



# PARENT HANDBOOK 2025-26



## Contents

Principal's Welcome .....	3
GEMS Core Values .....	4
GEMS WSA.....Investing in YOU!.....	4
WSA Aims and Objectives.....	4
UAE National Identity at WSA .....	4
National Flag of the U.A.E. ....	5
National Anthem of the U.A.E. ....	5
.....النشيد الوطني	
ABOUT WSA.....	6
Location Map.....	6
Key Staff Email Details .....	7
Main Term Dates (for Students).....	8
Attendance and Punctuality: Key to High Performance.....	8
Holidays during Term Time.....	8
Timings of the day* .....	9
Playing of the National Anthem .....	9
Morning Drop-Off and Afternoon Collection.....	9
Getting Ready for School.....	10
Books, Equipment and Bags.....	10
Book Store Timings .....	11
School Uniform Policy .....	11
The Curriculum.....	12
High Performance Learning (HPL) at WSA as part of WSA.....Investing in YOU!.....	13
The Importance of Reading .....	13
PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) and Moral Education .....	13
Extra-Curricular Activities including Visits and Trips.....	13
Student Leadership Opportunities .....	14
Sustainability at WSA .....	14
WSA's House System .....	14
WSA's Digital Strategy Statement .....	15

<b>Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guidelines for Year 07 to Year 09 Students</b>	15
<b>Mobile Phone Policy</b>	15
<b>Student Welfare and Wellbeing</b>	16
<b>Support for Students Special Educational and Learning Needs</b>	16
<b>Safeguarding &amp; Child Protection at WSA</b>	16
<b>Wellbeing at WSA</b>	17
<b>Healthy Eating Policy</b>	17
<b>Student Medical Welfare</b>	18
<b>Prayer Rooms</b>	18
<b>Student Safety</b>	18
<b>WSA Security Team</b>	18
<b>Behaviour for Learning and Codes of Conduct at WSA</b>	19
<b>Student Code of Conduct</b>	19
<b>Parental Code of Conduct</b>	19
<b>Teacher and Staff Code of Conduct</b>	20
<b>School Partnership (Home/School) Agreement</b>	20
<b>Other Important Information</b>	21
<b>School Fees</b>	21
<b>School Transport Information</b>	21
<b>Communication and Open Door Policy at WSA</b>	21

## Principal's Welcome

Dear Parents,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to GEMS Winchester School, Abu Dhabi (WSA). More than just a school, WSA is a close-knit family made up of students, staff and parents. Rooted in the heart of the community, WSA has flourished, and it has been my privilege to serve as Principal/CEO since the 2017–18 academic year.

At WSA, we believe education is more than the acquisition of knowledge, it is a journey of growth, aspiration and achievement. Our mission is to equip every child with the skills and confidence to pursue their ambitions and make meaningful contributions to the world. This vision is guided by a strong foundation of core values that shape everything we do:

### **WSA.... Investing In YOU!**

**UNITY** - Our diverse WSA Community ardently stands for equity and inclusivity; we invest in family and friendships, seeing similarities over differences. We are Global Citizens.

**TRANSFORMATION** – Driven by being the ‘Best version of yourself’; we invest in personal growth, emotional wellbeing and positive mental health, and the growth of others.

**ENVISIONING** – We take action; we invest time and energy into leadership, at all levels; innovation and creativity.

**COMMUNICATION** – We listen, and we learn; we invest in connectedness, transparency and accountability.

We have a great team at GEMS Winchester School who are committed to ensuring that your child is given every opportunity to learn and develop. Our aim is to ensure that we provide the best possible standards of learning and teaching to allow your child to succeed. We believe in developing the whole child, with a focus on academic achievement and personal development. We offer our students opportunities that help them develop into responsible, resilient young adults; and provide them with the desire to be life-long learners.

GEMS Winchester School has a caring family atmosphere underpinned by the GEMS core values and the local traditions and customs of the UAE.

I look forward to working with you over the coming weeks, months and years. I have no doubt that your child will have a very happy and fulfilling time learning at GEMS Winchester School, Abu Dhabi.

Kind regards,



Dr Karon Buck.

## GEMS Core Values

GEMS Core values are at the heart of everything we do

- **CARE** - I respect the needs of my stakeholders. I ensure they feel listened to and cared for.
- **EXCELLENCE** - I dream big, setting ambitious goals, delivering the highest quality and 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.
- **ALWAYS LEARNING** - My open-minded curiosity fuels my love for learning. I ask questions and listen so that I continuously learn and improve.

## GEMS WSA.....Investing in YOU!

- **UNITY** - Our diverse WSA Community ardently stands for equity and inclusivity; we invest in family and friendships, seeing similarities over differences. We are Global Citizens.
- **TRANSFORMATION** – Driven by being the 'Best version of yourself'; we invest in personal growth, emotional wellbeing and positive mental health, and the growth of others.
- **ENVISIONING** – We take action; we invest time and energy into innovation and creativity and leadership, at all levels.
- **COMMUNICATION** – We listen, and we learn; we invest in connectedness, transparency and accountability

## WSA Aims and Objectives

- To offer an appropriate and relevant curriculum aligned to the English National Curriculum
- To instill a sense of UAE National Identity
- Ensure access to learning for all students
- Encourage students to achieve their full potential and beyond, recognizing that every child has the opportunity to be a High Performer
- Create a safe and nurturing environment
- Develop positive relationships with stakeholders
- Encourage students to demonstrate the entrepreneurial attributes of determination to succeed, critical thinking, risk taking, teamwork, discipline and creativity
- To work in partnership with parents to deliver the best education possible for their children
- To encourage diversity in an environment of mutual respect
- To encourage a sense of belonging for students, parents and staff

## UAE National Identity at WSA

At WSA, we celebrate and honor the rich cultural heritage and values of the United Arab Emirates. Rooted in respect, unity, and progress, our school community embraces the diverse traditions and customs that define our nation.

We are committed to nurturing a learning environment that reflects the UAE's spirit of tolerance, inclusivity, and innovation. Our curriculum integrates local history, language, and traditions, fostering a deep understanding and appreciation of our national identity among students.

With pride in our heritage, we instill in our students a sense of belonging and responsibility as global citizens. Through engaging activities and events, we encourage them to uphold the core principles of the UAE: integrity, tolerance, and respect for all cultures.

Together with our dedicated staff and supportive parents, we strive to empower our students to contribute positively to society, embodying the values that make the UAE a beacon of progress and harmony in the region.

Join us in celebrating the UAE's rich tapestry of cultures and traditions, as we prepare our students to thrive in a globally interconnected world while cherishing their national identity.

## National Flag of the U.A.E.



## National Anthem of the U.A.E.

## النشيد الوطني

Eishi Biladi Ash – Itihado Imaratina  
Ishti Li-sha'bi  
Deennohul Islamu had-yo-hul Qura'an  
Hassuntuka bismil-Allah ya watan  
Biladi Biladi Biladi  
Kama-Kil-Illahu shurrorazza-man  
Aqsamna an-nab-ni na'amal  
Na amal nukh-lis Na'mal nukh-lis  
Mah'ma ishna Nakh-lis Nakh-lis  
Dama-I-Amanu Wa Asha-I-Alam Ya Imaratina  
Ramza-L-Uroobah  
Kul-Luna Naf-Deeka Bid-Dima Narweeka  
Naf-Deeka Bil-Arwah Ya Watan

عيشي بالدي عاش اتحاد اماراتنا  
عشت لشعب  
دينه الإسلام هديه القرآن  
حصنتك باسم هلا يا وطن  
بالدي بالدي بالدي  
حماك الله شرور الزمان  
أقسمنا أن نبني نعمل  
نعمل نخلص نعمل نخلص  
مهما عشنا نخلص نخلص  
دام الأمان و عاش العلم يا إماراتنا  
رمز العروبة  
كلنا نفديك بالدماء نروي  
نفديك بالرواح يا وطن

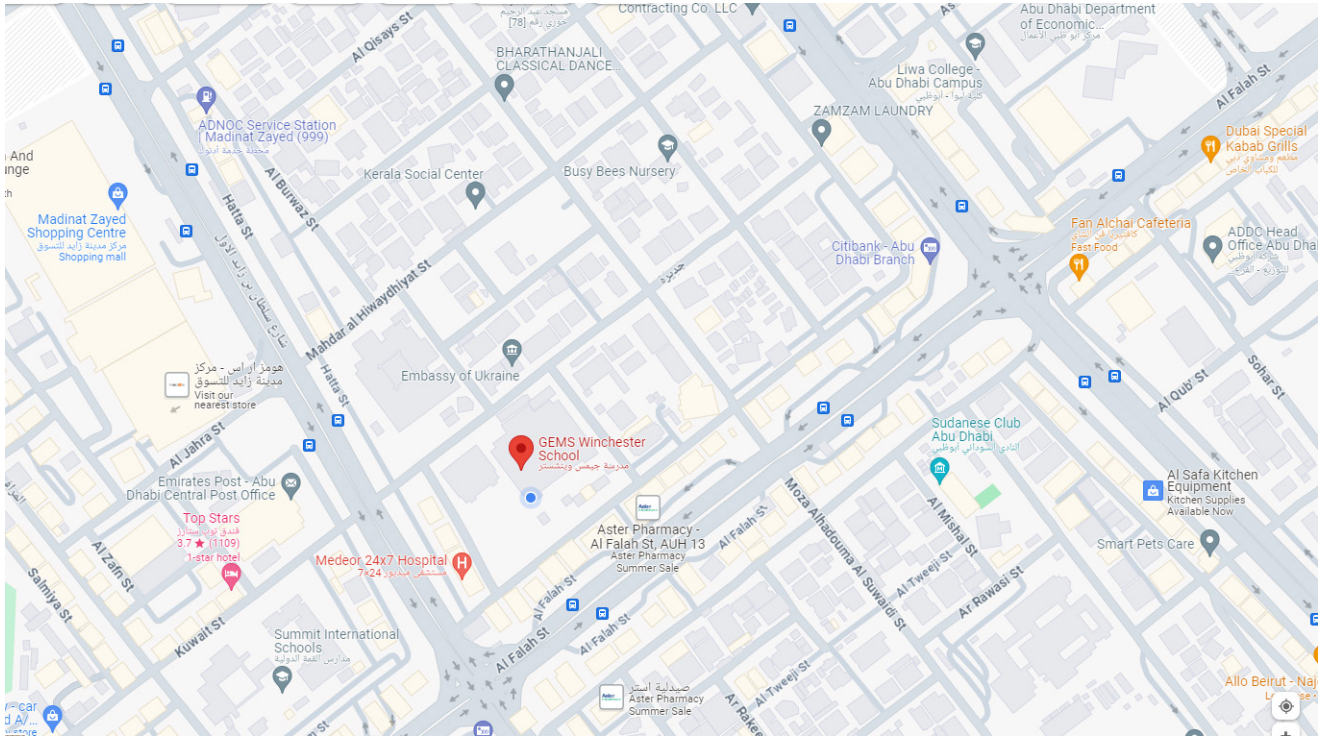
## Translation of the National Anthem of the UAE

Live my country, the unity of our Emirates lives  
You have lived for a nation  
Whose religion is Islam and guide is Quran  
I made you stronger in God's name oh homeland  
My country, my country, my country, my country  
God has protected you from the evils of the time  
We have sworn to build and work  
Work sincerely, work sincerely  
As long as we live, we will be sincere, sincere  
The safety has lasted, and the flag has lived oh our Emirates  
The Symbol of Arabism  
We all sacrifice for you; we supply you with our blood  
We sacrifice for you we supply you with our blood  
We sacrifice you with our souls oh homeland

## ABOUT WSA

GEMS Winchester Telephone Number: 02 403 5499  
PO Box Number: 38778

## Location Map



## Key Staff Email Details

Principal	Dr. Karon Buck	<a href="mailto:principal_wsa@gemsedu.com">principal_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Vice Principal	Ms Michelle Hayfron	<a href="mailto:michelle.h_wsa@gemsedu.com">michelle.h_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Assistant Principal - Teaching & Learning	Mr Carl Holdaway	<a href="mailto:carl.h_wsa@gemsedu.com">carl.h_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Head of School, Y6-Y9	Ms. Maimoona Fatima	<a href="mailto:maimoona.f_wsa@gemsedu.com">maimoona.f_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Head of School, Y3-Y5	Mr. Daniel Allseybrook	<a href="mailto:daniel.a1_wsa@gemsedu.com">daniel.a1_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Head of School, FS2-Y2	Ms. Yvonne Njue	<a href="mailto:yvonne.n_wsa@gemsedu.com">yvonne.n_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Head of MoE subjects	Ms. Iqbal Alomari	<a href="mailto:iqbal.a_wsa@gemsedu.com">iqbal.a_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Parent Relations Executive	Ms. Reem Abendeh	<a href="mailto:PRE_wsa@gemsedu.com">PRE_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Administration		
Receptionist	Ms. Mona Eladl	<a href="mailto:reception_wsa@gemsedu.com">reception_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
	Ms. Aleena Jobi	
Registrar	Ms. Ansu Annie Eappen	<a href="mailto:registrar_wsa@gemsedu.com">registrar_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Admission Secretary	Ms. Arlene Oyang	<a href="mailto:arlene.o_wsa@gemsedu.com">arlene.o_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
PA to the Principal	Ms. Beena Philipose	<a href="mailto:beena.p_wsa@gemsedu.com">beena.p_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Government Relations Executive	Ms. Dalia Marmoush	<a href="mailto:dalia.m_wsa@gemsedu.com">dalia.m_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Accounts	Mr. Vinod Sundaran	<a href="mailto:vinod.s_wsa@gemsedu.com">vinod.s_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
	Mr. Shamlik PV	<a href="mailto:shamlik.p_wsa@gemsedu.com">shamlik.p_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Nurse	Mr. Rethin Ms. Mintu Ms. Nimmy	<a href="mailto:nurse_wsa@gemsedu.com">nurse_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Store	Ms. May Bangayan	<a href="mailto:storekeeper_wsa@gemsedu.com">storekeeper_wsa@gemsedu.com</a>
Transport	Mr. Ajith B.	<a href="mailto:ajith.soman@sts-group.com">ajith.soman@sts-group.com</a>



### **Main Term Dates (for Students)**

**Term 1:** 25<sup>th</sup> August 2025 - 05<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Mid-term break: 13<sup>th</sup> October – 17<sup>th</sup> October 2025

**Term 2:** 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026 – 13<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Mid-term break: 10<sup>th</sup> February – 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026

**Term 3:** 30<sup>th</sup> March 2026 – 03<sup>rd</sup> July 2026

Dates of Public Holidays will be published separately.

### **Attendance and Punctuality: Key to High Performance**

At WSA, we believe that good attendance and punctuality are crucial skills that benefit students throughout their lives. Future employers highly value these traits, and poor attendance or punctuality can significantly impact career opportunities.

The school week runs from Monday through to Friday.

#### **Importance of Regular Attendance:**

- We strongly discourage taking your child out of school during term time.
- Research indicates that children who miss more than seven school days per academic year are likely to achieve at least one grade lower than those with 100% attendance.
- Please consider this when planning family vacations or other activities.

#### **School Hours and Punctuality:**

- The school gates open at 7:25 am for students.
- All students are expected to be present for the National Anthem, which begins promptly at 7:40 am.
- Punctuality is a sign of respect for teachers and classmates. Being late disrupts the entire class and affects your child's learning experience.

#### **Impact of Tardiness:**

- Arriving just 5 minutes late each day can result in a loss of 3 days of learning over the course of a school year.
- Parents are encouraged to stress the importance of being on time with their children to ensure they get the most out of their education.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us maintain a productive and respectful learning environment.

### **Holidays during Term Time**

We strongly discourage taking children out of school during term time as it significantly impacts their learning experience. However, we understand that there may be unavoidable circumstances.

If you do need to take your child out of school, please obtain written permission from the Principal.

Absences without prior approval will be recorded as unauthorized.

Please schedule doctor or dental appointments outside of school hours whenever possible.

We kindly request that parents refrain from picking up students during lesson time unless it is an emergency.

## Timings of the day\*

\*On Fridays, lessons finish at the end of Period 6, 11:45am.

Briefing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Primary Yr1-2	40min	40min	First Break Snack & Play		40min	40min	40min	40min	Second Break Snack & Play		40min	40min
			Yr1-2						Yr1-2			
			20min	20min					25 min			
	7:45 8:25	8:25 9:05	9:05 9:25 Eat 20min	9:25 9:45 Play 20min	9:45 10:25	10:25 11:05	11:05 11:45	11:45 12:25	12:25 12:50	12:50 13:30	13:30 14:10	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Primary Yr3-5	40min	40min	40min	Break Time Yr 3-5		40min	40min	40min	Form Time Yr 3-5		40min	40min
				20min	20min				25 min			
	7:45 8:25	8:25 9:05	9:05 9:45	9:45 10:05 Eat 20min	10:05 10:25 Play 20min	10:25 11:05	11:05 11:45	11:45 12:25	12:25 12:50	12:50 13:30	13:30 14:10	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Secondary Yr 6-9	40min	40min	40min	40min	Secondary Break		40min	40min	Form Time Yr 6-9		40min	40min
					40min				25min			
	7:45 8:25	8:25 9:05	9:05 9:45	9:45 10:25	10:25 11:05	11:05 11:45	11:45 12:25	12:25 12:50	12:50 13:30	13:30 14:10		

## Playing of the National Anthem

At 7:40 am every morning the National Anthem will play in the main quadrangle, at the start of the Whole School Assembly. We ask that you join us in stopping what you are doing and stand still until the National Anthem has finished playing.

## Morning Drop-Off and Afternoon Collection

### Morning Drop-Off:

- Students may be dropped off after 7:25 AM using either the playground entrance or the front entrance.
- The playground entrance closes promptly at 7:40 AM.
- If your child arrives after this time, please ensure they check in at the Reception Desk before heading to class.

### Afternoon Collection:

- We kindly request that parents arrive promptly for afternoon pick-up to ensure a smooth dismissal process.
- For FS students, collection from their classroom must occur by 12:00 PM and by 11:45 AM on Fridays.
- All other students should be collected by 2:10 PM (Monday to Thursday) and by 11:45 AM on Fridays, from the designated areas, unless they are using the school transportation service.

### Important Note:

Please be mindful of these collection times. It is crucial for the well-being of all students that they are picked up on time. Delayed pick-ups can be distressing for children of any age. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

## Getting Ready for School

### Books, Equipment and Bags

Students should use a strong school bag for school which should be able to fit all their personal items. We **do not** recommend trolley bags as they take up a lot of room in class and are difficult to get up the staircases.

All students should have following items:

FS2 – Y02	Y03 – Y05	Y06 – Y09
Whiteboard marker & eraser	Small whiteboard (A4 size) with marker and eraser	Small whiteboard (A4 size) with marker and eraser
Writing pencils – HB or H2	A transparent ruler	Black or Blue ink pen(s)
Eraser	Black or Blue ink pen(s)	Writing pencils – HB or H2
Pencil sharpener	Writing pencils – HB or H2	Colored pencils
Glue stick	Eraser	A transparent ruler
Child Safety Scissors	Pencil sharpener	Eraser
Colored pencils and Crayons	Glue stick	Pencil sharpener
Playdough	Child Safety Scissors	Glue stick
Transparent folder	Colored pencils	Child Safety Scissors
	Small dictionaries (English and Arabic)	Transparent 360 degree protractor
		Pair of compasses
		Calculator (from Y07-Y09)
		Small dictionaries (English and Arabic)

Textbooks will be provided by the school and need to be returned to the school by the end of the academic year. Students must care for the textbooks issued to them responsibly. Lost or damaged textbooks must be paid for in full.

Exercise books and workbooks can be purchased from the bookstore.

In an attempt to keep the weight of the school bag to a minimum, as per ADEK HSE Policy, students should not bring unnecessary books or equipment into school.

Table 1. Maximum Backpack Weight Limit per Grade

Grade/Year	Max. Backpack Weight*
KG1 / FS2	Not exceed 2 kgs
KG2 / Year 1	
Gr 1 / Year 2	
Gr 2 / Year 3	
Gr 3 / Year 4	Not exceed 3 to 4.5 kgs
Gr4/ Year 5	
Gr 5 / Year 6	
Gr 6 / Year 7	
Gr 7 / Year 8	Not exceed 6 to 8 kgs
Gr 8 / Year 9	
Gr 9 / Year 10	
Gr 10 / Year 11	
Gr 11 / Year 12	Not exceed 10 kgs
Gr 12 / Year 13	

\*Maximum school bag weight was calculated based on the American Chiropractic Association (ACA) recommendations.

## Book Store Timings

7:30am – 1:00pm Monday to Thursday and 7:30am – 11:30am Friday

## School Uniform Policy

### Uniform Requirements:

All students are required to wear the Winchester School uniform during school hours and at school-organized events, regardless of the time of day.

Students should come to school in their PE kit only on the day that they have PE lesson.

'Threads' is the official supplier of WSA' school uniform. Their shop can be found in Dalma Mall.

We respect the religious and cultural beliefs of our students. If there are concerns regarding uniform regulations due to these beliefs, please contact the school administration. We do not discriminate based on race, creed, or gender.

### Footwear:

- Black formal leather shoes are mandatory for all students except during Physical Education classes, where trainers are permitted.
- Students are not allowed to wear trainers or sports shoes on days without scheduled PE lessons.
- For safety reasons, **football boots or shoes with studs** are strictly prohibited on school premises, unless required in a dedicated PE lesson (only). Parents will be contacted to bring appropriate footwear if necessary.

### Uniform Responsibility:

Parents are responsible for ensuring their children arrive at school dressed in the correct uniform. If a student repeatedly arrives without the proper uniform, parents will be notified.

### Personal Belongings:

- All items of clothing and personal belongings must be clearly labeled with the student's name or initials.
- Jewelry is generally not permitted, except for watches and small stud earrings for girls.
- Hair should be neatly groomed and kept out of the eyes. Outlandish hairstyles, hair dye, excessive hair gel, and shaved patterns (except for religious or medical reasons) are not permitted. Long hair must be tied back neatly.

We appreciate your cooperation in adhering to the Uniform Policy as it contributes to a positive and focused learning environment at Winchester School. For any questions or concerns regarding the uniform policy, please contact the PRE.

## The Curriculum

At WSA, we proudly deliver the National Curriculum for England (NCFE), providing a comprehensive framework for your child's education. This curriculum encompasses all formal and informal learning experiences organized and promoted by the school. It is designed to foster academic excellence while nurturing your child's social, intellectual, spiritual, emotional, cultural and physical development.

### **Educational Philosophy:**

Our curriculum at WSA is designed to challenge and empower students to reach their full potential. Rooted in values of respect and inclusivity, we emphasize academic rigor, responsibility, and the power of collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking.

### **National Identity & the MoE Curriculum:**

In addition to the NCFE, our curriculum includes studies about the UAE and National Identity, including the study of its language, as required by MOE regulations and guidelines. This enriches our students' understanding and appreciation of their surroundings.

### **Individualised Learning:**

At WSA, teaching is tailored to each child's learning journey. Our professional staff personalize programs to integrate teaching and reinforce basic skills across various subject areas, ensuring a supportive and effective learning environment.

### **Responsibilities:**

**Principal:** The Principal oversees the implementation of the Curriculum Policy, ensuring it meets the needs of all students within the local context.

**School Staff:** Our dedicated staff follow established policies and procedures, contributing to curriculum development and delivery. They play a crucial role in providing personalized learning experiences that cater to each student's individual needs.

### **Curriculum Information:**

Our curriculum follows the English National Curriculum framework, widely adopted by international schools worldwide. It spans from age 3 to 18, structured into Key Stages:

Foundation Stage: FS2

Key Stage 1: Year 1 and Year 2

Key Stage 2: Year 3 to Year 6

Key Stage 3: Year 7 to Year 9

### **Age-Related Learning:**

For each subject and Key Stage, clear programs of study guide what students should learn.

Continuous monitoring of student performance is facilitated through 'age related learning,' which defines developmental milestones at each stage.

This comprehensive approach ensures that every child at WSA receives a well-rounded education, preparing them for future success in a globally interconnected world.

### **High Performance Learning (HPL) at WSA as part of WSA....Investing in YOU!**

WSA is High Performance Learning World Class School, and we embrace High Performance Learning (HPL) as a cornerstone of our educational philosophy.

HPL is a proven, research-based approach that challenges traditional notions of ability, viewing all students as capable of achieving high performance given the right support and guidance. This philosophy is integrated into our curriculum under the vision of WSA...Investing in YOU!, enhancing rigor, coherence, and consistency across all learning experiences.

HPL establishes a common language for discussing learning, setting clear expectations for what students can achieve at every stage of their educational journey. By systematically fostering cognitive skills, values, attitudes and attributes necessary for success, HPL not only enhances academic outcomes but also boosts student confidence and aspirations.

For our educators, HPL provides a framework that enhances job satisfaction and retention by promoting effective teaching practices tailored to individual student potential. Similarly, parents benefit from increased engagement and satisfaction as they witness their children develop into confident, capable learners.

We look forward to sharing more about HPL with you during Term 1 of the Academic Year, as we continue to empower our students to reach their full potential and thrive in an ever-changing world.

### **The Importance of Reading**

The significance of reading is emphasized through both our School Library, Class Libraries, Online Library and regular Book Fairs. Students are strongly encouraged to utilize the extensive, age-appropriate resources provided. It is expected that every student always maintains an ongoing reading book.

### **PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) and Moral Education**

PSHE and Moral Education offers students an opportunity to cultivate inner strength and knowledge that prepares them to engage effectively with the world beyond the school environment.

At WSA PSHE is integrated into lessons, covering essential topics such as:

- Identity
- Relationships
- Healthy balanced lifestyle
- Risk awareness
- Diversity and Equality
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Managing Change
- Career development

Through PSHE, students will develop confidence in tackling challenges and acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to navigate their current lives and future endeavors effectively.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities including Visits and Trips**

At WSA, we believe in providing students with a well-rounded education that extends beyond the classroom. Our extracurricular program is designed to enhance students' learning experiences, personal development, and social skills. In line with ADEK policies, we offer a diverse range of activities, including sports, arts, music, drama, and various clubs that cater to students' interests and

talents.

Field trips and educational visits are integral to our curriculum. These excursions are carefully planned to complement classroom learning, offering students practical, real-world experiences. Each trip is supervised by qualified staff members to ensure the safety and well-being of our students.

Participation in extracurricular activities and trips is strongly encouraged as they promote teamwork, leadership, and cultural understanding. Parents will be informed in advance of any scheduled trips and are required to provide consent for their child's participation. We adhere to ADEK guidelines to ensure that all activities and trips are conducted in a safe, educational, and enjoyable manner.

We strive to create a vibrant and inclusive school environment where every student has the opportunity to explore their interests and develop their full potential.

### **Student Leadership Opportunities**

At WSA, we believe in nurturing young leaders through a variety of impactful roles. Students have the opportunity to assume leadership positions such as Head Boy or Girl, Sports Captains, HPL Ambassadors and more. These roles empower students to develop essential leadership skills and contribute positively to our school community.

Student leaders play a pivotal role at WSA, representing their peers and actively engaging in school initiatives. They meet regularly with the Head of School to discuss ideas, provide feedback, and ensure that student voices are heard. These meetings are a cornerstone of our commitment to fostering leadership and responsibility among our students.

We encourage all students to explore these leadership opportunities, as they not only enhance personal growth but also cultivate a sense of pride and accomplishment in serving their school community. Through these experiences, students learn the value of teamwork, decision-making, and effective communication, preparing them for future endeavors beyond WSA.

### **Sustainability at WSA**

At WSA, we are committed to fostering a sustainable future for our students and the broader community in alignment with UAE Policy. We recognise our responsibility to minimize our environmental impact and promote sustainable practices in all aspects of school life.

Through curriculum integration, extracurricular activities and operational initiatives, we aim to educate and empower our students to become environmentally conscious global citizens. We encourage resource conservation, waste reduction and the responsible use of energy and water resources throughout our school site.

Our sustainability efforts extend beyond the classroom into partnerships with parents, staff, and local organizations to collectively promote environmental stewardship. By engaging in sustainable practices, we strive to demonstrate leadership and inspire positive change within our community.

We are committed to continuous improvement through monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation of our sustainability initiatives. Together, we can create a greener, more sustainable future for generations to come.

WSA's dedication to sustainability reflects our core values and commitment to providing a holistic education that prepares students to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

### **WSA's House System**

WSA's House System fosters community spirit, healthy competition, and student engagement. Every student is assigned to one of our four houses: Swifts (green), Gazelles (red), Eagles (blue), or Macaws (yellow). Throughout the year, Houses compete in various academic, athletic, and artistic events, earning points for outstanding performance and teamwork. This system encourages collaboration,



leadership, and school pride. Students build lasting friendships and learn valuable life skills. House achievements are celebrated at the end of each term, with the highest-scoring house awarded the prestigious House Cup.

### WSA's Digital Strategy Statement

In alignment with ADEK Policy, our school is committed to fostering a secure, innovative, and inclusive digital learning environment. Our Digital Strategy ensures that all students, teachers and parents leverage technology to enhance educational experiences while maintaining high standards of digital safety and ethics.

- **Digital Literacy and Skills:** We provide comprehensive digital literacy programs to empower students and staff with essential skills for the digital age. This includes safe internet use, critical thinking, and ethical online behaviour.
- **Innovative Learning:** Our curriculum integrates cutting-edge digital tools and resources to support interactive and personalized learning. We encourage creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking through the use of technology.
- **Cyber Safety and Security:** Ensuring a safe digital environment is paramount. We implement robust cybersecurity measures, educate our community on cyber threats, and promote responsible online behaviour.
- **Parental Engagement:** We believe in a collaborative approach with parents to support student success. Regular workshops and resources are provided to help parents navigate the digital landscape and support their children's online activities.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Our strategy includes ongoing evaluation and adoption of emerging technologies to keep pace with the dynamic digital world, ensuring our community remains future-ready.

Together, we strive to create a digitally proficient and safe school community that prepares students for success in an increasingly digital world.

### Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Guidelines for Year 05 to Year 09 Students

Students in Year 05 to Year 09 are encouraged to bring their own devices, such as laptops or tablets (not mobile phone), to enhance learning. Please ensure the device meets the following criteria:

- **Compatibility:** Devices should be compatible with our educational software and platforms.
- **Internet Access:** Reliable internet connectivity is necessary for online assignments and research.
- **Battery Life:** Devices should have sufficient battery life for a full school day.
- **Protective Case:** A durable case is recommended to protect against accidental damage.
- **Responsible Use:** Students are responsible for their device's security and appropriate use during school hours.
- **Headphones:** Headphones or earbuds may be required for multimedia activities.

Please label the device with your child's name. The school is not responsible for damage, loss, or theft of personal devices. Usage guidelines will be provided to ensure a safe and productive learning environment.

### Mobile Phone Policy

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing mobile phones to school. If a student must bring a phone for emergency purposes, it should be turned off and kept in their backpack during school hours. Mobile phones are not to be used for any purpose, including calls, texts or internet access, while on school premises. The school will not be responsible for any lost or stolen phones. Violations of this policy will result in confiscation of the phone, which will only be returned to a parent or guardian.



## Student Welfare and Wellbeing

### Support for Students Special Educational and Learning Needs

At WSA, we provide comprehensive support for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) under the guidance of our experienced SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator). Support is tailored to meet individual needs through both one-on-one and small group lessons as required. Additionally, we offer the option of in-class support for an additional charge.

Our staff continuously receive training to better support students with SEN, with the SENCo overseeing the monitoring of children's needs and conducting formal assessments.

#### Parental Responsibilities Regarding SEN:

Parents are required to inform the school of any SEN issues prior to admission and to provide a complete and accurate educational assessment.

In cases where the school identifies concerns regarding a student's access to the curriculum, parents may be asked to arrange a full educational assessment at their own expense. Upon receiving the assessment, the school will collaborate with parents to determine if additional support is necessary, which may involve additional costs.

If a learning support assistant is deemed necessary, parents will be notified accordingly, along with associated costs.

#### Enrolment Considerations:

Failure to disclose SEN issues during the admissions process may impact the enrolment or re-enrolment of the child. If the school determines that it cannot adequately meet the child's needs, parents will be promptly informed.

We encourage open communication between parents and the school to ensure the best possible support for every student. Should you have any questions or require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us.

### Safeguarding & Child Protection at WSA

At WSA, the safety and well-being of our students are our highest priorities. In accordance with the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) and GEMS policies, we are committed to providing a secure and nurturing environment for every child.

Our safeguarding measures include:

- **Staff Training:** All staff undergo regular training in child protection and safeguarding to recognize and respond to any concerns.
- **Safe Recruitment:** We follow stringent recruitment procedures to ensure that all staff and volunteers are thoroughly vetted.
- **Reporting and Monitoring:** We maintain clear procedures for reporting concerns and have designated safeguarding leads to handle such matters with confidentiality and care.
- **Student Education:** We educate our students about personal safety and digital security through age-appropriate programs and activities.
- **Parental Partnership:** We believe in strong partnerships with parents and guardians, working together to ensure the safety of our students both at school and at home.

We encourage open communication and urge parents to report any concerns regarding their child's safety to our safeguarding team. Together, we can create a safe and supportive environment for all our

students.

For more information, please refer to our detailed Safeguarding Policy available on our school website or contact the school's safeguarding team directly.

### **Wellbeing at WSA**

At WSA, the wellbeing of our students is at the heart of our mission. Guided by ADEK policy, we are dedicated to fostering an environment where every student feels safe, valued, and supported. Our comprehensive approach to wellbeing encompasses physical, emotional, and social dimensions, ensuring that students thrive both academically and personally.

We provide a nurturing atmosphere where respect, empathy, and kindness are fundamental values. Our programs include regular wellbeing assessments, counseling services, and workshops aimed at promoting mental health awareness and resilience. We also offer diverse extracurricular activities to support physical health and social engagement, helping students build a balanced and fulfilling school life.

Our staff is committed to continuous professional development in wellbeing practices to better support our students' needs. We encourage open communication between parents, students, and staff to create a collaborative and supportive community.

We believe that a strong foundation of wellbeing is essential for academic success and personal growth. Together, we strive to empower our students to become confident, compassionate, and capable individuals.

### **Healthy Eating Policy**

At WSA, we prioritize healthy choices for our students, whether they are purchasing food from the canteen or bringing food from home.

#### **Allergies and Medical Information:**

We ask parents to inform us about any allergies their child may have. Our school nurse maintains a record of these allergies to ensure the safety of all students. Parents are required to return the medical form to the Registrar upon admission.

#### **No Nut Policy and Food Restrictions:**

We are committed to maintaining a safe environment for all students. Therefore, we enforce the following policies regarding food:

- **No Nut Policy:** Nuts and products containing nuts (such as Nutella and Peanut Butter) are strictly prohibited at school. This policy is in place to protect students with allergies from potential harm.
- **Food Restrictions:** In addition to nuts, the following items are not allowed on school grounds:
  - Chips and crisps
  - Fizzy drinks
  - Food and Beverages in glass containers and bottles

#### **Food Sharing and Birthday Celebrations:**

To protect children with food allergies, we discourage the sharing of food. Please refrain from sending food to school for birthday celebrations.

#### **School Canteen:**

Our school operates a canteen where students can purchase food and snacks during designated times throughout the school day. We collaborate closely with 'Slices' our canteen food provider to ensure that only fresh and healthy food options are available. Chips, crisps, and fizzy drinks are not sold in the canteen. The contractor responsible for the canteen monitors the food offerings closely and provides regular updates to the school.

This policy reflects our commitment to promoting a healthy and safe eating environment for all students at our school. For further information or to discuss specific dietary concerns, please contact the school administration.

### **Student Medical Welfare**

- Parents are responsible for completing an annual Student Medical Declaration document and returning this to WSA's Medical Centre.
- The school nurses are on site throughout the school day.
- If your child is unwell the nurse will contact, you so that you may come in and collect him / her.
- If your child requires medication during the school day, please take it to the nurse with clear instructions in a named and labelled container.
- Medication should never be self-administered by students at school.

### **Prayer Rooms**

There are prayer rooms available for staff and students. Students must be supervised but may pray during breaktime.

### **Student Safety**

At WSA, student safety is our utmost priority. Throughout the year, we will conduct carefully coordinated fire drills and lockdown rehearsals. Parents will be informed in advance of any lockdown rehearsals.

Students will be instructed on emergency procedures including lockdown protocols and building evacuation and relocation to a safer area within the school. These drills are essential for ensuring that students know how to respond appropriately in emergency situations.

We also encourage all parents to remain vigilant while on school property. Please report any suspicious behaviour or items to security personnel stationed at any of the gates or doors.

For security purposes, it is mandatory for all parents and visitors to wear badges indicating they have registered through school security. Similarly, all WSA staff are required to wear named photo ID badges at all times while on site, identifying them as authorized school personnel.

Your cooperation is crucial in maintaining a safe environment for our students.

### **WSA Security Team**

The WSA Security Team are valued members of the WSA Community.

- There are security guards at all entrances.
- Parents are required to wear their Yellow lanyard and school ID card whenever on site.
- All visitors, and parents without their Yellow lanyard, have to provide their EID and receive a Green Visitors lanyard
- After the day has started all visitors (including parents) have to enter school through the main gate.
- The school has an extensive CCTV presence.

## Behaviour for Learning and Codes of Conduct at WSA

At WSA, we cherish the positive behaviour and attitudes exhibited by all stakeholders, fostering a strong sense of community and familial spirit throughout the school. Our effective Behaviour for Learning Policy is designed to uphold this growth-oriented environment. We believe in rewarding good behaviour, positive attitudes, and diligent effort, while addressing unacceptable behaviour, attitudes and effort in a constructive manner.

### Student Code of Conduct

In alignment with ADEK Policy, our school is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment. Students are expected to adhere to the following standards of behaviour:

- **Respect for Others:** Students must demonstrate respect and courtesy towards peers, staff, and the community. Bullying, harassment, and discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated.
- **Academic Integrity:** Honesty and integrity are paramount. Students must not engage in cheating, plagiarism, or any form of academic dishonesty.
- **Attendance and Punctuality:** Regular attendance and timely arrival to school and classes are essential. Absences must be justified with valid reasons and documentation.
- **Behaviour and Discipline:** Students are expected to follow school rules and instructions from staff. Disruptive behaviour, vandalism, and acts of violence are strictly prohibited.
- **Digital Citizenship:** Responsible use of technology is mandatory. Students must use school digital resources ethically and avoid inappropriate content or cyberbullying.
- **Dress Code:** Adherence to the school's dress code is required at all times to promote a focused and respectful learning environment.
- **Health and Safety:** Students must adhere to all health and safety guidelines, including those related to hygiene and physical distancing when necessary.
- **Out of Bounds:** Certain areas of the school are designated as out of bounds for students unless they are accompanied by a staff member or have obtained special permission:
  - Lifts (unless a medical pass has been authorized)
  - All Science Labs, ICT, Art, and Music Rooms
- **Corridor Etiquette:** We emphasize courteous behaviour among our students throughout the school. Students are encouraged to greet all adults respectfully. Walking, rather than running, is always expected to maintain our corridor etiquette.

Violation of this code may result in disciplinary actions as outlined in the school's disciplinary policy. We believe that adherence to these guidelines will contribute to a positive and productive educational experience for all.

### Parental Code of Conduct

In accordance with ADEK policy, we expect all parents to contribute to a positive and respectful school environment. This Parental Code of Conduct outlines the standards and behaviours expected to support our educational community.

- **Respect and Courtesy:** Treat all school staff, students and fellow parents with respect and courtesy. Avoid confrontational or aggressive behaviour, including verbal or physical abuse.
- **Communication:** Engage in open, respectful communication with teachers and school staff. Address concerns through appropriate channels and maintain confidentiality regarding school matters.
- **Support:** Actively support your child's education by ensuring regular attendance, punctuality and preparedness for school. Attend school meetings, events and parent-teacher meetings.
- **Safety and Well-being:** Follow school policies and procedures regarding safety, including adhering to drop-off and pick-up protocols. Promote a healthy lifestyle and monitor your child's use of technology and social media.

- Cooperation: Work collaboratively with the school to resolve issues or concerns. Refrain from making unfounded complaints or spreading misinformation that could harm the school community.

By adhering to this Code of Conduct, we create a supportive and thriving environment conducive to our children's academic and personal growth. Violations of this code may result in appropriate actions as deemed necessary by the school administration.

### **Teacher and Staff Code of Conduct**

WSA is committed to providing a safe, supportive and respectful learning environment in accordance with ADEK Policy. All teachers and staff are expected to demonstrate professionalism, integrity and ethical behaviour at all times. This includes:

- Respect and Equality: Treating all students, parents, colleagues and community members with dignity, respect, and fairness, without discrimination or bias.
- Professionalism: Maintaining high standards of professional conduct, including punctuality, preparedness, and adherence to school policies and procedures.
- Student Welfare: Prioritising the safety and well-being of students, ensuring a nurturing and inclusive environment that supports their academic, social and emotional development.
- Confidentiality: Respecting the privacy and confidentiality of students, families and colleagues, and safeguarding sensitive information.
- Communication: Engaging in open, honest, and constructive communication with students, parents, and colleagues, while fostering a positive school community.
- Continuous Improvement: Committing to ongoing professional development and staying informed about best practices in education and student care.
- Role Model: Demonstrating ethical behaviour, accountability and a commitment to the values and mission of the school, serving as a positive role model for students.
- By adhering to this Code of Conduct, our teachers and staff help create a positive, effective, and ethical educational environment for all.

### **School Partnership (Home/School) Agreement**

By enrolling at WSA all students and parents are acknowledging, accepting and agreeing to our School Partnership Home/School Agreement; confirming all stakeholders commitment to always try to "*Be the best version of yourself*" and to follow WSA's Codes of Conduct.

In accordance with ADEK Policy, WSA is committed to fostering a supportive and collaborative environment for the benefit of all students. This Home School Agreement outlines the shared responsibilities of the school, parents, and students.

#### **School Responsibilities:**

- Provide a safe, inclusive, and stimulating learning environment.
- Deliver a balanced and challenging curriculum that caters to individual needs.
- Communicate regularly with parents regarding student progress, school events, and policies.
- Encourage students to achieve their full potential and celebrate their achievements.

#### **Parent Responsibilities:**

- Ensure regular and punctual attendance.
- Support the school's policies, values, and code of conduct.
- Engage in open communication with teachers and participate in school activities and events.
- Provide a conducive home environment for learning and encourage good study habits.

#### **Student Responsibilities:**

- Attend school regularly and on time, ready to learn.

- Respect school rules, staff, fellow students, and the school environment.
- Take responsibility for their own learning and complete homework and assignments on time.
- Actively participate in school activities and strive to achieve personal and academic goals.
- Together, we commit to nurturing an educational partnership that supports the growth and success of every student.

Parents are responsible for signing the School Partnership (Home/School) Agreement and returning this to your child's Home Room Teacher (FS2 – Y05) or Tutor (Y06-Y09).

## Other Important Information

### School Fees

Fees are always paid in advance on a termly basis. Failure to pay fees in a timely manner will result in actions being taken in-line with ADEK recommendations. Please contact our Accounts Department for further details.

### School Transport Information

**Operating Hours:** Bright Bus Transport operates from 7:30am to 4:30pm, Monday through Friday.

**Official Transport Provider:** Bright Bus Transport is the official transportation provider for our students.

**Service Schedule:** A bus service is available at the beginning and end of each school day.

**Bus Guardian:** Each bus is accompanied by a Bus Guardian who can be contacted in emergencies via a dedicated mobile number.

**Control Room Monitoring:** Bright Bus Transport maintains a 24/7 control room facility to track and monitor all buses. In case of delays or emergencies, the control room sends SMS notifications.

#### Safety Measures:

- **Cameras:** Each bus is equipped with cameras for added safety and security.
- **RFID Scanning:** RFID scanning systems are installed on each bus, enabling tracking of students through the GEMS Connect app.

**Regulatory Compliance:** All Bright Bus Transport buses comply with ADEK/ITC safety regulations.

**Private Buses Policy:** The school does not endorse the use of private buses and cannot take responsibility for student health and safety in such cases.

## Communication and Open Door Policy at WSA.

We welcome parents into the school to discuss issues or concerns that we believe should be listened to promptly. We would always encourage you to make appointments in advance but where this is not possible, we will ensure that you are listened to by a senior member of staff. Obviously, you need to make appointments to see teachers as they are in class most of the day. You may of course email teachers with any concerns. If you do not have their email, then address your concerns to our Parent Relations Executive (PRE). You should always copy the PRE into any email so we can track our level of customer service. It is our promise to you that you will receive a reply within 24 hours, during the working week. If this does not happen, please contact the PRE immediately.

Her email is [pre\\_wsa@gemsedu.com](mailto:pre_wsa@gemsedu.com)

Please be mindful that staff members are not permitted to share their personal phone number or personal email address with students or parents, so please do not ask your child's teacher for such details.

We hope that your child has a happy and enjoyable learning experience at WSA and look forward to working with you, in partnership, over the coming weeks, months and years.