prior stages have been followed, including proof of having provided sufficient counseling as per their behavior strategy	



Note:

Confidentiality of Records:

All records of student behavior incidents, consequences, and interventions are confidential and will only be shared with parents/guardians, relevant school personnel, or ADEK as required. Records will not be disclosed to other students, parents, or external parties in line with the UAE Code of Conduct for Educators.

11. Restorative Practices

At GAA, we believe in restoration and use approaches to resolve conflict and address wrongdoing that focuses on repairing harm and rebuilding relationships, rather than solely on punishment.

- Facilitating restorative conversations and peer mediations between affected parties, when willing.
- Encouraging reflection and accountability.
- Creating action plans to rebuild relationships and prevent recurrence.
- Community service tied to the behavior(s) exhibited.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

Students:

- Follow the GAA code of conduct and own their behavior.
- Demonstrate positive behavior, follow expectations, and engage in reflection and improvement.
- Take ownership of their academic outcomes and adhere to classroom expectations and deadlines
- Communicate their socio-emotional needs with stakeholders to create successful outcomes for their school year

Parents:

Respect the vision, mission, and value statements of the school and its learning environment.

Treat members of the entire school community including students, staff (including security guards, cleaners, etc.), parents, in a professional and respectful manner and maintain relationships in the best interest of students.

Acknowledge that the education and wellbeing of each child whilst in school is a joint responsibility based on a positive school-to-home relationship between the school and the parent and that they will commit to their responsibilities (e.g., ensure their children engage in home learning, get adequate sleep, consume healthy foods in moderate amounts, engage in physical activity).

- Reinforce school expectations and collaborate with school staff.
- Encourage your child to take responsibility for their actions and behavior.



- Support your child in reflecting on their choices and learning from their experiences.
- Reinforce the importance of honesty, integrity, and respect for others.
- Collaborate with the school to address behavioral concerns constructively.
- Promote positive conflict resolution and encourage your child to make amends when appropriate.
- Maintain open communication with school staff to support consistent behavior expectations at home and at school.
- Model accountability and responsible behavior in your own actions.

*Parents will work in line with the Parent Engagement Policy, following parental expectations.

Teachers & Staff:

- Apply the policy consistently and fairly.
- Build strong relationships with students.
- Use restorative and inclusive strategies.

Ongoing Staff Training

GAA is committed to providing regular, targeted professional development for all staff in behavior management, trauma-informed practice, and restorative strategies. Training is reviewed annually and updated to reflect best practices and emerging challenges in student behavior and well-being.

Counselors

- Support students through Social Emotional Learning programs, interventions, and behavior planning

School Leadership:

- School leadership will ensure all staff receive regular, targeted training on behavior expectations, accountability, and restorative practices, and will oversee the consistent and effective implementation of the behavior policy across the school.
- School leadership will regularly monitor behavior data (including incident reports, restorative conversations, and outcomes) and stakeholder feedback, using this information to review and adjust school practices, interventions, and staff training to improve outcomes for all students.
- School leadership will maintain regular communication with families, in accordance with ADEK
- Communicate regularly with families and ADEK.



13. Bullying Prevention

At GAA, Bullying, in all its forms, is not tolerated and includes:

- Verbal, physical, social, and cyberbullying
- Harassment or intimidation based on race, religion, or ability

➤ **Response Procedures:**

- Immediate investigation
- Support for the victim
- Restorative and disciplinary actions for the offender
- Regular follow-up

14. Monitoring and Review

- All behavior incidents are logged and reviewed regularly.
- Data is used to inform staff training and student interventions.
- The policy is reviewed annually and updated as needed in line with ADEK regulations.
- **This Behavior for Learning Policy will be reviewed annually, with updates informed by analysis of behavior incident data, stakeholder feedback, and ADEK policy updates. The review process ensures that interventions remain evidence-based, relevant, and effective.**

15. Communication

- This policy is shared with students, parents, and staff at the start of each year.
- Orientation sessions and student handbooks reinforce expectations.
- Translated copies are available upon request to ensure accessibility.

16. Pathways to the Green Zone: Supporting Positive Behavior and Emotional Wellbeing

As part of our Behavior for Learning Policy, we are embedding the **Zones of Regulation framework** into everyday classroom practice in KG and the elementary division. This approach provides students with a straightforward way to understand and express their emotions, enabling them to develop self-control, resilience, and positive behavior.

Teachers will support students through **daily emotional check-ins**, **calm down spaces**, and **weekly SEL lessons** designed to build emotional vocabulary and regulation skills. When students move into the Yellow or Red Zones, staff are encouraged to use empathy, guidance, and co-regulation strategies rather than punitive responses.

Our shared aim is to help students return to the **Green Zone** - a state where they feel calm, focused, and ready to learn—while promoting consistency, compassion, and a positive learning culture across our school.



17. Positive Recognition System

At GAA, we believe in the power of recognizing and celebrating positive behavior as a means to reinforce our shared values and expectations. Our school-wide Positive Recognition System is designed to reward students who demonstrate our school expectations. This includes initiatives such as allocating CritterCoins to students who consistently exemplify our school values of always learning, one team, excellence and care, the Being a GEM award, given to those who go above and beyond for their peers or community, and Certificates of Appreciation, which recognize students for academic or character-based achievements. Additionally, students who consistently demonstrate responsibility and leadership may be selected for student voice committees, peer mentor roles, and opportunities for school representation. These structured systems provide a balanced and motivating culture where students are not only held accountable but are also celebrated for their growth, effort, and contributions to the school community.

GAA prioritizes support for our students of determination. The GAA Behavior for Learning Policy applies to all students and will be modified as appropriate by individual education behavior plans.

For more detailed information for each division, please see their respective handbooks.

THE GAA ATTENDANCE POLICY

The consequences and enforcement of the GAA Attendance Policy accord with the Parent-School Contract, as noted in the Appendix.

SOCIAL MEDIA RESPONSIBILITY

GEMS American Academy encourages the appropriate use of social media for all students, as well as other members of the school community. For the well-being of our students and school, GAA, do not tolerate any form of defamation or intentionally harmful actions through social media.

Responsible use of social media means that students, parents, and GAA team members must not use social media for sharing misinformation, rumors, or gossip. Such conduct by children or adults may result in loss of privilege on school-sponsored forums and a potential report to appropriate authorities. Parents and students in all grade levels using any social media forums must demonstrate respect for the members of the school community, including students, families, and personnel. Parents and students must not breach confidentiality, defame, or make threats to any person in the school community, including but not limited to the use of WhatsApp, Facebook, Snapchat, Messenger, Twitter, and Instagram.

Members of the GAA school community should follow the UAE laws at all times, including Cyber laws. If in doubt, please contact the school. This includes the newer charity and social media laws. For example, naming of individual GAA staff members or students is in direct violation of the UAE Cyber laws. Examples of potential consequences include being removed from GAA social media or actions by external authorities.

If students or parents have questions or concerns, social media is not the appropriate place for resolution. GAA has a communicated supportive process for responding to concerns. This process calls for resolving concerns through direct conversation at the point closest to the source of the



concern. The process for communication and appeal is outlined in the following section of this document, as well as being published in the Parent-School Contract and on the website.

Digital Citizenship & Use of AI Tools

At GAA, students are encouraged to use technology responsibly, including emerging tools such as artificial intelligence. Students must not use AI to complete academic tasks dishonestly or generate misleading or inappropriate content. Responsible digital citizenship includes evaluating online information, maintaining privacy, and demonstrating ethical behavior in all digital interactions. Violations will be addressed under the Acceptable Use Policy and may be subject to disciplinary action.

GAA CONTACTS FOR STUDENTS & PARENTS

Students or Parents should always go to the team member closest to the source of their question or concern. In most cases, this will be the teacher. For the health and well-being of the GAA community, social media should be avoided as a forum for concerns, as social media only promotes rumors, misunderstandings, a lack of professionalism, and diatribes. Clear steps for appeal exist, as included in the GAA Appeal Process explained later in this section, as well as in the Parent-School Contract.

Teachers may be contacted through email, call, or meeting. In addition, primary contact information for each division is included below. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers or divisions immediately when questions arise. This is important as it helps resolve issues in a professional, effective manner.

Elementary School Primary Contacts

- John Ashenden, Elementary Principal
- Lauren Sargent, Vice Principal KG1-Gr 5
- Cody James Preston, Dean of Students

Middle School Primary Contacts

- Mollie Williams, Middle School Principal
- Paul Teahan, Dean of Students (6-9)

High School Primary Contacts

- Gwyn Underwood, High School Principal
- Monica Martin, Vice. Principal (11-12)
- Zahra Bhatti, Vice Principal (9-10)
- Kelly Jamieson, Dean of Students (10-12)

Students are encouraged to go immediately to teachers, counselors, administrators, secretaries, or other trusted adults in the building with any concerns they have. As an added resource for sharing concerns, members of our school community may use the GAA comment boxes located at each reception desk in the building. Input at these boxes may be anonymous or not, as the individual chooses. The more information provided, the more thorough the investigation and response can be accomplished.



In addition to the resources above, GAA also has a dedicated Safeguarding Team with representatives in each division and a Governor of Safeguarding. The full Safeguarding Team is posted throughout the building and on the website.

THE GAA APPEAL PROCESS

The GAA appeal process for questions and concerns is included within the Parent School Contract signed by each family upon admission. This process is designed to support students and parents, answer questions, and find appropriate solutions to problems. It is best to solve issues informally through meetings and discussions; however, at times concerns might need further deliberations.

Students and parents should refer to this process for any conflict resolution within the school:

1. If a student or parent wants to question a decision made by the school at any level, then the parent should meet the person directly involved in the decision such as a teacher or supervisor.
2. If the parent is still not satisfied, then he or she should meet with the Division Head, such as the Elementary School, Middle School, or High School Assistant Principal or Principal, if applicable.
3. If the issue is still not resolved, then the parent must meet the Superintendent to try to resolve the issue.
4. Each process from A to C should not exceed more than five working days. If the parent is still not satisfied, then the parent has the right thereafter to refer the matter to KHDA by raising it through the E-Feedback System.



HELPFUL QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Does the school address behavior violations that occur on campus before, during, or after the school day, including arrival and dismissal times?

Yes. All school-related activities whether on or off campus fall under the purview of GAA, our Behavior for Learning Policy, and the Code of Conduct.

Does the school address behavior violations that occur off-campus during school field trips, bus transportation, athletic competitions, performances, or other school-sponsored events off campus?

Yes. All school-related activities whether on or off campus fall under the purview of GAA, our Behavior for Learning Policy and the Code of Conduct.

Does the school address behavior violations that occur off campus and apart from any school event?

Yes. If the misconduct directly impacts school operations, the violation will be treated similar to other infractions on campus. If the misconduct does not impact school operations, GAA interventions may still include such actions as parent contact, counseling intervention, behavior education, and warnings.

Does the school address behavior violations that occur while the student is in uniform, whether on or off campus?

Yes. When in uniform, the student is representing GAA and should represent the school ethos with integrity and pride. Misconduct while in school uniform brings disrepute to GAA and our school community.

Does the school address misuse of school technology?

Yes. In accordance with the GAA Technology Policy, students must use technology appropriately.

Does the school address misconduct on social media, such as inappropriate comments, bullying, or threats?

Yes. GEMS American Academy will not tolerate any form of defamation or intentional harmful actions through social media. Responsible use of social media means that students, parents, and GAA team members must not use social media for sharing misinformation, rumors, or gossip.

Does the school address bullying?

Yes. GAA has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying in all its forms. Bullying is the intentional intimidation of another person through emotional, physical, psychological and/or cyber means.



Instances of proven and intentional and repeated bullying may result in immediate suspension of the aggressor from the school.

Does the school issue warning letters to students in accordance with the ADEK notification process?

Yes. GAA has the right to issue warning letters to a student for any behavioral issue, including bullying. The school may block the re-enrollment of students for the following academic year when behavioral issues are repeated. This will be documented through the issuance of the dated warning letters and supporting evidence.

Will the school facilitate mediations between students?

Yes. GAA believes that an important part of the behavior learning process is for students to practice responsibility, compassion, and forgiveness. Apologies between students facilitated by professional personnel support this process. We do not use public apology as a learning tool due to the potential for humiliation or prompting conflict, as well as due to student confidentiality required by the UAE Code of Conduct for Educators.

Will the school facilitate apologies between families?

No, GAA does not host family apologies on campus for reasons of safety, confidentiality, and school operations. Parents may request their contact information to be shared with another family, accompanied by a contact request. Follow-up between families must be managed by the parents among themselves.

Will the school block re-enrollment of a student for the following school year if the misconduct is egregious?

Yes. GAA remains committed to student education, growth, safety, and remediation as priorities. In cases of repeated and egregious offenses, however, the school retains the right to block re-enrollment for the following school year.

Will the school suspend or expel a student from school for either repeated or egregious misconduct?

Yes. GAA remains committed to student education, growth, safety, and remediation as priorities. In cases of repeated and egregious offense, however, the school retains the right to suspend students for up to three days in accordance with ADEK provision, or in extreme cases, seek ADEK approval for expulsion.

Will the school share my child's confidential information with other parents or parties outside my family and the school?



No. Student personal information is confidential and will be shared only with parents and school personnel. This accords with the UAE Code of Conduct for Educators.

Will the school share with me confidential information about a child other than my own?

No. Student personal information is confidential and will be shared only with parents and school personnel. This accords with the UAE Code of Conduct for Educators.

Are parents permitted to view CCTV footage?

No, parents **do not have access** to CCTV footage. CCTV recordings are strictly controlled and may only be reviewed by the Principal, designated staff, or security personnel for safety, security, or behavioral investigations. Parents will be informed of any relevant findings that concern their child, but the footage itself remains confidential.



APPENDIX

The references included in the Appendix inform and support the GAA Behavior for Learning Policy.

GAA Division Handbooks:

1. [GAA Elementary Student Handbook](#)
2. [GAA Middle Student Handbook](#)
3. [GAA High Student Handbook](#)

[Athletic Handbook](#)

[GAA Attendance Policy](#)

[GAA Mobile Device Policy](#)

[Policy on Mobile Phone Use for Recording](#)

[GAA Safeguarding Policy](#)

[GAA Safeguarding Team](#)

[GAA Bullying Prevention Policy](#)

[GAA Parent Engagement Policy](#)

[ADEK Parent Engagement Policy](#)