



أكاديمية جيمس العالمية  
GEMS World Academy  
ABU DHABI



# Student & Parent Handbook 2022 - 2023

## Student - Parent Handbook

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### Principal's Welcome:

Welcome to GEMS World Academy – Abu Dhabi (WAA), our premium IB and British curriculum school offering a trailblazing 'world of pathways'. We provide learners and their families with a hyper-personalised, future-proofed education – one that delivers high performance for all. Our state-of-the-art building and campus enable our world-class leaders and teachers to provide learning experiences that are truly among the best in Abu Dhabi and the UAE.

This handbook has been prepared with information to help you understand our school and community so that you can take full advantage of the many opportunities on offer. GEMS World Academy is an International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) World School that serves the educational needs of expatriate and Emirati families who are living, working and making their home in Abu Dhabi.

In this, our eleventh year, we have the excitement of moving to our new campus and we will have over 500 learners attending WAA representing over 60 nationalities. Our campus features academic buildings including a modern library, technology and innovation suite, outdoor play areas, two swimming pools, sports hall, multipurpose hall, sport courts and indoor learning through play centres for our youngest learners. The school is led by myself (Vice President Education and HPL leader), alongside an established Executive Leadership and Middle Leadership team which includes two accredited IBEN evaluators and two World Class Accredited Principals.

Through our dynamic, diverse and inclusive approach to education, with our IB World School provision underpinned by the National Curriculum for England, we strive to unlock the potential of all learners in our care. Our focus is on creating a nurturing, supportive environment that ensures all students feel safe, happy and valued, in which they are consistently engaged, challenged and inspired, allowing them to develop into responsible global citizens and critical thinkers.

WAA's rich curriculum and exceptional teaching and learning practices across the IB Primary Years and Middle Years Programmes sustain students' interest and curiosity. Our teachers focus on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and the world beyond. They prepare learners for the intellectual challenges of further education and future careers, ensuring outstanding progress and high levels of performance for all.

WAA's secondary provision is where students benefit from our unique blended model, offering a choice of International Baccalaureate, National Curriculum for England/IGCSE, vocational and technical qualifications – a real first in the Emirate. This 'world of pathways' enables genuine personalisation with outcomes that are highly valued by universities and employers globally.

Through our agile, digitally driven, innovative provision and blue-sky thinking, we are able to enhance the learning of all our students, while celebrating their successes and those of our teachers and families. Our education provision is centred around the '8 Cs': Community, Collaboration, Character, Critical Thinking, Civic, Creativity, Curiosity, and Cultural Fluency. Through these, our learners are instilled with the values, attitudes and attributes of hard work, empathy and agility, coupled with advanced cognitive performance characteristics resulting in high-level problem solving and entrepreneurship. Our aim is for all WAA students to graduate as

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young people who can think for themselves and are socially confident.

With a keen focus on social enterprise, excellence and success, our approach is to enable children and young adults to not only learn about their world, but also accomplish the unthinkable, preparing them for jobs that may not yet exist today. We want our students to go on to contribute to the development of a cohesive society centred on health, well-being and happiness. They are the future leaders of their generation, filled with passion and purpose, and we can't wait to see what great things they will accomplish.

We look forward to welcoming you as a valued partner and member of our wonderful school community. We know you have many educational options and are pleased that you chose GEMS World Academy as the school for your child. We take our responsibility for educating your child very seriously and thank you for your trust. Working together, we promote the importance of becoming socially responsible and internationally minded as key features of your child's education.

In partnership,

**Kelvin Hornsby**

Principal/CEO

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### GEMS CORE EDUCATIONAL VALUES

At GEMS Education we care about a values-led education and seek to encourage students to grow and develop their personal and interpersonal qualities. A variety of initiatives, designed to instill values in students, have been rolled out across GEMS schools, with teachers, student and parents all actively involved. The GEMS Jewels of Kindness & Respect initiative has been created to encourage students to think about showing all the qualities of kindness, such as respect, empathy, helpfulness, and compassion, to their friends, family and wider community with the belief that children learn best when there is close collaboration between home and school on core values.



#### CARE

I respect the needs of my stakeholders. I will ensure they feel listened to and cared for.

#### GEMS EDUCATION | OUR VALUES



#### EXCELLENCE

I dream big, setting ambitious goals, aiming to be the best at what I do.



#### ONE TEAM

I am a team player. I work with the bigger picture in mind. I put the team's needs ahead of my own.

*Our values are at the heart of everything we do...*



#### ALWAYS LEARNING

My open minded curiosity fuels my love for learning. I ask questions & listen so that I continuously learn & improve.

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# OVERVIEW OF WAA - ABU DHABI

### Mission and Vision

Unlocking the potential of the unique child through a world of pathways.

With world class physical resources, and along with the recruitment and retention of world class leaders and teachers, provision will be amongst the best in Abu Dhabi, the UAE and globally.

### Philosophy

- We believe that the diversity of our student body provides the foundation for creating involved global citizens in our rapidly changing world.
- We believe that quality education builds bridges of trust, communication and common goals between the home and school.
- Our approach is guided by a respect for each child's uniqueness, recognizing their inherent capacity for growth. We recognize that each student learns differently and provide a wide range of learning opportunities for our students and encourage them to be active participants in their learning.
- We plan inquiry based learning experiences and environments that shape learning and provide opportunities for success.
- Students build knowledge and skills through the progressive structure of the National Curriculum for England student outcomes
- Our students are encouraged to explore their interests and strengths and to develop their own distinct, individual personalities and to expand their perspectives.
- Students have the opportunity to excel as individuals, while learning to work collaboratively as part of a team.

We support our philosophy through:

- high standards of achievement and performance
- a developmental, student-centered approach to teaching
- a comprehensive and varied curriculum aimed at the acquisition of transferable skills and enduring understandings
- the development of independent learning skills and self-reflection in the learning process
- constructive feedback for learning
- nurturing a strong sense of self-esteem, personal integrity and a respectful, caring attitude toward others
- developing an understanding of, appreciation for, and willingness to accept people whose ideas and experiences differ from our own
- facing problems within a framework of fairness and shared values
- nurturing a sense of responsibility for our environment

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### Setting the Context for Learning

We take advantage of our international student community and the cultural diversity that it offers. We learn about different countries' cultures – traditions, customs and holidays. Our local community also has an impact on our curriculum in that we frame conceptual understandings in the context of personal experiences situated in the local environment. In this way, the program is enriched by what is offered in Abu Dhabi and the surrounding area.

The school community is warm and nurturing. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the daily education of students by participating in the GEMS Parent Engagement Program. WAA also has a newly reformed, active and supportive Parent Association (WAA-PA) regularly coordinating events, organizing fund-raising activities and helping build school and community spirit.

### Overview of the EYFS in Early Years FS1 and FS2

Underpinning our PYP framework is the Early Years Foundation Stage (FS1 and FS2) which sets standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five years old. With an emphasis on fostering effective learning characteristics, every child is developed holistically through a play-based, student-centred approach.

Three characteristics of effective learning guide all that we do in FS1 and FS2. These are:

- Playing and exploring (investigating and 'having a go')
- Active learning (concentrating and persevering when they encounter difficulties)
- Creating and thinking critically (developing their own ideas and making connections)

Seven areas of learning, aligned with the PYP framework, shape our programme and determine what children should learn and how their learning and development will be supported. These are:

- Mathematics
- Communication and language
- Literacy
- Understanding the world
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical Development
- Expressive arts and design

Through continuous provision, we encourage children to be active learners who make independent choices and develop their curiosity and social skills through exploration and play.

We foster an inquiry-based approach to learning and teaching throughout the school. Throughout their experience, children develop deep understandings, skills and dispositions that build academic success and strength of character.

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### Procedures for Assigning Class Placement

We believe strongly in the importance of well-balanced class groupings – we want children to work within a heterogeneous environment in order to benefit from the diversity of backgrounds, abilities and personalities inherent in an international school setting.

In order to create the optimal class environment, we seek as information as possible about your child's social, emotional, physical and academic needs. We strive to balance each class according to gender, nationality, new or returning family, academic ability and level of English fluency. We do not accept requests for specific teachers.

Right up to the day school starts, our student lists are changing, so we are not able to post class lists before the start of school. We are confident that all placements provide an opportunity for academic and social success.

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### CURRICULUM

Through a ‘world of pathways’ GEMS World Academy, Abu Dhabi (WAA) unlocks the potential of the unique child, providing learners with a hyper-personalised future proofed education that is totally inclusive delivering high performance for all.

WAA offers a bespoke, truly unique and aspirational curriculum for all learners. Combining the best of the Early Years Framework (EYFS) and National Curriculum for England (NCFE) underpinning the world renowned, IB Overarching framework feeding seamlessly into the Middle Years Programme (MYP). The NCFE provides a rigorous, progressive framework which focuses on the “mastery of concepts”, ensuring breadth and depth, coupled with the IB pedagogical approach ensuring student agency, creativity, international-mindedness and the taking of action. The WAA curriculum is a specifically tailored learning model arranged through a mixture of interdisciplinary, conceptual based learning and stand-alone teaching of English/ Language, Maths, Science and Socials, Digital Learning, Computing, History, Geography, DT, The Visual and Performing Arts, Physical Education, UAE Social, Moral and Cultural Studies, Personal, Social and Health education, student wellbeing, Arabic, Islamic, French, entrepreneurship/enterprise environment and charity.

In our Early Years at WAA the EYFS and IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) ensure a child-centred learning environment and a rich curriculum where all children are valued and championed. With a focus on the EYF characteristics of learning, and the central features of the Early Years in the PYP, we value play, positive relationships and engaging learning environments in contributing to all areas of learning. Our continuous provision reflects our focus on all areas of learning, with Communication, Language Literacy, Number and Understanding the World always available for children to explore, play and engage with. We follow Read Write Inc Phonics which is enhanced by teacher led and independent reading alongside storytelling opportunities and writing for pleasure. An internally developed maths scheme (aligned to the White Rose Maths approach) promotes deep understanding of number value and real-life maths skills. Children are then able to use a variety of resources and strategies to solve problems and investigate independently.

Critical thinking skills are embedded throughout our curriculum, our children know that the key to mastery is understanding how we learn and being able to take ownership of the learning process in order to achieve their very best. Children receive diverse and exciting curriculum opportunities to immerse them in the learning process, deepening their connections in learning and applying them in other contexts. Students are empowered to use their literacy, oracy and digital communication skills to share their learning with others.

WAA places learners at the heart of social enterprise, through partnership with globally recognized partners such as 8billionideas, an entrepreneurial framework supports creativity, excellence and success. Inspirational provision enables learners to not only learn about their world, they will accomplish the unthinkable being prepared for jobs that may not exist today, being molded into internationally minded global citizens, critical thinkers with adaptability and empathy. They will be able to lead future generations through autonomy, mastery and purpose, being able to thrive in all walks of life.

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The WAA curriculum is highly considerate of the local context of the UAE, ensuring full immersion in UAE traditions and culture as well as ensuring full coverage of the UAE Social Studies and Moral Education curriculum. The school meets MOE expectations for the delivery of Islamic Studies and the Arabic Language for native and non-native speakers as well as ensuring enhanced links between English and Arabic to develop students' acquisition and love of languages.



### **International Baccalaureate Mission**

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

### **International Baccalaureate® (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP)**

The International Baccalaureate® (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) is a curriculum framework designed for students aged 3 through 12. It prepares students for the intellectual challenges of further education and their future careers, focusing on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside. The aim of the PYP is to create a curriculum that is engaging, relevant, challenging and significant for learners.

Since June 2014, GEMS World Academy Abu Dhabi has been a fully authorized IB World School.

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### International Mindedness: The Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

*IB learners strive to be:*

Inquirers	They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.
Knowledgeable	They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.
Thinkers	They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.
Communicators	They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of mode of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.
Principled	They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.
Open-minded	They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.
Caring	They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.
Risk-takers or Courageous	They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

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Balanced	They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.
Reflective	They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

### Transdisciplinary Learning

The PYP endorses a belief that students learn best when the learning is authentic and relevant to the real world, where learning is not confined to the boundaries of traditional disciplines but is supported and enriched by them.

“Students’ interests and questions form the heart of transdisciplinary learning. It is a curriculum-organizing approach where human commonalities rise to the top without regard to subject boundaries. Subjects become an instrument/tool/resource to explore a theme, problem or concept in depth.”

*International Baccalaureate Organization (2018)*

Therefore, our specialist teachers work collaboratively with our homeroom teachers to develop children’s knowledge, understanding and skills. In this way, our students learn through the different disciplines and develop literacy within them.

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### The Organising Structure of the PYP

There are three important elements to the organising structure of the PYP: the learner, learning and teaching, and the learning community.



#### The Learner

Agency is the central principle for learning in the PYP. When we use the term *learner agency*, we refer to students who have voice, choice and ownership for their own learning. When students have agency, they work in partnership with their teachers.

Students learn by doing. Here at GEMS World Academy, teachers collaborate to create opportunities for agency by involving students in establishing a respectful and welcoming culture, creating shared routines, setting up learning spaces, making decisions about learning and by communicating learning expectations clearly so that students understand what they are learning and why.

Building and developing relationships is a fundamental part of establishing important skills and dispositions that center on trust, agency and belonging. Our teachers spend a lot of time getting to know and understand students and their families.

#### Learning and Teaching



Learning and teaching in the PYP is transdisciplinary. The PYP model illustrates the features of the framework. The written curriculum encompasses all of the knowledge, concepts, and skills students are expected to learn and enhance, and the opportunities that students may have to take action as they reflect and respond to their learning.

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Incorporating local and global issues into the curriculum, the programme requires students to explore six related transdisciplinary themes and consider the links between them. All science and social studies knowledge, understandings and skills are carefully woven through these themes. All other subject specific knowledge and skills are built into the programme with consistent emphasis on supporting and deepening students' understanding. Explicit instruction occurs alongside this as appropriate.

Students are continually engaged in inquiry based learning where they are provided with opportunities to explore concepts, identify connections between subjects, learn how to ask constructive questions, plan investigations, solve problems, communicate effectively and find answers to the wonderings and questions that they have.

Throughout the course of the academic year, FS1 and FS2 students will engage in four units of inquiry, Year 1 and 2 students will engage in five units of inquiry, while students in Year 3 through 6 will engage in six units of inquiry across the following themes:

Who we are  
 Where we are in place and time  
 How we express ourselves How  
 the world works  
 How we organize ourselves Sharing  
 the planet

Seven key concepts are used to drive the process of inquiry. These fundamental concepts and associated questions are broad in scope, guide the units of inquiry, and are the basis for the school's programme of inquiry. These concepts also provide consistency among IB PYP schools worldwide and give children a valuable framework for seeking answers and solving problems.

- Form: *What is it like?*
- Function: *How does it work?*
- Causation: *Why is it like it is?*
- Change: *How is it changing?*
- Connection: *How is it connected to other things?*
- Perspective: *What are the points of view?*
- Responsibility: *What is our responsibility?*

Through this process of inquiry students are then able to construct meaning from their learning experiences. There are five sets of transdisciplinary skills, or approaches to learning, acquired and developed through the process of inquiry:

- Communication Skills
- Thinking Skills
- Research Skills
- Self-Management Skills
- Social Skills

While all IB PYP schools develop their own programme of inquiry, there is sufficient flexibility to ensure learning is situated in the context of the local environment, with respect for social and cultural influences and norms, and in compliance with local and national guidelines and expectations.

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Assessment informs learning and teaching, and is something that occurs every day. Teachers use various strategies and tools to evaluate students understanding, providing timely, meaningful feedback to students that guides and supports their ongoing learning and development. Over time, students themselves develop their reflective skills so that they can take greater responsibility for their learning and participate in goal setting. Much of this learning is shared on Seesaw, our interactive learning platform which is readily accessible to parents.

### IB Middle Years Program (MYP)



The IB goal is to provide students with the values and opportunities that will enable them to develop sound judgments, make wise choices and respect others in the global community. The IB Middle Years Programme (IB MYP) is a purpose-built five-year program (Years 7-11, ages 11-16) for international schools which is taught and implemented worldwide. The IB MYP builds upon the skills and learning developed in the IB Primary Years Programme (IB PYP).

The IB MYP also relies on connecting classroom pedagogical practices and content to the world outside through the Global Contexts and the Learner Profile. The IB MYP prepares students for the IB Diploma Programme, which was established to provide students with a balanced education, facilitate geographic and cultural mobility and to promote international understanding. The IB MYP Philosophy The IB MYP emphasizes holistic learning. The IB MYP should expose students to as many different subjects, skills and experiences as possible so that students will learn to see knowledge as an interrelated whole. Students should have the opportunity to show their various strengths while being rewarded for them and gaining a sense of personal achievement. The IB MYP emphasizes intercultural awareness and communication. In our community, it is essential that the curriculum reflects and is responsive to the different perspectives of all our students. It should also guide them in forming their own, international, outlook. This implies an emphasis on communication skills, both in the languages and in other subjects. The IB MYP is student-centered. It is vital that students develop an awareness of their own learning process and the necessary skills to continue learning throughout life. The curriculum seeks to shift the emphasis from teacher-led instruction to student-led learning wherever possible. The philosophy's key elements permeate and are practiced throughout the whole curriculum. IB MYP educators have continued to focus on how best to meet the needs of adolescents, who are confronted with a vast and often bewildering array of choices in a complex

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and rapidly changing world. A focus on higher-order thinking skills gives students opportunities to develop a growing awareness of themselves and others, as they explore real-world issues.

The IB Middle Years Program at GEMS World Academy Abu Dhabi (WAA) adopted the IB MYP because the philosophy and objectives of this program reflect those of the school. In addition, the IB MYP is an international program with no bias towards any particular national system; it provides vertical consistency through the IB Diploma in Years 12 and 13 and the IB PYP in the Primary School. Many elements of the IB MYP are common to the skills required by the IB Diploma and developed in the IB PYP; provides assessment, within the IB MYP subjects, which share a common approach by being criterion-based and inquiry-led, has strong, interdisciplinary elements and is flexible enough to allow WAA to design the curriculum to fit student needs. It does not prescribe content of subject areas but does provide a framework for their delivery and supports curriculum development and external evaluation.

The assessment within each subject is designed to help students and parents recognize a student's individual strengths and weaknesses according to the particular set of skills necessary for achievement. The IB MYP Curriculum model a concept-driven curriculum. A concept is a big idea, a principle that is enduring, the significance of which goes beyond aspects such as particular origins, subject matter or place in time. Concepts represent the vehicle for students' inquiry into issues and ideas of personal, local and global significance, providing the means by which the essence of a subject can be explored. The IB MYP identifies prescribed key concepts and related concepts. These concepts ensure the development of a rigorous curriculum and promote a shared community of practice among IB World Schools offering the IB MYP. A concept-based model is used in the IB MYP because it encourages students to process factual knowledge at a deeper intellectual level as they relate the facts to concepts and essential conceptual understandings. It creates a personal relevance, as students relate new knowledge to prior knowledge, and encourage understanding of cultures and environments across global contexts through the transfer of knowledge.

### Global Contexts:

#### Why are we learning this?



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Learning at WAA aims to help students understand the complex world. Clearly, there are many different things that one would need to understand in order to understand the world. These things can be broken down in to six categories, known as the Global Contexts. Units of work in all subjects allow students to explore one of the Global Contexts. Global Contexts are designed to encourage the students to make worthwhile connections between the real world and classroom learning. Through their learning of subject concepts, students will come to a better understanding of a Global Context. When teachers select a global context for learning, they are answering the following questions.

- Why are we engaged in this inquiry?
- Why are these concepts important?
- Why is it important for me to understand?
- Why do people care about this topic

The six IB MYP Global Contexts inspire explorations of our common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet. They invite reflection on local, national and global communities, as well as the real-life issues and concerns of 11 to 16-year-old students. Over the course of their study, students will explore all six Global Contexts on multiple occasions and in different subjects. The Global Contexts build on the powerful transdisciplinary themes of the IB PYP, thereby extending and deepening understanding in an age-appropriate manner.

The Personal Project is a significant body of work produced over an extended period. It is a product of student initiative and should reflect their experience of the IB MYP.

### Approaches to Learning (ATL)

It is widely known that the development of transdisciplinary skills are just as important in education as learning in specific subjects. The transdisciplinary skills that empower students to be successful in school, education and beyond, are known as Approaches to Learning (ATL). There are five broad categories of skills, which can be broken down into ten more specific categories of ATL skills. Through subject lessons, as well as the Advisory Programme, students will learn and practice different strategies for developing these skills.

### The Learning Community

“The IB connects a worldwide community of learners who celebrate a common humanity and share a belief that education can help to build a better and more peaceful world.”

*International Baccalaureate Organization (2018)*

In recognising that education is a collective endeavor, benefiting the whole community, our school prioritizes people and their relationships.

We have a strong commitment to collaboration. This requires a strong respect for the roles that we play and perspective we bring to the work we do. We value all stakeholders.

We are an inclusive school and are committed to supporting all students. Teachers extend learning for all students by creating an affirmative and responsive environment that considers student identities and embraces learner diversity from a strength-based perspective. Our established inclusive support structures support equal opportunities for all learners.

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## Student - Parent Handbook

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We are committed to the health and well-being of all members of our community. This is essential to ensuring quality relationships and effective interactions. This is reflected in our morning assemblies, throughout our programme of inquiry, in our after school offerings and in the various events and activities we host.

Our learning environments support coherent, authentic teaching and learning. This allows for transparent connections so that students are aware of the relevance of the learning to their reality and are encouraged to respond with a high level of engagement.

### High Performance Learning

High Performance Learning is a research-based, pedagogy-led philosophy developed by Professor Deborah Eyre. It is based around a framework that includes 20 generic characteristics that students need to develop to be high performing learners. These are based around, 'How we think' (ACPs) and 'How we behave' (VAAs) which are carefully planned and embedded across our WAA curriculum.

At WAA we truly believe that all children can be high performance learners and we strive for all our students to have a performance mindset and reach their potential. HPL responds to our growing understanding of human capability and normalises high performance for all students.

The High Performance culture and IB philosophy permeates the school classrooms and corridors at WAA; from the children articulating their learning in the classroom, to children working collaboratively and engaging in creative and critical thinking tasks across all areas of learning.

### Technology Integration

Technology is a tool for learning. The school employs a Digital Technology and Innovation Coach who supports students and teachers throughout the school. Students develop knowledge, skills and understanding of the ways in which we can become connected learners through the use of a variety of digital tools such as iPads, laptops and coding devices. Through meaningful use of technology, students develop and apply strategies for critical and creative thinking, engage in inquiry, make connections and apply new understandings and skills in different contexts.

### Modern Library

The traditional library model is evolving. As students learn to engage with various media, navigate digital learning environments, and develop the transferable skills necessary to work efficiently and successfully in our changing world, it is essential that learning spaces are supportive so that teaching and learning can be maximized. As a PYP school, we embrace this change and strive to be innovative in both design and usage; we seek spaces where disciplines can intertwine, different perspectives can permeate and where intentional spaces can support students as they imagine, inquire, discover and create.

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Teachers regularly schedule time for students to visit the Innovation Lab as part of the conceptual learning and digital skills development. Students are given the opportunity to work both independently and collaboratively, developing critical thinking skills as they locate and consume information, make decisions, solve problems and communicate. Students are given the opportunity to check out books each week. Additionally, teachers may give assignments which require the use of library media or technology at other times.

Students and parents may want to check out books or other materials for their own personal enjoyment. In either case, students are expected to return their items on time. The cost of lost texts will be charged to the student. WAA is unable to issue final progress reports or transfer certificates to students who have outstanding book fees. The library is open Monday to Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., except Friday when it closes at 11am.

### Physical Education

In the context of the PYP, personal, social and physical education (PSPE) is a school-wide endeavor concerned with individual health and well-being. As it encompasses physical, emotional, cognitive, and social health and development, and contributes to an understanding of self, to developing and maintaining relationships with others, and participation in an active healthy lifestyle, it is considered integral to all teaching and learning.

In addition to educational experiences facilitated in the context of the units of inquiry, students participate in two physical education classes each week (including swimming). These are timetables as 30 minutes each in Early Years and 60 minutes in Year 2 to 6. These lessons provide students with opportunities to develop physical strength, stamina, endurance, flexibility and coordination in a wide range of both movement and sport-specific skills.

Students are expected to come prepared for class, be dressed appropriately and follow the health and safety guidelines. Specific swimming safety guidelines will be shared at the start of each year. Students are required to attend all physical education classes unless the school is provided with a written statement that details a sound reason for release from a particular physical education activity.

### Visual Art

At WAA, we seek to ensure that, during their PYP experience, students encounter a broad range of experiences that illustrate the field of visual arts which may include architecture, bookmaking, ceramics, collage, costume-design, drawing, graphic design, film, illustration design, installation, jewelry, land art, mask-making, metalwork, painting, papermaking, performance art, photography, printmaking, sculpture, set-design, textiles and woodwork.

Throughout the units of inquiry, and with weekly visual arts lessons, all students have the opportunity to engage in creative processes through which they explore and experiment in a continual cycle of action and reflection.

### Music

The PYP music program at WAA provides students with opportunities to participate in a broad range of music experiences. Through the units of inquiry, and during their weekly music lesson, students classify and analyze sounds, compose, explore body music, harmonize, listen to and play instruments, sing, read music, engage in song writing and recording. Children will also develop the ability to use their imaginations and communicate their ideas and feelings.

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### Arabic

In PYP schools, all students have the opportunity to learn an additional language from the age of 7. Every learner benefits from having access to different languages, and, through that, access to different cultures and perspectives. At school, students learn primarily through the medium of English with a significant amount of time also spent developing Arabic language skills.

In line with the Ministry of Education, all of our native speaking Arabic students in Years 2 to 4 receive 240 minutes of Arabic instruction each week while non-native Arabic speaking students in Years 2 to 4 receive at least 160 minutes of Arabic instruction each week. For students in Years 5 and 6 all native speaking Arabic students receive 200 minutes of Arabic instruction each week and non-native speaking Arabic students receive at least 160 minutes each week. In addition, as we believe in the importance of developing students language skills as much as possible, students in FS1 to Year 1 additional Arabic language development classes.

The UAE is a country rich in culture and heritage. Where possible, we strive to situate learning in the local context in order to deepen students' knowledge and understanding of the country in which they live. The programme of inquiry has been developed to support all students in developing their understandings and providing opportunities to explore alternate perspectives.

In the UAE, the Ministry of Education also requires all students in Years 1 to 6 to spend 60 minutes each week participating in UAE Social Studies. As students grow, it is important that they become increasingly more knowledgeable about the world in which they live and belong.

### Islamic

Ensuring that Muslim students have the opportunity to grow spiritually is an important part of students' educational development here in the UAE. Islamic Studies for Muslim students is offered in two languages: Arabic for native Arabic speakers and English for non-native Arabic speakers. Students who must attend Islamic education classes are those who have been identified as Muslim by their parents at the time of registration.

The Ministry of Education requires all Muslim students in Years 2 to 4 spend 120 minutes each week participating in Islamic Studies, so all Muslim students receive three 40 minute classes in their schedule. Students in Years 5 and 6 enjoy two 40 minute classes each week as they are expected to receive 80 minutes of instruction. As we recognize the importance of Islamic education for Muslim families, we also provide one class each week for Muslim students in FS1, FS2 and Year 1.

### Moral Education

The Ministry of Education Moral Education Program includes three pillars of teaching and learning: character and morality, the individual and the community and civic and cultural studies. All students in Years 1- 6 participate in this program. This curriculum is complementary to the IB PYP framework and is reflective of the goals identified in the UAE Vision.

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### Student Services Team

The Student Services Team (STS) assists students with academic, social, emotional, or transitional needs. The core members of the team are the Head of Student Services (Ms. Claudia), Head of Primary/Secondary, Vice Principal, school counselor, and the ELL and learning support specialists.

The school has a clear process for identifying and supporting children with specific learning and/or social-emotional needs. Members of the SST work to establish an understanding of a child's strengths and to define learning needs to make accommodations, or (if required) modify the school program. The process may also include a referral for a medical examination or an assessment by an educational psychologist, an occupational therapist, or a speech and language therapist. Additional WAA staff members such as classroom teachers, specialist teachers, learning support assistants, and the nurse are included in this process, as are parents.

### English Language Learners (ELL)

It takes approximately 5-7 years to become fluent in a language. As a PYP school, here at WAA we practice inclusion. This is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. All of our teachers are language teachers. Across the curriculum, it is important that students are continually given opportunities to learn language, learn through language and learn about language.

At WAA, we value students' home or family language and encourage you to foster this at home. Development of this language is crucial for cognitive development, and in maintaining cultural identity.

When a student whose home or family language is not English enters WAA, placement tests may be given to determine the level of English proficiency. This helps the school determine potential supportive steps that may need to be taken. In addition, diagnostic tests are administered to ELL serviced students throughout the year to determine the student's progress and current stage of proficiency. The ELL teacher, working in consultation with the Student Support Team, is the final arbiter of student readiness and develops a plan of action based on each child's individual needs.

Our intensive Beginner English Course (BEC) is provided for students with little or no exposure to the English language. This structured program ensures that students can communicate their basic needs and wants, build relationships with peers and adults, and become active learners within the PYP. It is offered a different times throughout academic year and generally runs for eight weeks.

Teachers differentiate to ensure that students' needs are met. In addition, ELL support is offered to those non-native speakers of English who are identified as requiring additional support. This may happen in the classroom setting or in breakout areas. Focused instructional lessons, alongside guidance and support, are designed to enable non-native speakers of English to reach a sufficient degree of proficiency in the English language to be able to participate fully in mainstream classes.

The ELL curriculum is aligned with mainstream programs but modified to meet the needs of students still learning the fundamentals of listening, speaking, reading and writing in English. The ELL teacher also provides support for the mainstream subjects by reviewing

## Student - Parent Handbook

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class assignments, giving further explanations and reinforcing concepts and subject specific terminology.

### External Assessments

Students undertake a range of internal and external assessment to ensure that the school develops a holistic understanding of a student's individual strengths and areas for development, as well as supporting identification of whole school patterns and trends which support curriculum modification.

**The Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4)** is a diagnostic assessment. It provides information about how a child learns and what his or her academic potential may be. This test assesses non-verbal reasoning, verbal reasoning and quantitative reasoning as well as spatial ability.

**PASS (Pupils Attitudes to Self and School)** is an assessment that involves students answering survey style questions that takes 20-30 minutes. It gives staff an indication of how a student is thinking and what their attitude to school and learning is. It is based on a trusted psychometric measure and is widely used by thousands of schools in the UK. PASS helps staff understand why students may be highly successful or reluctant learners by sensitively exploring social and emotional wellbeing. It then provides interventions and guidance so that issues can start to be addressed immediately and effectively. Students complete annual external benchmark tests as stipulated by ADEK.

These are computer adaptive achievement tests that measure a student's abilities and achievements in language usage, reading, mathematics and science. Scores in the form of percentile ranks are reported to the parents. These scores will become part of the child's learning record.

### Homework

Developing children's communication skills is of paramount importance. Therefore, spending time each day talking, reading and playing with your child is vital.

Teachers may assign homework in keeping with the following guidelines:

- Year 2: Not to exceed 15 minutes per day
- Year 3: Not to exceed 20 minutes per day
- Year 4: Not to exceed 25 minutes per day
- Year 5: Not to exceed 30 minutes per day
- Year 6: Not to exceed 40 minutes per day

Homework will most frequently include reading and generally be related to the development of English and Arabic language skills. It may include tasks that support mathematical knowledge and skills or the current unit of inquiry.

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If your child experiences difficulty completing homework assignments or cannot complete a homework assignment because of illness or other extenuating circumstances the parent should communicate directly with the teacher.

### Field Trips

As an important educational component of the programme of inquiry, field trips to local places of historical and cultural value - theaters, museums, historic buildings – along with visits to sites that help offer opportunities to develop students' transdisciplinary skills are arranged to provide meaningful learning experiences in an authentic context. These trips are considered part of the curriculum and participation is strongly encouraged.

Planning and preparation for all trips is thorough. Comprehensive risk assessments ensure that all health and safety considerations are fully addressed. Education and Knowledge (ADEK) must approve all field trips. As part of this process, permission forms must be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the school by the specified date. Unless otherwise communicated, the student will pay for all transportation, entrance fees and guided tours.

Standards of dress and behavior are the same on field trips as during a regular school day and students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately.

Occasionally, some students remain in school rather than taking part in the trip. These are extraordinary situations. Students who are excused from the trip are expected to attend school and work will be provided by the class teacher.

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### INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

#### Internet Use at School & Wi-Fi Access

Students have age-appropriate, filtered access to the Internet to conduct research and communicate about academic topics. Our Acceptable Use Policy outlines user privileges and responsibilities.

#### Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Access to online resources can support individual and group projects, collaboration and the exchange of ideas.

Use of the WAA network is a privilege extended to students who act in an ethical, considerate and responsible manner. Abuses of the Internet, including participation in chat lines; accessing personal email; plagiarizing the work of others; trespassing in another student's space; displaying or downloading information or images that are offensive, dangerous and/or objectionable; and sharing personal information, may result in loss of internet access privileges. Violations may also lead to disciplinary actions.

Students and parents should understand that, while safeguards are in place, it is impossible to completely control the content of the information obtained online. Faculty members and IT personnel do their utmost to monitor students' online activity.

### ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Plagiarism is using the ideas or words of others without clearly acknowledging or crediting the source of that information. Plagiarism is regarded as a type of theft and there are laws against it. Plagiarism is not acceptable at WAA. To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use:

- another person's idea, opinion, or theory,
- a presentation that is not your creation,
- quotations
- images and videos
- paraphrased versions of an original.

If a student is found to have presented the work of another as their own, he/she will be required to re-write the assignment. Parents and the Principal will be notified and a record of the infraction will be maintained. Further offences will have serious consequences.

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### AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES (ASA)

The school offers teacher led After School Activities (ASAs) throughout the school year. Most activities are free; however, some may charge a small fee for materials.

East Sports Management (ESM) is a company that provides athletic activities. They hire professional experienced coaches and charge a fee for each class. When ASAs are in session on the green, students not enrolled must stay off the green area.

**Parents must pay ESM directly. School personnel are unable to take money for ESM.**

**a. ASAs are open to all students in Y1 and up**

- i. Year 1 students may participate in one ASA per trimester.
- ii. Year 2 and higher are eligible to participate in two ASAs per trimester.

**b. ASA Schedule and Timing:**

- i. Students who participate in ASAs will be monitored by the classroom teacher or teaching assistant between 2:45 p.m. and 2:55 p.m. before transitioning to their activity.
- ii. ASAs begins at 3:00 p.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. Parents are responsible for ensuring their child is collected on time at 4:00 p.m. School transport is not provided. If a parent is late three times to pick up a child, then loss of ASA privilege will occur.
- iii. ASAs held off-campus may have adjusted timings.
- iv. The ASAs schedule varies depending upon the number of weeks in a term, national holidays and Ramadan. Parents are provided with information about the dates at the start of the year.
- v. Students may not attend their ASA if they have been absent on the day, unless approved by the Principal or Assistant Principal.

**c. Sign-ups:**

- i. Parents will receive a link for the online sign-up.
- ii. Children must be signed up by their own parent or guardian.

**d. Disciplinary Procedures:**

- i. If a child receives three behavioral reports it will result in a loss of ASA privileges for that trimester.
- ii. If a significant behavior incident occurs, the ASA instructor will inform Principal, Parents, and ASA Coordinator immediately.

**e. Student Attendance:** ASA instructors will take attendance.

- i. If a student is going to be absent, the parent and/or teacher must inform the ASA instructor in advance.
- ii. 3 days of **unexcused** absences = Lost spot in ASA.

## THE SCHOOL DAY

### School Hours

The school day for Year 2 to Year 8 starts at 7.45am with the playing of the national anthem. Registration closes at 07.50am. Early Years (FS1, FS2 and Y1) have a staggered drop-off between 07.45am and 08.15am. Students who arrive after the National Anthem will be marked late. Dismissal time is 2:45 p.m. with the exception of Fridays when students are dismissed at 11.45am.

The school cannot supervise students before 7:30 a.m. or after 3:00 p.m. Students must be under parental supervision while on school premises before and after these times, the only exception being when the student is attending an after school activity (3:00 – 4:00 p.m.)

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Generally, all students and parents who are not involved in an after-school activity should exit the campus by 3:30 p.m. on Monday to Thursday.

Students not involved in ASA activities must not enter school buildings, with the exception of the student toilets.

### School Scheduling

The school week runs from Monday to Friday. The school has developed timetables which ensure consistency in structure, variety in subjects and skills and overall balance. Protected blocks have been created to ensure that little to no issues occur to reduce lesson time from any curricular area due to special events, assemblies or holidays.

### Attendance

Parents are expected to call, instant message via Seesaw or email the school between 7:30 - 8:00 a.m. when their child is absent from, or will be late to, school. Attendance and student participation in learning activities are important, so parents are urged to schedule medical, dental and other appointments after school hours or during vacations.

All students are expected to abide by the school schedule and attend school on the days before and after vacations. Frequent or lengthy absences can seriously impede your child's learning progress. In some cases, this can lead to the school's inability to promote your child to the next grade.

#### In line with ADEK Policy:

- ❖ **Absence rates above 10% are regarded as a cause for concern as are unauthorized absences, this includes extended holidays and Ramadan.**
  - **Authorized Absences:** illness, death of first or second degree relative, scheduled doctor's appointments, official community task, mandatory appearance before an official body, and essential urgent family travel for matters such as medical treatment or the death of a family member
  - **Unauthorized Absences:** shopping trips, unnecessary travel, other types of travel not included in the authorized absences list
  - The school issues attendance letters to parents when 10, 15 and 20 days have been missed and parents are invited to meetings to discuss attendance concerns.

### Early Pick-Up

For safety reasons and to ensure limited disruption to classes, pick up of students is not permitted within the last 30 minutes of the school day (between 2:15 p.m. and 2:45 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesday, Wednesdays and Thursdays, or after 11am on Friday). In exceptional circumstances, please contact the school reception in advance.

If a student is leaving school early, parents must come to the office before collecting their child from the class to obtain an early collection slip. The teacher must sign the slip, before handing to security when exiting the campus. It is helpful if parents contact the teacher and/or reception to advise the school of an early collection in advance of coming to school.

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### Change to Regular Home Transportation

Teachers must receive communication from both families if a child is to go home with another child. If this involves using the school bus, the parent must **also** contact the bus provider to ensure there is space on the bus.

### School Uniform

As part of the GEMS family of schools in the UAE, as well as in compliance with the Ministry of Education requirement, all GEMS students are required to wear the uniform designated for their school.

### Daily Uniform Requirements

# GEMS WORLD ACADEMY - ABU DHABI

CORE UNIFORM		FS1 - YEAR 2	CORE UNIFORM	YEAR 3 - YEAR 6	CORE UNIFORM	YEAR 7 - YEAR 8	PE & WINTERWEAR	ALL YEARS
BOYS		<p>POLO SHIRT NEW FABRIC (OFF FIT PRICE)</p> <p>HALF CLAYTON NAVY SHORTS (UNTIL 2022)</p> <p>NAVY TROUSERS (WINTER WEAR OPTION)</p>		<p>BLUE SS SHIRT (WINTER WEAR OPTION)</p> <p>NAVY SHORTS</p> <p>NAVY TROUSERS (WINTER WEAR OPTION)</p>		<p>BLUE SS SHIRT (WINTER WEAR OPTION)</p> <p>NAVY TROUSERS (WINTER WEAR OPTION)</p>	<p>JACKET - NAVY</p> <p>FULLOVER - NAVY</p> <p>UNISEX CAP</p>	
GIRLS		<p>POLO SHIRT NEW FABRIC (OFF FIT PRICE)</p> <p>NAVY SHORTS</p> <p>NAVY TROUSERS (WINTER WEAR OPTION)</p>		<p>BLUE SS BLOUSE (WINTER WEAR OPTION)</p> <p>NAVY SKIRT</p> <p>NAVY TROUSERS (WINTER WEAR OPTION)</p>		<p>BLUE SS BLOUSE (WINTER WEAR OPTION)</p> <p>NAVY SKIRT</p> <p>NAVY TROUSERS (WINTER WEAR OPTION)</p>	<p>UNISEX CORE SHOES</p> <p>GIRLS CORE SHOES</p> <p>UNISEX SPORTS SHOES</p>	

www.threadsme.com 800-THEADS(8473237)

Teachers will contact the parents of students not in uniform. Upon third notification, the Parent Relations Executive will contact the family. If the matter is still not resolved, parents will be required to attend a meeting with a Senior Leader.

**All GEMS World Academy students** are expected to wear their uniform with pride at full time. This includes the appropriate clothing and footwear and in addition we ask parents and students to ensure jewelry is kept to a minimum for health and safety purpose and hair is appropriate for school.

As students progress through the different phases of school we are preparing them for further study and the world of work. Jewelry and hair styles should be appropriate for a professional environment. This means no extreme cuts or use of different colours or hair dyes.

**FS1 to Year 2:** Regulation blue polo shirt with shorts or trousers for boys, and skirt or trousers

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for girls.

**Years 3 - 8:** Regulation light blue cotton shirt with shorts or trousers for boys, and blouse and skirt or trousers for girls.

**PE Uniform:** For both boys and girls, the regulation WAA PE polo shirt, and shorts or jogging bottoms with the school logo must be worn. On days when students have PE they may wear the uniform for the full school day.

**Footwear must be all black or all white and can only be dress shoes or trainers.** Crocks, sandals and rubber flip-flops are not permitted.

**Outerwear:** A blue V-neck sweater or fleece jacket/hoodie with the school logo may be worn. Other outerwear may be worn to and from school but students will not be allowed to wear non-uniform items during school hours.

**Sun Hats:** Dark blue, red or white hats or caps.

**Please ensure that all your child's clothing and belongings are clearly labeled with his/her name.** All uniform items are available from Threads online at [www.threadsme.com](http://www.threadsme.com) or at their Capital Mall showroom. There are also samples available for viewing in reception. Please stop by at your convenience.

**School bags:** Students may use a bag of their choosing. Trolley bags are not permitted in accordance with the Health & Safety guidelines from Dubai Municipality. Pupils should take home only those books they need for homework each day and reading books.

### WAA Healthy Eating Guidelines

**Overview:** Our school environment supports the growth, health and well-being of students. A healthy diet is linked to improved academic achievement.

#### Water

Each child must have a refillable water bottle with their name printed on it.

#### Lunches and Snacks

Children may purchase their lunch in school or bring lunch from home. Your child should bring healthy snacks from home to eat during their scheduled breaks. Our traffic light system (see below) indicates the foods that children should and should not bring to school. This is in line with the Ministry of Education's regulations and the Department of Health in Abu Dhabi's recommendations.

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**Food at School**

**Special Day Exceptions**

For special days, red foods may be brought to the class, but always coordinate with the teacher



**اكاديمية جيمس العالمية**  
**GEMS World Academy**  
ABU DHABI

Not Permitted	Permitted in small quantities	Encouraged
		
<p>sodas, energy drinks, flavoured milks and other sugary drinks; crisps or chips, chocolates, sweets, pastries, cakes, chocolate-covered biscuits and cookies, fried food, and other junk food</p>	<p>white versions of bread, pasta, and rice; highly processed meats and other foods; plain biscuits</p>	<p>whole-grain versions of bread, pasta, and rice; fruit and vegetables; fresh meat, fish, eggs, and dairy products</p>

Slices is our food service provider, offering a wide range of healthy hot and cold snacks, beverages and lunch items. Menus are available on GEMS Parent Portal and in our newsletters. Children may pay via a Slices account or via cash.

For health and safety purposes, microwaves are not available in the cafeteria or classrooms. Students bringing lunch from home must bring food items that do not require heating. In Early Years (FS1 – Y1) children eat in their classrooms but may still purchase a cold school lunch if preferred.

### Birthday Celebrations

At WAA we recognise and celebrate the importance of a child's birthday both in class and as a school community through our regular assemblies. Parents wishing to send a birthday treat for their child's birthday may do so on the day of the child's birthday. This should be individually wrapped and approximately the size of the child's hand. Healthy treats are very much promoted.



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### Invitations to Off-Campus Birthday Parties

Invitations to birthday parties may only be sent via school if all students in the class are invited. If you plan to invite only a few students in the class, we request that you do this directly with their parents via email or phone. Classroom teacher or other staff members at WAA are not permitted to assist handing out individual invitations to a select few, due to the fact this can cause upset amongst students and create uncomfortable and awkward situations within the community. School personnel are not permitted at any time to provide private contact details of any student or families due to confidentiality.

## PARENT COMMUNICATION

The school maintains close relations with parents facilitating communication and cooperation. Prior to the start of the academic year, parents will receive a Family Events Calendar.

### Seesaw

Seesaw is the chosen platform for students' ongoing learning journeys and communication with your child's teachers. These digital portfolios are shared, interactive spaces where teachers and students can document, share and reflect on learning. Parents are encouraged to access Seesaw regularly and to use their child's journal to talk about learning, share learning and encourage learning at home.

### Seesaw Teacher Communication

This platform is used for messages to and from teachers in place of email. When messaging teachers, please remember that they are often unable to respond immediately. You should expect to receive a response within 24 hours or by Sunday for messages received after hours on Thursday. Teachers, including specialists, provide weekly updates of important events and curriculum information.

Please make sure that you have downloaded the Seesaw app.

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### GEMS Connect

Through GEMS Parent Portal, parents can access key school information. GEMS Connect is the school's virtual learning environment where parents can keep up-to-date with upcoming events through Circulars and Newsletters under the Communication tab, pay for school trips through Activities and view School Reports under the Academics tab.

### Text Messaging & Email

Important and/or urgent, time-sensitive information is communicated by the Parent Relations Executive via SMS and/or email. **It is important that your emergency contact information is accurate.**

### Newsletters

Whole school newsletters containing information about current events and news from around the school are posted bi-monthly on your email.

### Social Media

General communications about upcoming events and videos and photos of activities on campus are shared regularly via our WAA Facebook Page and Twitter feed.

### Internet Access on Campus

For parents who wish to access the WAA Wi-Fi network while on campus, usernames and passwords are available at reception in the administration building.

### Telephone

To contact the school please call reception at 02-659-5959. Please remember that teachers are unable to take phone calls during class time. Your message will be relayed to them and they will return your call at their first opportunity.

### Change of Contact Details

**It is imperative that the school has current details of your address, email, telephone number and mobile number(s) and emergency contacts.** The accuracy of this information is vital in the case of an emergency. At the start of the school year we will send an Emergency Contact Form home with your child. Please return this form as quickly as possible. You can also update this information via the Parent Portal.

It is your responsibility to update this information online and to notify the school office when you have done so, preferably by email or phone.

### Withdrawing from School

All notices of withdrawal must be in writing to the Registrar. The school requires a minimum of two weeks notification of withdrawal. Parents are responsible for completing the online Transfer Certificate (TC) request on the Parent Portal. In the event of outstanding books, fees or fines, the school will not release records nor issue a Transfer Certificate. We will be pleased to prepare a Transfer Certificate for all students who have completed the withdrawal process.

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### PROGRESS REPORTING

#### Progress Reports

At the end of each trimester, parents receive a written evaluation of their child's achievement and progress for all areas of learning. Teachers also report on their development of the learner profile attributes and attitude towards learning.

In reporting, the intent is to provide parents with information that clearly highlights the knowledge, conceptual understandings and skills that the child has developed and, where appropriate, to communicate areas for development and/or improvement.

#### Conferences

Conferences are an important part of our educational program and provide an opportunity for parents, teachers and students to discuss and reflect upon progress. There are three formal conferences that parents are expected to attend during the school year. Parent- teacher conferences are scheduled during trimester one, three-way (student-parent- teacher) conferences are scheduled during trimester two, and student-led conferences are held during trimester three for the exhibition of student portfolios and discussion of student progress.

Additionally, parents are invited to schedule individual conferences with teachers at any time. An individual conference reminder will be sent shortly before progress reports are released.

### APPOINTMENTS WITH TEACHERS & ADMINISTRATION

#### Appointments with Teachers

Meetings with teachers can be arranged at any time during the year. Please contact them to arrange a time. Individual appointments will be generally be scheduled before or after school.

In the case of an emergency, if you need to speak with a teacher urgently or pass a message to your child, please contact the school office in the first instance and they will be able to assist you. Please do not go directly to the classroom during school hours as this disrupts in-class learning. Please also avoid discussing your child when other students or parents are present.

#### Appointments with the Counselor

Please contact the school office to schedule an appointment if you would like to discuss your child with the school counselor. You can also email the counselor directly.

#### Appointments with the Parent Relations Executive (PRE)

If you would like to discuss a general issue, please contact the school office to schedule an appointment with the Parents Relations Executive who is often the best person to address your initial questions or concerns.

#### Appointments with the Senior Team

The Principal and Executive Leadership Team are happy to meet with parents to discuss general or specific topics. Please note that in the case of specific student concerns, it is expected that the appropriate staff member has already been consulted or informed. Please contact the school office to schedule an appointment.

## Student - Parent Handbook

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### PARENT ENGAGEMENT & INVOLMENT

Parents are encouraged to be actively engaged and involved in the school. Parents are invited to assemblies and other special activities throughout the year and are welcome to join us each morning as we greet the children and start the day.

At WAA, we encourage a 3-A-Day approach: talking about learning, sharing learning and encouraging learning. This is a great way to connect with your child and actively contribute to his or her development. In addition, our Parent Engagement Coordinator organizes regular parent engagement programs offering a range of workshops for parents designed to support greater partnership between home and school.

GEMS World Academy – Abu Dhabi has an active parent association (WAA-PA). WAA- PA is an important part of our school community and we encourage all parents to get involved and/or support the association’s activities throughout the year. These include coffee mornings, student activities, various cultural events including the very popular annual UAE National and International Day celebrations.

WAA-PA depends on parent volunteers. There are many ways to get involved. Attending the coffee mornings will help you connect and decide how you can be involved, which may include supporting special individual events or acting as a room parent.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health, safety and well-being of our students is of paramount importance. The school is in full compliance with all governing authorities and undergoes regular inspections. All parents will receive information about the Health and Safety and the Child Protection policies at the start of the school year and shared on the school website.

#### School Nurse

A registered and licensed nurse is on duty during school hours. The nurse is here to assist pupils who become ill or injured during the day and coordinate the care and management of students with chronic illnesses. **Parents are required to complete the medical forms sent home at the beginning of the year and to keep the nurse informed of medical problems that might affect the student at school or have a bearing on his/her academic work.**

Should your child become ill, the school will attempt to contact you or, if you are not available, your emergency contact. You are required to collect your child in a timely manner, within an hour. **It is imperative that we have updated emergency contact information and that someone is always available by phone, in the event we need to contact you due to illness or an emergency.**

First aid kits are located in the health clinic and front office. Additionally, a number of staff have valid First Aid certification.

## Student - Parent Handbook

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### Medication

The Department of Health has strict regulations in administering medications at school. Medication must be prescribed by a doctor for acute or chronic conditions or be required in an emergency situation. Medications must be in the original container and have clear and comprehensive instructions for administration and dosage.

An emergency medication consent form must be completed annually at the beginning of each school year for all students. Prescribed medication consent forms must be completed by the prescribing doctor and parents for each acute illness and annually for chronic conditions.

Parents are responsible for collecting any unused medication when the course of treatment is complete, the expiry date has been reached and/or at the end of the school year. The School Nurse will alert parents as needed.

### Illness

**Students suffering from fever, diarrhea or vomiting may not return to school until they have been fever or episode free, without the aid of medication, for 24 hours.**

At times the medical advice provided to families may be at variance with the school's recommendations. In all cases the School Nurse is the final arbiter and, if necessary in discussion with the Principal, will signal when a child is allowed to return to school.

### Food Allergies

Parents must inform teachers and the School Nurse if their child has any type of allergy. Should prescribed medication be required, it is imperative that the School Nurse is fully informed.

**Nut Allergies:** A reminder that WAA is a no nuts school due to student allergies. Please could you ensure that student lunch boxes do not contain nuts or nut products (such as Nutella or nut based cereal bars). Any food for sharing must be free of nuts and nut products to protect students who may experience allergic reactions. Training in the use of Epipens is provided to those adults who work directly with students experiencing severe allergies.

### Evacuation & Lock-Down Alarms and Drills

The buildings on the campus are fitted with a two-tone alarm system. Periodically throughout the year, evacuation and lockdown drills will take place in order to familiarize pupils with the emergency procedures. This is in accordance with Civil Defense regulations.

**Evacuation:** When the evacuation alarm is sounded, students and visitors should leave the building immediately in an orderly fashion using the designated exit. After leaving the building, students and visitors should report to their designated assembly point for an attendance check. Emphasis is placed on staying quiet and observing rules and directions during such drills.

**Lock Down:** When the lock down alarm is sounded, teachers should immediately lock doors and support students and visitors in moving out of visibility and getting under cover. Everyone should be silent and still.

## Student - Parent Handbook

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### Supervision of Students

During school hours students are fully supervised by WAA staff. Before or after school hours, parents and/or adult guardians must supervise their child/children, keeping them in sight at all times.

### Student Dismissal Procedure

At dismissal, children being picked up will remain in the classroom, supervised by a Teacher or Teaching Assistant (TA). Parents and/or guardians are reminded that dismissal begins at 2:45 p.m. and are requested to not interrupt classrooms until this time. Students must be collected **no later** than 3:00 p.m.

Teachers or TAs will escort students who use the bus service to the central playground where bus conductress receive and account for all students.

### Bus Regulations

Any student riding a school bus must observe the following agreements:

- demonstrate respect for the driver, the conductresses and other passengers
- must be seated with a buckled seatbelt at all times
- use a calm voice and kind words towards adults and peers while on the bus
- keep the bus tidy and not dispose of rubbish on the bus
- not eat or drink on the bus

Students may ride home with another child if there is enough room on the bus. Parents should check before noon with the Transport Manager to confirm that there is space. Both the driver and the classroom teacher must be notified in writing of any alteration to normal bus arrangements. Our Transport Manager is Mr. Vysakh Chandran Usha; Email: [vysakh.chandran@sts-group.com](mailto:vysakh.chandran@sts-group.com)

There is a bus conductress present to monitor student behavior on each bus. Incidents of inappropriate behavior will be reported to parents by the bus conductress or Transport Manager. After three incidents of inappropriate behavior (to or from school), the student will be suspended from the bus for one day. The student's parents will be notified and it will then become the parents' responsibility to transport their child to and from school for the following school day.

In the case of an extreme incident or repeated behavior issues, the Principal will review the case and take appropriate action.

### Security

The campus is guarded 24 hours a day, seven days a week to ensure that all people, buildings and grounds are kept safe and secure. In case of an emergency, the security guards have access to a telephone. All entrances, grounds, hallways and public spaces are monitored by CCTV. Footage from these cameras is maintained according to ADEK policy.

All WAA staff wear their GEMS ID card and a blue lanyard while on campus. This makes them easily identifiable to students and parents.

All parents are issued with two family passes on yellow lanyards which must be worn at all times while at WAA. All visitors, including parents not wearing the school issued IDs, will be required upon arrival to sign in, leave their ID card with the security guard, and wear a

## Student - Parent Handbook

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visitor pass on green lanyard for the duration of the visit. This ensures that all WAA community members are easily identifiable and helps keep the school a safe environment.

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### SCHOOL-WIDE BEHAVIOUR POLICY

#### School Behaviour

WAA is committed to promoting proactive strategies for defining, teaching and supporting appropriate school behaviours that help develop social awareness and reinforce ethical and moral values among students. All members of the school community must demonstrate respect for each other and value individual differences.

Students and adults are expected to abide by school agreements and/or rules and procedures any time they are at school, including after school and evening activities, weekends and during any parent-sponsored events.

WAA shares responsibility for teaching our students appropriate school behaviours with parents. Utilizing a positive behaviour approach, students develop an understanding of what our expectations for positive school behaviours look like, feel like and sound like.

Students are expected to uphold these positive behaviours by conducting themselves responsibly at all times. Their behavior must not intimidate, hurt or harass other members of the school community for any reason.

The Principal and Assistant Principal are responsible for:

- Providing staff with training and information
- Displaying rules posters
- Communicating the School-Wide Behaviour Policy to parents
- Holding Rules and Responsibilities assemblies annually
- Supporting teachers and staff members in implementing the school-wide and classroom behavior plans
- Using positive reinforcement throughout the school

The Teachers and Staff are responsible for:

- Adhering to the School-Wide Behaviour Policy
- Developing a classroom behaviour plan in alignment with the school rules (teachers)
- Posting classroom agreements
- Using positive reinforcement on a regular basis
- Communicating classroom agreements to parents
- Keeping parents informed of concerns about student behavior

Parent and Guardians/Carers are responsible for:

- Reading and supporting the School-Wide Behaviour Policy and classroom behavior plans
- Communicating with the school if there are questions or concerns

#### SCHOOL RULES

WAA has four positive behaviour expectations for all students:

- Be Kind
- Be Respectful
- Be Safe
- Be Ready to Learn

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These expectations are linked to our PYP learner profile attributes and reinforced to students throughout the school year.

Examples of the Learner Profile in action include:

- Principled – doing the right thing even when no-one is watching such as always recycling drink bottles and returning promptly to class after visiting the nurse or restroom
- Caring – helping others when in need, inviting others to join in play, and responsible use of equipment and materials
- Communicator – using appropriate voice levels and only using kind words to others
- Open Minded – asking questions and learning about friends lives and experiences, inviting others to join at lunch and making room for everyone
- Thinker – solving problems independently, stopping to think about why others act or speak like they do before reacting
- Reflective – using experience to make positive changes to words, actions or behavior and being a role model by consistently demonstrating appropriate behaviour
- Risk-Taker – raising your hand and participating; sharing thoughts and ideas, trying new activities and games, making new friends
- Knowledgeable – being consistently ready and willing to learn, playing games according to the rules
- Balanced – being active and eating healthy foods, taking a mindful minute to calm down when upset, playing with different friends
- Inquirer – asking if you don't understand something someone has said or why something happened

### SCHOOL-WIDE SIGNAL

- A school-wide signal ensures that all students and adults know the system for gaining attention and restoring order when necessary. This is important in any situation, especially emergencies, but also to support safe and appropriate behaviour throughout the campus.
- A raised open hand and the command “GIVE ME 5” means body still, hands free, mouth quiet, ears listening and eyes watching.

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School-wide signal posters will be prominent across the campus and in each classroom. Teachers may elect to use additional signals in their classrooms, but all students must be instructed to recognise and respect the school-wide signal when used by any member of staff.

### SCHOOL-WIDE VOICE LEVELS

A school-wide approach to voice levels ensures that all students and adults speak in a respectful, appropriate tone of voice. This ensures that all WAA community members are the best communicators that they can be.

5	Outside Voice
4	Presentation voice
3	Conversation voice
2	Group work/partner voice
1	Whisper Voice
0	Silence

### POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Students are encouraged to develop strong intrinsic motivation to make appropriate choices when deciding how to think, speak, respond and act. While positive behaviour should not rely on rewards, we will make an effort to acknowledge and celebrate positive behaviours through the following extrinsic motivators:

- Classroom Motivators – praise, stickers, notes home and golden time (as agreed upon by grade level team)
- North Star Postcards – written cards that describe positive behaviours that reflect a student’s efforts toward improving a behaviour
- GEMS of Kindness Certificates – acknowledgements of students who demonstrates acts of kindness, respect or appreciation at home, school or in the local community

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### COMMON AREA EXPECTATIONS

#### Walking on paths or in corridors:

- Walk single file
- Keep left
- Hands to self
- Quiet voices
- Give personal space

#### Cafeteria:

- Wait outside until told to enter
- Students with lunch from home walk and sit at designated table
- Students buying lunch walk to the server area, then walk with their tray and sit at designated table
- Remain seated while eating
- Use good manners and speak softly (level 3) to tablemates
- No sharing of food (to prevent any allergic reactions)
- Return trays and throw trash away responsibly
- Wait to be escorted to recess or class

#### Playground:

- Be inclusive and invite others to play
- Keep hands and feet to self
- Only slide down the slide; no climbing up the slide
- Only one person at a time going down the slide
- No chasing games on equipment

#### Restrooms:

- Use the toilet appropriately and flush
- Wash hands and turn off water tap
- Dispose of paper towel in bin
- Leave the restroom immediately
- Report any problems immediately

### RESPONDING TO STUDENT MISBEHAVIOUR MAJOR Vs.

#### MINOR INFRACTIONS

WAA has guidelines and procedure for teachers, staff and administration to follow in order to deal with the unacceptable behaviour based on its severity. The response depends on whether the behaviour falls into the minor or major category of infractions.

#### MINOR INFRACTIONS

Minor Infractions are to be managed in the situation by the staff member or the teacher. It is not necessary to document all minor infractions through an incident report. However, once a pattern of minor infractions emerges it will be necessary to document the possible escalation to a major infraction.

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Infraction	Definition
Inappropriate Language	Non-threatening, non-directed verbal messages or gestures used within conversation that include swearing, name calling, or use of words in an inappropriate way. Additionally, first and second time offences that involve behaviours that could lead to bullying/harassment, including disrespectful words, excluding, gossiping, spreading rumors, or other acts intended to hurt others emotionally.
Defiance/ Disrespect	Refusal to follow classroom or school rules, or staff directions, talking back and/or socially rude interactions, littering
Disruption	Intentional behaviour causing an interruption in class or activity. Disruption includes loud talk, noise with materials or body parts, or getting out of seat
Rough play	Non-threatening overly physical interactions
Lying/Cheating	Student delivers message that is untrue and or deliberately violates rules
Minor Property Damage/ Vandalism	Student participates in an activity that results in some damage of property. This may include: writing/coloring on wall, breaking a cubby, damaging another person's property

### MAJOR INFRACTIONS

All major infractions must be referred to an administrator

Infraction	Definition
Abusive/ Inappropriate Interactions with Peers and/or Adults	Threatening verbal or gestural interactions with peers or staff that are directed towards someone include swearing, name calling, or use of words or gestures in an inappropriate way
Fighting/ Physical Aggression	Intentional actions involving serious physical contact where injury may occur (e.g., hitting, punching, hitting with objects, kicking, hair pulling, scratching, etc.)
Physical Assault on School Personnel	Intentional aggressive actions (e.g., hitting, kicking, throwing objects at, pushing, etc) directed at school personnel
Inappropriate Sexual Contact/ Obscene Act	Consensual physical contact between students that is sexual in nature, exposure of private body parts
Harassment/ Bullying	Student delivers disrespectful messages (electronic, verbal, or gestured) to another person that includes threats, intimidation, obscene gestures, pictures, or written notes. Disrespectful messages include negative comments based on race, ethnicity, disability, religion, gender, age, national origin, and or sexual orientation. Additionally, multiple offences that involve behaviours that could lead to bullying/harassment, including disrespectful words, excluding, gossiping, spreading rumors, or other acts intended to hurt others emotionally.

## Student - Parent Handbook

Deliberate Disruption/Defiance	Behaviour causing an interruption on school premises (i.e, in a class, playground, cafeteria, etc) where the student is not responsive to repeated directions. Disruption includes sustained loud talk, yelling, or screaming; noise with materials or body parts; roughhousing; sustained out of seat behavior; verbal refusal to comply with repeated instruction.
Property Misuse	Unauthorized and inappropriate use of school property including technology (e.g., downloading of software, sites, pictures, etc; changing computer settings; or providing personal information to websites)
Property Damage/Vandalism	Student participates in an activity that results in substantial destruction or disfigurement of property
Forgery/Theft	Student is in possession of, having passed on, or has been responsible for removing a possession of personal, identifying information or items of another person. Falsifying a document, report or item (i.e, a signature on a permission slip). This also includes acts such as plagiarism or submitting work other than one's own with the intent of deceiving others.
Use/Possession of Prohibited Substances	Student is in possession of or caught using tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs
Bomb Threat/False Alarm	Student delivers false message or orchestrates the delivery of a false message of possible explosive materials being on-campus, and or pending explosions; student pulls or orchestrates pulling of an unwarranted fire alarm
Possession of a Dangerous Weapon or Materials	Student is in possession of knives, guns, explosive materials (real or look alike), or other objects readily capable of causing bodily harm, or creating the impression (as in the case of a fake gun or grenade) of causing bodily harm.
Reckless Endangerment	Engaging in conduct that creates grave risk of serious injury
Leaving Supervised Area	Missing student
Continued Minor Offences	Student exhibits continued minor offences with no regard for consequences

### CONSEQUENCES OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

WAA utilizes a positive behaviour approach to discipline by ongoing teaching and encouragement of appropriate behaviours. At times, when a student's behaviour falls below the expectations of the school, disciplinary consequences will be positive in approach and, while maintaining respect for the student, will ensure that the safe and positive school environment is preserved.

Our goal is for students to accept responsibility for their actions and begin to understand the link between their behaviour and its effect on others.

Depending on the severity of the behaviour, any of the following strategies and/or consequences may be employed:

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### Problem Solving

When a student is challenged by a particular situation, the child is encouraged to solve the problem either independently or in cooperation with a group. A teacher or staff member may intervene when needed but this strategy is used to help students develop their ability to act responsibly and apply the appropriate skills to ensure a positive outcome, whether the context is social or academic.

### Thinking Time

Students who may require time to process events, their actions or behaviour, or compose themselves following an emotionally charged interaction with peers will be given a quiet supervised space in which to reflect and think. Following this time, the teacher or staff member will conference individually with the child to help determine the appropriate next steps. Students may take the initiative to request this time.

### Reflective Tools

There are a variety of strategies and tools that teachers can use to help students work through a focused reflective process to develop self-awareness and provide students with frameworks for thinking that help them to develop the skills necessary for responding to challenging situations. These tasks may be completed orally, through art or writing, or alongside movement or music. They may be completed orally, in pairs or small groups depending on the situation.

### Meetings with the Assistant Principal or Principal

Some concerns about student behaviour are referred by teachers to administration. In order to gather information about a problem, it is typical for an administrator to schedule a meeting with the students involved. At this meeting, students will discuss the behaviour concern.

With serious problems or those that repeat, a conference between the parents of the child and an administrator is scheduled. In some cases, referral to the School Counselor will be made and parents informed.

### Time Outs

Time outs allow students to regain self-control. They must be handled in a safe, respectful and supportive manner. All students in the class should know the reason for a time out system. When handled non-punitively, the process supports strong teacher-student relationships as well as positive peer relationships.

In some instances, a child may request a time out. The teacher will need to use his or her judgment if this is a healthy response to stress or anger or an attempt to avoid work. Keeping language positive and in a matter-of-fact tone and avoiding lengthy discussion is important, as is a warm, positive welcome back.

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- **In-Room Time Out:** If students demonstrate a lack of control either verbally or physically and do not respond to teacher guidance or instruction, they may be removed from the class activity and positioned in a space away from the group elsewhere in the classroom, in order to have a quiet space in which to think about his/her behaviour. During this time, as a consequence of failing to adhere to classroom agreements, the student is not allowed to interact with the group for a limited time and must wait until he/she is invited by an adult to rejoin the group.
- **Buddy Teacher Take-A-Break:** If an in-room time out proves ineffective, or the teacher determines it to be a better alternative to an in-room break, the buddy teacher break may be beneficial. This allows both the student and teacher space, allowing instruction to continue and preventing power struggles.
- **Private Take-A-Break:** In some instances, designating a private break space away from high traffic areas such as the counselor's or principal's office, an empty classroom or office, etc. may be necessary. The area should be quiet and free of distraction. A plan must be in place to ensure that the student is supervised at all times. In cases where the student may need to complete work, a workspace and the necessary materials must be provided.

### Loss of Social Time (lunch, recess, breaks, before and after school)

Occasionally, as a consequence of choosing to behave in a manner that negatively impacts learning time or play time for self or peers, a student may lose the privilege of socializing with their friends for a designated length of time. Students must be supervised during loss of social time.

### In-School Suspension

Students who repeatedly violate school-wide behaviour expectations or where the incident is serious may receive an in-school suspension. This takes place under supervision. Students will complete work provided by teachers and will receive counseling and advice which relate to the reason for the suspension.

### Home-Suspension

If a serious problem occurs where any student's safety is threatened or there are concerns which remain unresolved after other techniques have been tried, a student may be placed on suspension for a designated period of time in accordance with ADEK policy. In order for a student to be readmitted to school, a conference between an administrator and the parents will be required. During a home suspension, a student is not permitted to be on campus or to participate in any school related activity.

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### Expulsion

In accordance with Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) policy, the school reserves the right to expel without refund of fees any student whose conduct seriously disrupts the academic program or exerts a negative influence on other students.

### WAA ABU DHABI BULLYING POLICY

Anti-social behaviour can take many forms ranging from the extremes of violence to less obvious acts such as deliberately excluding an individual from a group activity. Whatever forms this kind of behavior takes, it will be unwanted and unpleasant. Bullying and intimidation perpetrated by fellow students can have a very adverse effect on a student's self-esteem, learning effectiveness and general health and well-being.

Bullying is behaviour intended to hurt another person. It is intentional and often repetitive. It can include the following abuses:

<b>Physical</b>	pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching
<b>Verbal</b>	name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, persistent teasing
<b>Emotional</b>	excluding others, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, intimidating
<b>Racist</b>	racial taunts or gestures
<b>Sexual</b>	unwanted physical contact or abusive comments
<b>Cyber</b>	verbal, emotional, racist or sexual bullying which is done over the Internet

WAA commits to its students that all reported incidents of bullying, harassment or other forms of anti-social behaviour by one student or group of students towards another will be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively.

The academic and administrative staff at WAA is responsible for taking immediate action when instances of bullying, intimidation or other anti-social behaviour come to their attention, whether through personal observation or by a report from another student or a parent. Staff will regularly teach students the standards of behaviour that are expected of them.

When these expectations are not being followed and come to the attention of parents of WAA students, they are responsible for reporting the behavior to the appropriate teachers or administrators.

### FOR FACULTY

#### *What should you do if you witness bullying?*

It is important to remember that each child has a right to be and feel safe at school. Students are expected to come to trusted adults who will listen and assist them when they feel they need help. Therefore, it is important for every staff member to understand and recognize when a student's behaviour may be considered bullying. Bullying is considered a major

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infraction and it is important for WAA staff to take it seriously. Depending on the severity of the potential bullying behaviour, the behaviour may or may not be considered bullying. Reference the above definition of bullying to decide if the behaviour should be considered bullying or a one-time inappropriate comment or interaction. If the behaviour is determined to be bullying, staff are required to follow the procedures and guidelines for reporting major infractions (see below).

### FOR STUDENTS

*What should you do if you are bullied or you notice others bullying?*

Telling about bullying is not telling tales. Bullying is wrong and you should report it. You have the right to be safe from attacks and harassment and no one should expect you to be silent when you or others are being tormented or hurt. You should tell your parents about what is happening. Also tell the principal, a teacher, counselor, school nurse or any other trusted adult. Explain who is involved and what is happening.

### FOR PARENTS

*If your child is a victim of bullying:*

Contact the Principal or the Counselor immediately if you suspect that your child is being bullied.

*If your child is responsible for bullying:*

Never ignore it.

Make it clear that such behaviour is unacceptable.

Work with the school to develop strategies to change behavior.

## LOST AND FOUND

Parents should label all of their child's personal belongings, especially water bottles and lunch boxes in order that lost articles may be returned to the child. You are also encouraged to check lost and found for items that your child has lost in the collection point on the ground floor of Building One. Valuables that are lost will be held by the Receptionist. At the end of the school year, all lost and found items are donated to charity.

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS & LEGAL GUARDIANS

At WAA, we recognize the importance of regular interaction between faculty and parents so that support for student learning and development is consistent. In the circumstance that parents have a complaint, the school will treat it in accordance with the below procedures. In the interest of promoting successful partnerships with our parents/families, we respectfully request that any parent who is unhappy with any aspect of education, culture, staffing, or social program at WAA kindly contact the Principal to make the concern/complaint known before bringing such a concern or complaint forward to the attention of ADEK.

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### 1. School-based Informal Resolution

It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally.

If parents have a complaint or concern they should, in the first instance, contact their child's teacher. In most cases, the matter will be resolved. If the matter is not resolved, it may be necessary to contact the Parent Relations Executive, Counselor, Head of School (Primary/Secondary) or the Principal.

Any complaint made directly to the Principal will normally be referred back to the relevant teacher unless deemed appropriate to deal with the matter personally.

### 2. School-based Formal Resolution

Any complaints or concerns not resolved with teachers can be escalated to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) or the Principal.

If parents have a complaint or concern that has not been resolved, they should make an appointment with a member of the ELT. All prior communications should be shared. The Principal or member of ELT will address the matter, take appropriate action and keep you informed. Parents may be invited in for subsequent meetings if necessary.

## VARKEY FOUNDATION

Our school community supports the Varley Foundation, a not-for-profit organization established to improve the standards of education for underprivileged children throughout the world. This organization builds new classrooms and centers of learning, addresses global teaching capacity and seeds excellence and innovation in the next generation of educators. Their mission is that every child should have a good teacher. They do this through building teacher capacity, advocacy campaigns to promote excellence in teaching practice at the highest levels of policy making and providing grants to partner organizations that offer innovative solutions in support of our mission.

To learn more please visit [www.varkeyfoundation.org](http://www.varkeyfoundation.org)

### CHARITABLE CAUSES & COMMUNITY ACTION

Supporting charitable causes provide our students with opportunities to demonstrate initiative and further develop their skills and understandings of citizenship and leadership. ADEK approved charitable drives and community action activities may be organized from time to time.

Ideas for fund-raising and/or action should be brought to the attention of the Principal for possible consideration.

### Yearbook / Electronic Communication / Use of Children's Images

A school Yearbook will be produced at the end of each school year. One copy is provided free of charge to each family in the school. Parents are to inform school if they do not wish their

## Student - Parent Handbook

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child's photo or work to be used in advertising mediums (such as Yearbook, GEMS Connect, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram & the school Website). In addition to communicating through regular emails and our website, we also encourage parents to visit the relevant class pages on Seesaw for frequent updates on their children's learning and details of homework.

### **Suggestions please!**

We hope you will find this information helpful. Please let us know if there is anything we have forgotten that you would like to be included.

## Student - Parent Handbook

### QUESTIONS? WHOM TO CALL FIRST:

WAA Telephone:	+971 (0)2 641 6333
WAA Fax Number:	+971 (0)2 642 8803

	Email
Principal/CEO ( <i>Kelvin Hornsby</i> )	k.hornsby_waa@gemsedu.com
Vice Principal ( <i>David Craggs</i> )	d.craggs_waa@gemsedu.com
Head of Secondary ( <i>Neil White</i> )	n.white_waa@gemsedu.com
Head Of Primary ( <i>Vicky Martin</i> )	v.martin_waa@gemsedu.com
Deputy Head of Primary/PYP Coordinator ( <i>Lynn White</i> )	l.white_waa@gemsedu.com
Counselor ( <i>Molly Knell</i> )	m.knell_waa@gemsedu.com
Nurse's Office ( <i>Anju Joseph</i> )	nurse_waa@gemsedu.com
Registrar ( <i>Hamsa Rakem &amp; Reem Abdelgani</i> )	registrar_waa@gemsedu.com
Parent Relations Executive* ( <i>Yuliia Vozniuk &amp; May Farag</i> )	pre_waa@gemsedu.com
Accounts Officer ( <i>Sandhya D'Souza</i> )	s.dsouza_waa@gemsedu.com
Government Relations Executive* ( <i>Nada Ali</i> )	n.ali_waa@gemsedu.com
GEMS World Academy – Main Office	Info_waa@gemsedu.com

\*Bilingual Arabic/English Speaker

#### External Providers

Bright Bus Transportation	<a href="mailto:aevysakh.chandran@sts-group.com">aevysakh.chandran@sts-group.com</a>
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*In general, school email addresses follow the format: first initial.surname\_waa@gemsedu.com name*

Academic Calendar (International - GEMS World Academy L.L.C. - 9210) 2022/23

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Week		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Week	
Term-1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			2	3	4	5	6	7	8	W16	Term 2 for Students Starts
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14			9	10	11	12	13	14	15	W17	
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21			16	17	18	19	20	21	22	W18	
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28			23	24	25	26	27	28	29	W19	
	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	W1	Term 1 for Students Starts	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	W20	
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	W2		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	W21	
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	W3		13	14	15	16	17	18	19	W22	
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	W4		20	21	22	23	24	25	26	W23	
	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	W5		27	28	1	2	3	4	5	W24	
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	W6	Prophet Mohammed's Birthday	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	W25	
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	W7		13	14	15	16	17	18	19	W26	
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	W8	Mid Term Break 1	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	W27	Term 2 for Students Ends
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	W9		27	28	29	30	31	1	2		Spring Vacation for Students - 27-Mar to 7-Apr	
31	1	2	3	4	5	6	W10		3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	W11		10	11	12	13	14	15	16	W28	Term 3 for Students Starts	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	W12		17	18	19	20	21	22	23	W29	Eid holiday	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	W13		24	25	26	27	28	29	30	W30		
28	29	30	1	2	3	4	W14	Commemoration Day, National Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	W31		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	W15	Term 1 for Students Ends	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	W32		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18		Winter vacation for students - 13-Dec to 30-Dec	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	W33		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25			22	23	24	25	26	27	28	W34		
26	27	28	29	30	31	1			29	30	31	1	2	3	4	W35		
									5	6	7	8	9	10	11	W36		
									12	13	14	15	16	17	18	W37		
									19	20	21	22	23	24	25	W38		
									26	27	28	29	30	1	2	W39	Arafah, Eid Al Adha, Term 3 for Students Ends, Last day of academic year for students	
									3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
									10	11	12	13	14	15	16			
									17	18	19	20	21	22	23			
									24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
									31	1	2	3	4	5	6			

- Term1, Term2 and Term3 days
- Mid term break 1 and mid term break 2
- Public holidays

Public holidays are tentative and are subject to official announcements.