



مدرستنا الثانوية الإنجليزية، الشارقة (فرع البنين)  
Our Own English High School, Sharjah  
Boys' Branch

# Professional Learning and Development Policy



**Date of adoption: July 2014**

**Date reviewed: April 2022**

**Date of next review: April 2023**

**Verified & Signed**

  
**Principal & CEO**

## **Rationale**

This policy provides the framework for professional development for all staff at Our Own Sharjah Boys' Branch. Professional development aims to enhance personal work performance, professional practice, and career development while contributing to and maintaining a strong performance and development culture at the school.

The Standards of professional practice that must be maintained by teaching staff include:

### **PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE –**

- Teachers know how students learn and how to teach them effectively;
- Teachers know the content that they teach;
- Teachers know their students.

### **PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE -**

- Teachers plan and assess for effective learning;
- Teachers create and maintain a safe and challenging learning environment;
- Teachers use various strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning.

### **PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT-**

- Teachers reflect on, evaluate and improve their professional knowledge and practice;
- Teachers are active members of their profession.

## **Aims**

The professional development policy aims to give:

- Greater emphasis on staff development with the help of workshops organized by GEMS and the school.
- Exploration of strategies such as peer observation.
- More guidance to teachers through informal observations.
- Competency check reviews and guidance to all staff members of the school.
- Guidelines to instil GEMS core values.

## **Professional Development**

A systematic approach to professional and career development to ensure that all staff have the capabilities necessary to fulfil their roles

### **Professional Development Activities**

Professional Development occurs through a range of formal and informal work-related activities.

These include:

- 1) **Attendance at** (internal or external) or workshops.
- 2) **Participation in:** network meetings
- 3) **Involvement in other learning:** critical reflection on practice, professional reading, focused consultation with colleagues,

- 4) **Formal studies:** studies for formal higher education programs at the undergraduate or postgraduate level, including research activities.
- 5) **Research /Writing:** performing action research, study tours, preparing and publishing papers or books.
- 6) **Leadership Programmes**

Professional development activities should benefit the individual and the school by enhancing all skills and professional learning bases.

### **Participation**

All staff are encouraged to participate in professional development activities. An in—house workshop will be organized within the school every month, keeping the school improvement and personal enhancement of staff in mind. All teachers are expected to attend these workshops. Additionally, staff may be required to participate in specific technological or organizational change and development activities.

### **Responsibility**

#### **Individual**

Professional Development is a shared responsibility between the leadership team and the individual staff member. Ultimately, each individual is responsible for their learning and development and is expected to manage their own Personal and Professional Development and contribute to the development of their colleagues by sharing their expertise.

#### **SLT & SMT**

The SLT & SMT is responsible for encouraging, counselling, and helping staff identify their learning and career development needs and help them find and pursue activities to meet those needs. The SLT & SMT is expected to ensure access to relevant staff learning and development activities for individuals and staff groups. The entire staff is eligible for learning and development in some form, and equal opportunity applies to access and participation by all staff.

### **Procedures**

#### **Induction and Orientation**

All new staff undergoes an induction and orientation process at the beginning of the academic year. This includes orientation to their workplace, the Staff Code of Conduct, Occupational Health& Safety induction and induction to the school policies and practices relating to those areas.

#### **Professional Development Plans**

- A series of workshops are conducted at the beginning of the academic year, keeping the school evaluation and improvement plan in mind.
- A workshop is run by the school every month of the cascade of the workshops conducted by GEMS in the school and conduct workshops as per the need and requirements of the school.

## **Registration Process**

- The PLD Coordinator will forward all information from the GEMS PLD Team about the workshop to the SLT & SMT.
- The names of teachers who wish to attend the workshops should be submitted ten days before the workshop.
- Once the Supervisors offer the list of teachers who want to attend or are advised to participate in a workshop, the PLD coordinator will discuss and finalise the names of the participants with the Vice-Principal. The final approval of the names will be sanctioned by the Principal & CEO.
- Registration of the participants will be done one week before the workshop. Once the registration is complete, the PLD Coordinator will inform the participants, SLT and SMT. A copy is also forwarded to the Principal, Vice-Principal and the Transport Officer for information.
- The PLD coordinator will fill out the transportation requisition forms and submit them to the Coordinator, who signs and sends them for signature to the vice principal. The Vice-Principal signs and forwards the documents to the Transport Officer.
- The PLD coordinator will also make arrangements for lunch and snacks depending on the timing and duration of the workshop
- On completion of the workshop, the participants will be required to provide a brief report on the benefits and utility of the workshop.
- The PLD coordinator will maintain staff records of Professional Development.
- A PLD Tracker will be maintained to ensure all teachers get a chance to attend at least one workshop organized by the GEMS group.

## **STAFF APPRAISALS**

**Staff appraisal will be done regularly by the SMT. The following formats and procedures will be used**

1. Competency review checks twice a year
  2. One GEMS review
  3. Peer observations
  4. Self-evaluation
  5. Informal Observations
  6. Immersion Day
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- Staff should meet the Supervisor concerned immediately after the lesson observation
  - The SMT/SLT should give feedback to the teacher and guide her /him on how the lesson transaction could be more meaningful.
  - Three targets that the teacher needs to focus on are informed to the teacher.
  - The SLT, SMT & HODs should check if the teacher incorporates new teaching and learning strategies inducted during the PLD.
  - Immersion days are scheduled once a term; SLT, SMT & HODs visit classes in other departments and observe lessons. Teachers whose lessons are observed are then given feedback and targets to improve.

- The teachers whose lessons are rated acceptable are put on a developmental action plan and coaching agreeing with the SLT, SMT, HODs and the teacher concerned. The targets are reviewed after six months.

### **Completion of Professional Development activities**

- On completing any Professional Development Training by GEMS, the staff conducts a workshop and shares the information and relevant handouts/resources with the other teachers in the school.

### **Evaluation and Review**

- ❖ This policy and associated procedures will be reviewed at the end of the year.

### **SPEA Compliance**

The School endeavours to have a PLD programme in alignment with SPEA policy as listed below -

- Continuous Professional development for school staff should contribute to staff's professional growth and improve student learning outcomes in all private schools. School leaders, teachers, administrators, and professional/technical and support staff are responsible for promoting, planning, implementing, and evaluating CPD activities in their schools.
- All CPD must align with the individual needs of staff, school priorities, SPEA priorities, and/or the UAE National Agenda
- All planning for CPD activities should include adherence to the minimum requirements of 40% formal CPD
- All school leaders must undertake a minimum of **120** hours of professional development hours every Academic Year
- All teachers must undertake a minimum of **100** hours of professional development hours every Academic Year
- All administrators, professional/technical personnel, and support staff must undertake a minimum of **80** hours of professional development hours every Academic Year
- All school leaders, teachers, administrators, professional/technical personnel, and support staff have an Individual Professional Learning Plan (IPLP) that is continuously updated and reflects needs and progress.