

## Curriculum

Our school offers an enhanced British curriculum (Cambridge), which leads to the IGCSE and A level qualifications.

The IGCSE stands for International General Certificate of Secondary Education, which is a widely recognised qualification for international pre-university programmes such as the UK Advanced Level, Australian matriculation, and the International Baccalaureate diploma. It is also widely accepted by top Malaysian colleges and universities for admission into various programmes.

The Cambridge A-level qualification is recognized by top Malaysian and international universities. You may conduct a recognition search by clicking [here](#). (Individual universities may require candidates to fulfill specific requirements for admission purposes.)

## Age of Students

We currently admit students from age 3 (nursery) up until 16 (IGCSE). From 2018 onwards we will also admit students up to 18 years old into our A level programme.

A cut-off date of 31 August is applied to determine which year group each student will be admitted to.

## Teachers

All our nursery and primary homeroom teachers as well as secondary core subject teachers are expatriates.

Each nursery and primary class will also have an assistant teacher.

We have a rigorous hiring process which ensures our teachers are not only qualified and experienced but also aligned with the core values of our school.

## Class Size

The number of students in each class will be limited to 20 for nursery and range from 25 to 28 for primary and secondary.

## Distribution of Students

If there is more than one class per year group, students will be assigned to classes by the school based on various factors (e.g. no. of male/female students, new or old students, nationality, etc.)

We do not assign students to classes based on academic results.

## Student Progress

Parents will have the opportunity to meet with homeroom teachers during parent-teacher conferences, which are held at the end of each term. A report will be sent to all parents before the conference.

## English Medium

English is the medium of instruction, i.e. all lessons will be taught in English (except Malay and Mandarin languages).

Students who are poor in English will be supported by our specially-trained teachers. In addition, all nursery and primary classes will have a Malaysian teaching assistant who can speak a local language.

Generally, younger children will pick up the language quite quickly once they are immersed in the English-speaking environment of our school. Older students (11 years old and above) will be provided with extra support through our English Language Learning class.

## Malay & Mandarin

All students will learn Malay and Mandarin at our school, starting from Foundation Stage (nursery).

During each school week there will be three lessons each for both Malay and Mandarin language (50 minutes per lesson).

For Mandarin, the students will be divided into different classes according to their level of proficiency. The students will be taking one of the following papers at IGCSE level: first language, second language or foreign language.

**School Hours**

Little GEMS: Monday to Thursday 9:00 am – 3:15 pm; Friday 8:00 am – 2:25 pm

Primary & Secondary: Monday to Thursday 8:00 am – 3:15 pm; Friday 8:00 am – 2:25 pm

**Meal Breaks**

Students will have mid-morning snack and lunch break each day. The timing will depend on the year level, i.e. the primary students and secondary students will have their breaks at different times.

**After School Activities (ASA)**

A wide selection extra-curricular activities will be offered each term.

Students will have to sign-up for activities of their choice at the beginning of each term.

Some activities will be conducted by external providers, which will incur a fee.

It is compulsory for each student to take up at least one ASA.

After School Activities are held on Monday to Thursday from 3:20 to 4:20 pm.

**Meet the Principal or Head of Primary**

We will be happy to arrange for you to meet with the Principal or Head of Primary, especially if you would like to find out more about academic matters.

**School Calendar**

The school calendar starts in September and ends in July.

Each school year consists of three terms, with each term lasting approximately 12 to 14 weeks. Generally, first term will be from September to December, second term January to March, and third term April to July.

Each term break will be about two weeks long, and the year-end holiday lasts for about seven to eight weeks.

Most Malaysian and Penang public holidays are observed.

**Accreditation**

Our school is a private international school registered with the Ministry of Education, and accredited by the University of Cambridge for Cambridge International Examinations (CIE).

**Parent Engagement**

We believe parents play a very important role in the education of our students. Hence, we will involve parents in the education process, including notifying them about weekly lessons and homework, upcoming assessments and activities, etc.

Parents can communicate directly with homeroom teachers via email.

**Admission**

All students will need to take a placement exam before admission. Registration and admission fees (total RM5,000) will need to be paid before assessment. If a place is not offered to your child, the admission fee of RM4,000 will be refunded.

**Assessments**

FS1 & 2 – homeroom teacher interview with student and parents (1 hour)

Year 1, 2 & 3 – homeroom teacher interview (30 minutes)

Year 4, 5 & 6 – homeroom teacher interview (15 minutes); online CAT 4 (1 hour 45 minutes) & written English test (30 mins)

Year 7, 8 & 9 – online CAT 4 (2 hours), additional assessment may be required; e.g. English teacher interview, written tests

Year 10 – English teacher interview (1 hour); online CAT 4 (2 hours); written tests: English (1 hour), Maths (1 hour) & Mandarin (30 mins)

**Nationality of Students**

GEMS International School of Pearl City, Penang welcomes students of all nationalities.

Approximately 90% of our students are Malaysians, with the rest coming from at least 12 different countries, ranging from America to China.

## School Facilities

We have the following facilities in our 8.5-acre campus:

- Specialist learning spaces, e.g. art rooms, science labs, design technology workshop
- Three libraries (nursery, primary and secondary)
- Indoor activity halls
- Full performance stage
- Dance studio
- Black box studio
- Outdoor playground
- Basketball courts
- Football fields (primary and secondary)
- Futsal court
- Swimming pool and learner pool
- Clinic (with a full-time nurse)
- Internet and wi-fi connection

## School Canteen

We provide a meal plan with healthy snacks and nutritious lunches, with daily choices of Western, Asian and vegetarian food. The menus are planned by a nutritionist.

Students will be enrolled in the meal plan by default. Students may opt out from the meal plan upon written notice to the Registrar.

## Bus Transport

We provide an optional bus transport service. Currently, the pick-up/drop-off points are as follows:

- Harbour Place
- Jalan Raja Uda
- Sunway Carnival Mall
- Bayu Mutiara (Bukit Mertajam)

Our vehicles are equipped with GPS and CCTV. There is also a bus marshal on each of our school buses.

The transport service is not available for Foundation Stage students.

## Support for Special Needs

Support may be provided for students with special education needs. The support provided will be on a case-to-case basis, depending on the actual needs of the student. (An external assessment by a professional may be required.)

## Books and Stationery

Books and stationery are available for sale at the book store.

A list of recommended text, activity and exercise books will be provided to parents each year.

Parents are advised to check with teachers before purchasing text and activity books.

## School Uniform

Students are required to wear a uniform when they attend school. Uniforms are also sold at the book store as follows:

- Nursery T-shirt - RM25 each
- Nursery shorts/skirt - RM35 each
- Primary T-shirt - RM35 each
- Primary shorts/skirt - RM35 each
- Secondary trousers - RM50 each
- Secondary skirt - RM50 each
- Secondary shirt - RM30 each
- Secondary blouse - RM30 each
- Secondary tie - RM25 each
- PE T-shirt - RM20 each

## School Location

GEMS International School of Pearl City, Penang is located in the fast-growing township of Bandar Tasek Mutiara, Simpang Ampat.

We can be located on Waze by searching for "GEMS International School Pearl City"

The Google Maps link is

<https://goo.gl/maps/ZxsQJMM48pP2>