



ADMISSIONS, STUDENT DISCOVERY AND PLACEMENT POLICY

Academic Year 2026–2027

Policy Title	Admissions, Student Discovery and Placement
Effective Date	September 2026 (subject to approval)
Scheduled Review Date	June 2027
Policy Owner	Principal/CEO and Admissions Leadership
Version	2.0 – Draft for Leadership Review
Applies To	FS1 to Year 13 admissions, transfers, placement and transition

Policy principle: WGP uses admission assessment to discover how a learner can be placed and supported successfully. No single brief assessment score should be treated as a stand-alone pass/fail judgement.

Status note: This revised policy is a working draft for school leadership review and should be checked against any newer SPEA/GEMS circulars before formal approval.

1. Introduction

GEMS Wesgreen International School, Sharjah (WGP) is committed to an inclusive, transparent and student-centred admissions process that supports successful access to learning. The school welcomes applications from learners of all nationalities and backgrounds and does not discriminate on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religion, social class, disability, special educational need or other protected status, subject to applicable law and regulatory requirements.

WGP's admissions process combines regulatory eligibility checks, previous school information and age-appropriate Student Discovery. Student Discovery is designed to build an initial understanding of the learner's academic starting point, English-language proficiency, learning behaviours, strengths, interests, transition needs and any additional support that may be beneficial.

Student Discovery is not a clinical, psychological or diagnostic assessment. It is an educational onboarding process. Findings are interpreted within the limits of the tools used and alongside other evidence; they are not used to infer a diagnosis or a learner's overall potential.

WGP remains fully subject to Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA) requirements. For schools commencing the academic year in September, age requirements and progression/sequence of study are applied in accordance with the current SPEA Learners' Enrollment in Private Schools policy and subsequent circulars or approvals.

2. Aims and Purpose

This policy establishes a consistent process to determine appropriate admission, placement, support and transition arrangements while maintaining the integrity of WGP, GEMS Education and SPEA requirements.

- Provide a fair, inclusive, efficient and family-friendly admissions experience.
- Confirm regulatory eligibility, year-group progression, documentation and seat availability.
- Understand the whole learner using multiple sources of evidence rather than a single test result.



- Establish an initial academic and English-language baseline that can inform teaching from the first day.
- Identify strengths, interests, potential barriers to learning and areas where support or extension may be beneficial.
- Include parent insight and, where developmentally appropriate, student voice in the admissions process.
- Identify where further inclusion, curriculum or subject-pathway review is necessary.
- Provide relevant transition information to receiving staff on a need-to-know basis.
- Review the effectiveness and fairness of the process through post-entry follow-up and annual quality assurance.

3. Guiding Principles for Student Discovery and Assessment

Principle	Required practice
Multiple evidence sources	Admissions decisions should consider previous school records, parent information, age-appropriate student voice, teacher observation and relevant baseline data. A single short score should not be the sole basis for a high-stakes decision.
Purpose validity	Every assessment must be used only for the purpose it is designed to measure. For example, an English-proficiency screening result must not be interpreted as a measure of intelligence, mathematical attainment or general academic potential.
Age and developmental appropriateness	Tasks, language, environment and expectations must reflect the applicant's age and stage of development.
Reasonable adjustments	Where a learner has a known or suspected additional need, appropriate access arrangements or alternative evidence should be considered so that the process measures the intended construct rather than the impact of an avoidable barrier.
Contextual interpretation	Staff should consider prior curriculum, length of exposure to English, recent relocation, interrupted schooling, anxiety, fatigue and other relevant contextual factors when interpreting results.
Professional judgement with evidence	Teacher judgement is important but should be recorded using a brief structured form to improve consistency and reduce avoidable bias.
Low-stakes English screening	English proficiency screening is used to plan placement, EAL provision and onboarding. It is not a stand-alone pass/fail entrance examination.
Proportionality and efficiency	The process should collect enough evidence to make a sound initial decision without unnecessarily extending the applicant's time in school. Parent information should normally be completed before the visit.

4. Responsibilities

GEMS Education / School Governance: Ensures that the school maintains an admissions policy consistent with corporate and regulatory requirements.

Principal/CEO: Approves, monitors and ensures implementation of the policy; resolves exceptional cases within delegated authority; ensures staff understand their responsibilities.

Admissions Leadership / Registrar: Owns day-to-day admissions workflow, documentation, communication, records, waiting lists, offers and coordination with academic, inclusion, finance and government-relations teams.

Front of House / Admissions Team: Contacts families, gathers information, explains Student Discovery, schedules sessions, checks documents and ensures required forms are complete.



Educational Team / Phase Leaders: Reviews academic information, conducts or delegates age-appropriate discovery, interprets evidence and provides placement/support recommendations.

Inclusion Team: Reviews applications where additional needs or access arrangements are indicated; advises on reasonable adjustments and support planning; does not diagnose unless appropriately qualified and authorised to do so.

EAL / English Support Team: Interprets English-proficiency information and advises on appropriate EAL provision where required.

Head of Secondary / Sixth Form Leadership: Reviews Years 11–13 curriculum suitability, subject prerequisites, option availability, prior grades and any additional evidence required.

Government Relations Executive (GRE): Supports SPEA/Daleel registration and regulatory documentation. A learner must not begin attendance until required SPEA registration approval is completed.

Parents/Guardians: Provide accurate and complete information relevant to admission, including academic history, additional needs, previous provision and current reports, and complete required regulatory/contractual steps.

Students: Participate in age-appropriate discovery activities and, where applicable, provide their own perspective on strengths, interests and support needs.

5. Admission Process

1. **Application:** Parents/guardians complete the online application through the school's approved enrolment platform.
2. **Initial family contact:** Front of House/Admissions should normally contact the family within one working day to gather additional information, answer questions and confirm the next steps.
3. **Document and previous-school review:** Admissions requests the most recent academic report and other relevant records. The Educational Team reviews available evidence before or alongside Student Discovery.
4. **Pre-visit Parent Discovery Questionnaire:** Parents complete the age-appropriate Parent Discovery Questionnaire before the school visit wherever possible. This captures strengths, interests, language background, learning history, independence, social/communication information and concerns that may not appear in a report.
5. **Student Discovery:** The learner participates in an age-appropriate discovery pathway described in Section 6. The purpose is to understand the starting point and support needs, not simply to pass or fail an entrance test.
6. **Whole-learner review:** The Educational Team integrates the available evidence and determines whether an offer can be made, whether support planning or further review is required, and whether any regulatory or subject-pathway conditions apply.
7. **Offer / waiting list / further review:** Admissions communicates the outcome clearly. Where a year group is full, eligible applicants may be placed on a waiting list according to school criteria and regulatory requirements.
8. **Offer acceptance and seat reservation:** Parents have the period stated in the offer letter (currently three working days in the school process) to accept and pay the approved seat reservation amount. WGP currently uses AED 1,000, provided this remains within the SPEA-approved limit. The seat reservation amount is deducted from tuition for that academic year and may be non-refundable if the learner does not join, in accordance with the current SPEA fee policy.
9. **Completion of school and SPEA registration:** Parents complete required school forms and Daleel/SPEA steps with GRE support. Learners may attend only after the required SPEA electronic registration approval is completed.
10. **Transition handover:** Relevant Student Discovery information is summarised for the receiving educational team on a need-to-know basis.
11. **Post-entry review:** Where indicated, a short review is undertaken approximately 4–6 weeks after joining to confirm whether the initial profile and support plan remain appropriate.

6. Student Discovery by Phase

The exact evidence required may be adjusted when sufficient reliable information is already available, when a learner requires reasonable adjustments, or when curriculum/subject requirements justify additional review. The aim is to use the minimum proportionate assessment necessary to make a sound educational decision.



Phase	Core discovery evidence	Main focus	Indicative school time
Early Years FS1–Year 1	Parent questionnaire; previous nursery/school information where available; play-based observation; brief teacher quick form.	Communication, social interaction, engagement, independence, school readiness, motor/early learning indicators and response to routines.	Usually 20–30 minutes; developmentally flexible.
Primary Years 2–6	Previous report; Parent Discovery; age-appropriate student voice; English-proficiency screening where applicable; brief teacher interaction incorporating learning behaviours and a short numeracy/academic check where needed.	English access, literacy/numeracy indicators, confidence, engagement, instruction-following, problem solving, strengths and support needs.	Usually about 45 minutes; parent input completed in advance.
Secondary Years 7–10	Previous records; Parent Discovery; student questionnaire; English-proficiency screening where applicable; teacher/academic review; short numeracy/subject-access check where needed.	Curriculum access, English proficiency, academic habits, independence, motivation, reasoning, transition needs and support planning.	Usually 45–60 minutes, depending on evidence required.
Senior Secondary Years 11–13	Detailed transcript/report review; subject-option/prerequisite review; English screening if relevant; student discussion; additional subject assessment or CAT4 only when educationally justified.	Curriculum pathway, subject prerequisites, examination compatibility, prior attainment, time remaining in course and likelihood of successful access to chosen subjects.	Case dependent; targeted rather than routine.

6.1 Use of FlashAcademy® and Other Baseline Tools

For Years 2–13, WGP may use a school-approved English-proficiency screening tool, currently FlashAcademy® where applicable. The pre-enrolment screening is designed to provide a structured snapshot of English proficiency and may take approximately 30 minutes depending on the selected assessment. It should be used to inform EAL planning, placement and onboarding rather than as a stand-alone acceptance/rejection test.

FlashAcademy® is an English-language/EAL assessment platform; it should not be described or interpreted as a numeracy test. Where numeracy evidence is required, WGP should use a separate age-appropriate school-approved numeracy baseline, work sample or teacher task. This distinction protects the validity of the admissions evidence.

CAT4, where used, should be treated as one additional source of cognitive-profile information and not as a substitute for curriculum attainment, English proficiency, teacher observation or previous school evidence. The reason for requesting CAT4 should be recorded in the applicant file.

6.2 Teacher Quick Form

Following the interaction, the teacher completes the relevant Early Years, Primary or Secondary Student Discovery Teacher Quick Form. The form is deliberately brief and should normally be completed within a few minutes. It records only observable evidence that is useful for placement, transition and support planning.

6.3 Student Voice

For Primary and Secondary applicants, an age-appropriate student questionnaire or short conversation should capture interests, perceived strengths, subjects the learner finds easy or challenging, preferred ways of working and expectations about joining WGP. Student voice informs onboarding; it does not replace professional assessment or regulatory requirements.



7. Whole-Student Discovery Profile and Decision Framework

Whole-student evidence model: Previous school information + Parent insight + Student voice + Standardised/structured baseline evidence + Teacher observation + Curriculum/inclusion review (where required).

The Admissions/Educational Team considers the consistency and quality of the evidence rather than simply adding scores. Where sources conflict materially, the team should seek clarification, repeat a limited task if appropriate, or obtain additional evidence before making a high-stakes decision.

Outcome	Meaning	Typical next action
Offer	Available evidence indicates the learner can access the relevant programme within normal school provision.	Issue offer, complete registration and transition handover.
Offer with planned support	The learner can be admitted and would benefit from identified EAL, literacy/numeracy, inclusion, pastoral or transition support. This is not, by itself, a negative admissions outcome.	Record support recommendation and hand over to relevant team.
Offer with enrichment recommendation	Evidence indicates high attainment, advanced skill or an area of particular strength.	Flag for teacher/phase leader and consider appropriate challenge after entry.
Conditional offer	An offer depends on a legitimate outstanding requirement such as final grades, subject availability, required document, equivalency, or regulatory approval.	State the condition and deadline clearly in writing.
Further review required	Evidence is incomplete, inconsistent or suggests that further curriculum/inclusion review is needed.	Request only the additional evidence necessary; avoid unnecessary repeated testing.
Waiting list	The learner is otherwise eligible but the relevant year group/subject pathway has no available place.	Place on waiting list according to approved priority criteria.
Unable to offer a place	A place cannot be offered because of legitimate capacity, regulatory, age/progression, curriculum/subject-pathway, documentation, or provision considerations after required review. SEND must not be the sole reason.	Document rationale; follow SPEA/GEMS requirements and communicate respectfully.

8. Inclusion, SEND, EAL and Additional Learning Needs

WGP recognises the importance of early identification and appropriate provision within an inclusive mainstream school. Applicants are not refused admission solely because they have, or may have, a special educational need or disability (SEND), and the school will follow applicable SPEA requirements in any case where there is concern about whether the school can provide an appropriate placement.

- Parents/guardians must provide relevant information already known to them, including previous IEPs/provision plans, therapist reports, educational psychology reports, medical information relevant to school access, and previous support arrangements.
- A formal diagnosis should not be required merely to begin an inclusion review when there is clear evidence of need.
- The Inclusion Team may observe the learner, review records, speak with parents and previous professionals where authorised, and recommend reasonable adjustments or further specialist evidence when genuinely necessary.
- Where a dedicated learning-support arrangement is considered necessary, the school will discuss the proposed provision with the family and manage any associated requirements in accordance with current SPEA/GEMS rules and the parent-school contract.



- English as an Additional Language (EAL) must not be treated as evidence of low cognitive ability or SEND. Language proficiency and learning needs should be considered separately unless there is evidence supporting a broader concern.
- Non-disclosure of material information may require the school to review support arrangements and the parent-school contract; it should not trigger automatic cancellation without appropriate educational and regulatory review.

8.1 Foundation Stage Independence and Personal Care

Foundation Stage learners are generally expected to demonstrate age-appropriate independence with toileting and personal care. Where a medical condition, disability or additional need affects independence, the school will consider reasonable arrangements with the family and Inclusion Team rather than applying the expectation as an automatic exclusion criterion.

Parents/guardians must disclose any known additional learning needs, disabilities, medical conditions or personal-care needs relevant to their child's access to school, and provide available supporting information. This enables the school's Inclusion Team to consider appropriate reasonable adjustments and support arrangements, which may include learning support assistance (LSA) where this is identified as necessary following professional review and in accordance with applicable SPEA/GEMS requirements and the parent-school contract.

9. Year-Group Placement

Year-group placement must follow the current SPEA age and progression requirements. For schools commencing in September, SPEA currently identifies minimum admission ages of 3 years for FS1, 4 years for FS2, 5 years for Year 1 and 6 years for Year 2 by 31 August of the year of admission. From Year 2 onwards, sequence of study and successful completion of the previous grade are primary placement requirements, subject to SPEA rules and any permitted exceptions.

Student Discovery may identify that an alternative year-group placement could be educationally beneficial; however, such a recommendation does not override SPEA requirements. Any exceptional placement must be referred through the required regulatory process and must not be represented to the family as final until the necessary approval is obtained.

Terminology: The term "demotion" should not be used in the Student Discovery process. Use "alternative year-group placement recommendation, subject to SPEA approval" where an exception is being explored.

10. Class Placement

The purpose of class placement is to create balanced, inclusive sections that support learning, wellbeing and effective teaching. Class composition may consider class size, English-language profile, educational needs, attainment range, gender, cultural and language diversity, peer dynamics and other relevant educational factors.

The school cannot guarantee requests for a specific teacher or section, and class changes will not normally be made solely on parental preference. Where a safeguarding, inclusion or exceptional educational need exists, the relevant leader may review placement.

11. Information and Documents Required

- One recent passport-size photograph.
- Copy of the learner's passport, valid UAE visa and Emirates ID, as applicable.
- Copy of the learner's birth certificate and vaccination card.
- Copies of parent/guardian passport, valid UAE visa and Emirates ID, as applicable.
- School continuation letter where required.
- Most recent/end-of-year report from the current school.
- Transfer certificate/school leaving certificate from the current school where required.
- Attestation/equivalency documents required by SPEA/MOE for transfers from other Emirates or outside the UAE.
- Any relevant educational support documents already available, including IEPs/provision plans and professional reports.



Parents/guardians are responsible for providing accurate information relevant to the application. Where required documentation is pending, the school may issue an undertaking or conditional offer subject to completion of the stated requirement and regulatory approval.

12. Registration and Acceptance Requirements

Acceptance and registration remain subject to the conditions in force in the UAE and Emirate of Sharjah, including regulatory eligibility, documentation, age/progression, seat availability and the school's ability to provide the relevant licensed curriculum and subject pathway.

- Age eligibility and year-group progression in accordance with current SPEA requirements.
- Successful completion of the previous school year where required for progression.
- Complete and authentic documentation, or an approved undertaking/conditional process where permitted.
- Availability of a place in the requested year group and, for older learners, availability of required subject options.
- For Years 11–13, prior grades, curriculum compatibility, examination requirements and subject prerequisites may be considered.
- Student Discovery evidence may inform placement and support planning, but no single short assessment should automatically determine acceptance in isolation.
- Full and accurate disclosure of information relevant to safe and appropriate educational provision.

13. Non-Acceptance, Further Review and Withdrawal of Candidacy

WGP may be unable to offer a place where a legitimate capacity, regulatory, documentation, age/progression, curriculum or subject-pathway requirement cannot be met, or where—after appropriate evidence-based review and any required consultation—it is determined that an appropriate placement cannot be provided within the applicable framework.

SEND, disability, EAL status, nationality, race, gender, religion or social class must not be used as stand-alone grounds for non-acceptance. Where an additional need is relevant to provision, the school should first consider reasonable adjustments, available support, relevant evidence and the applicable SPEA process.

If material information was intentionally withheld or later information substantially changes the school's understanding of the learner's provision needs, the school may review the admission or support arrangements in accordance with the parent-school contract, GEMS requirements and SPEA procedures. Decisions must be documented and proportionate.

14. Notification of Outcome

Families should normally be notified by telephone or email within 72 hours of completion of the required Student Discovery/placement review, provided the application and required documentation are sufficiently complete. Where additional specialist, curriculum, subject or regulatory review is required, Admissions should explain the reason and provide an expected next step rather than leaving the application without status.

Sibling applicants must complete the applicable admissions process. Sibling priority may apply where the learner meets regulatory/placement requirements and a suitable place is available.

15. Transition into School and 4–6 Week Review

Student Discovery should create continuity between admissions and learning. Once registration is confirmed, Admissions provides the receiving educational team with a concise Student Discovery Snapshot containing only information necessary for successful transition.

- Key strengths and interests.
- Initial English-proficiency and other relevant baseline indicators.
- Observed learning behaviours and engagement.
- Known inclusion/EAL/pastoral provision and reasonable adjustments.



- Areas for teacher observation during the first weeks.
- Relevant parent/student transition information.
- Recommended immediate strategies or referrals.

A 4–6 week review is recommended for learners where the Discovery Profile identified a significant support need, uncertainty, an alternative placement concern, notable EAL need, or other transition risk. The review should confirm whether the initial profile was accurate and whether support needs to continue, increase, reduce or be redirected.

16. Records, Confidentiality and Data Use

- Student Discovery information is educational record data and must be stored in approved school systems with access limited according to professional role and need.
- Sensitive inclusion, medical or psychological information must not be distributed more widely than necessary for safe and effective provision.
- Parents should be informed about the purpose of information collected during Student Discovery and how it supports placement and transition.
- Assessment scores should be recorded with the tool/date/version where practical, so that results are interpretable later.
- Data should be retained, transferred and disposed of in accordance with GEMS records-management requirements and applicable UAE data-protection law.

17. Re-enrolment

Parents wishing to secure a place for the following academic year must complete the re-enrolment requirements and pay the approved re-enrolment/seat reservation amount by the communicated deadline. Failure to do so may result in the place being released to a new applicant, subject to applicable school and regulatory requirements.

18. Tuition Fee Payment

Tuition fees are payable in accordance with the SPEA-approved school fee schedule and parent-school contract. Parents must be offered payment in at least three instalments over the academic year, or another arrangement agreed by the parties.

Under the current SPEA fee policy, the first tuition instalment may be collected no earlier than one month before the start of the academic year, and parents must not be compelled to pay the full annual tuition in advance. Monthly payments may be offered where approved by the school. Parents of learners joining after the start of the academic year will be advised of the applicable pro-rated/regulatory payment basis by Admissions/Finance.

The approved enrolment/re-enrolment seat reservation amount may be collected within the regulatory advance-registration period. It must remain within the SPEA limit (currently no more than 5% of approved tuition and no more than AED 1,000) and is deducted from that academic year's tuition. A separate admission-test fee must not be charged unless specifically permitted by current SPEA regulation.

19. Tuition Refunds

Refunds will be processed in accordance with the current SPEA Payable Tuitions to Schools and Refunds Policy and the approved GEMS fee process. At the date of this draft, the SPEA framework provides:

- Seat reservation/enrolment or re-enrolment amounts may be non-refundable where the learner does not attend, subject to the SPEA conditions governing seat reservation.
- If a learner attends for two weeks or less and then withdraws voluntarily, one month of tuition is charged.
- If a learner attends for more than two weeks and up to one month, two months of tuition are charged.
- If a learner attends for more than one month, the full term/semester tuition is charged.
- The refund calculation date is based on the parent's officially submitted withdrawal request or the learner's earlier actual dropout date, where applicable.



- Finance will process the settlement and refund after the required school/GEMS authorisation and supporting documentation.

20. Withdrawal and Transfer Certificate Guidelines

Withdrawal and transfer requests must be completed through the school's approved process. The school will process transfer/disenrolment steps through the relevant SPEA electronic system and provide the required certificates in accordance with regulatory requirements and any applicable financial-clearance provisions.

For learners transferring to WGP, the school must receive the required Transfer Certificate (TC) and related reports within the regulatory timeframe. Learners who have never previously attended a school may be exempt from TC requirements where permitted. Attestation requirements depend on the learner's previous school location/country and must follow the current SPEA/MOE guidance rather than an outdated country list.

21. Regulatory and Evidence References

- Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA), Learners' Enrollment in Private Schools, Policy No. SPEA-8.1-01.0 / English section of bilingual policy, Issue Date November 2022. [Source](#)
- Sharjah Private Education Authority, Policies and Legislation portal (current regulations and future updates/circulars should take precedence where applicable). [Source](#)
- Federal Decree-Law No. 39 of 2022 concerning Compulsory Education, as listed by SPEA. [Source](#)
- Sharjah Private Education Authority, Payable Tuitions to Schools and Refunds Policy, Policy No. SPEA-8.1.04.0, Effective Date December 2021. [Source](#)
- FlashAcademy®, English placement testing for international schools: admissions screening is an English-proficiency snapshot and is not designed as a high-stakes pass/fail admissions test. [Source](#)
- WGP Admissions Policy 2025–2026, effective September 2025, scheduled for review June 2026 (source document used as the operational base for this revision).

Regulatory precedence: If any provision in this policy conflicts with a current SPEA/MOE requirement, regulatory decision, circular or approved parent-school contract, the current regulatory requirement takes precedence and this policy must be updated accordingly.

Appendix A – Student Discovery Workflow at a Glance

1. Online application received
2. Initial contact and document check
3. Parent Discovery completed at home
4. Previous school evidence reviewed
5. Age-appropriate Student Discovery session
6. English screening / targeted academic evidence where applicable
7. Teacher Quick Form + Student Voice



8. Whole-learner review
9. Offer / support / conditional / further review / waiting list / unable to offer
10. Offer acceptance, fees and required documents
11. SPEA/Daleel registration approval
12. Student Discovery Snapshot to receiving team
13. Learner joins school
14. 4–6 week review where indicated

Approval and Review

Role	Name / Signature	Date
Principal/CEO		
Head of Admissions / Registrar		
School Leadership / Policy Approver		