



PUTTING THE FUN BACK
INTO LEARNING!

Principal's Welcome

September 2016

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Welcome back to our returning students and welcome to all new students. We are happy to welcome you and your families to our Al Basma School Community.

I am very excited to be continuing at Al Basma at such a critical stage in the school's development and I relish the opportunity to continue to move the school towards an ADEC Band A inspection grading in our inspection which is due later this year. We had an excellent year last year with lots of achievements to be proud of. We secured BSO, BSME, AOBOS, Edexcel, AQA and Cambridge accreditation. We have a very strong team moving forward which has been supplemented with excellent, experienced teachers recruited from the UAE, UK and beyond. We are fortunate to have been able to strengthen the in class support team recruiting well qualified Teaching Assistants to support the teachers in KG1, KG2 and Grade 1. We are expecting three more teachers to arrive from the UK and beyond in the coming months once they have worked their notice. Thanks should go to the teachers covering their classes in the short term.

I am very fortunate to have been able to supplement the existing leadership team with additional very experienced Assistant Vice Principals and Senior Teachers.

The wider leadership team now comprises of

Principal Ms Allison

allison@albasmaschool.ae

Mr. Mohammed is responsible for student's pastoral care and inclusion across the school. He leads the associated inspection strand, Student Protection, Care, Guidance and Support.

mohammed.nawaz@albasmaschool.ae

The Vice Principal Ms Ruth is responsible for assessment, recording and reporting across the school and the associated inspection strands, Student Achievement and Teaching & Learning.

ruth.duncan@albasmaschool.ae

The Assistant Vice Principal KG1 is Ms Jayne

jayne@albasmaschool.ae

The Assistant Vice Principals Grades 6 to 9 are Ms Karen and Mr Steve

Ms Karen is also responsible for student personal development across the school and the associated inspection strand Student Personal and Social Development and Innovation. Mr Steve is leading curriculum development in the secondary school and the associated whole school inspection strand, Curriculum.

karen.p@albasmaschool.ae

Stephen.f@albasmaschool.ae

Senior Teachers

Ms Niamh (Grades 6 to 9) and Ms Deega (Grade 6 to 9). Ms Niamh is supporting Mr Mohammed with protection care and guidance of G6 to 9 students whilst Ms Deega is supporting Ms Karen and Mr Stephen with STEM and innovation.

niamh.d@albasmaschool.ae

deega.s@albasmaschool.ae

Ms Ashley (Grades 2 to 5) who is supporting Ms Ruth with student achievement and teaching and learning.

Ms Gayatri (KG2 and G1) who is supporting Mr Steve with the inspection strand curriculum

ashley@albasmaschool.ae

Gayatri.b@albasmaschool.ae

We, as a Leadership Team, will continually review practice, policy and procedure and will implement changes as required to improve standards. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and patience as we implement any changes our intent is always to improve standards of safety and education through any changes.

Meet the Teacher Event

We are hosting 'Meet the Teacher' events in the week after Eid to give you the opportunity to meet your child's homeroom teacher, find out what your child will be learning and have your questions answered.

Monday 19th September

- 5pm – KG1
- 6pm – KG2

Tuesday 20th September

- 5pm – Grades 1 and 2
- 6pm – Grades 3, 4 and 5

Wednesday 21st September

- 5pm – Grades 6 to 9

The agenda for the evening is a short presentation detailing the curriculum as well as procedures and expectations, as well as introducing our new school management system, followed by an opportunity to meet your child's homeroom teacher, see their classroom and have a brief question and answer session with the homeroom teacher.

Please enter through the doors to the left of reception, sign in and go to the hall at the designated time.

We are looking forward to meeting you all.

Please find the answers to parents' most common questions on the next few pages.



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Please retain this information for future reference

النسخة العربية متوفرة على موقع المدرسة

English National Curriculum (ENC)

The English national curriculum does not prescribe set textbooks. Teachers use a wide variety of resources when teaching, therefore your child will not bring textbooks home. This reflects practice in the UK where the teacher is the most valuable resource as they plan and prepare the resources to meet the different needs of the students.

In G6 to 9 some subjects will have a textbook which they use in class together with other resources as required.

Students in KG1 will follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum whilst KG2 to Grade 5 will follow the 2014 ENC for the corresponding ENC year. KG2 = ENC Year 1, Grade 1 = ENC Year 2, Grade 2 = ENC Year 3 and so on.

Children in Grades 6 to 8 will follow the 2014 ENC Key Stage 3 curriculum. Grade 8 students will follow GCSE/I-GCSE courses in some subjects leading to external examination by Edexcel or Cambridge in May of Grade 10. Early in Term 2, Grade 8 students will select a small number of foundation subjects to focus on in Grades 9 and 10.

Grade 9 are following GCSE and IGCSE courses in the core subjects and in the two subjects they have chosen from the optional subjects.

KG1

All KG1 students should attend school from 7.50am to 2:35pm. KG1 is compulsory education in the UK. Therefore by only attending for half a day our children are missing 50% of the curriculum time and entering KG2 at a disadvantage. ADEC inspection feedback in 2015 recommended increased opportunities for independent choice and student directed learning in KG1. We could not provide this between 8am and 11.30am, without reducing directed teaching time. Therefore in response to this recommendation we extended the school day to 2.35pm to bring us in to line with the UK.

Uniform – Day to Day

Boys – Bermuda shorts or long pants, polo shirt, school fleece, black school shoes

Girls – Skirt, polo shirt, school fleece, black school shoes, jewellery – one pair of small ear studs only

PE – Uniform track pants, uniform PE shirt in house colour, trainers (any colour) – no football boots with studs or blades

Siblings should be in the same house, please inform Ms Najuva if this is not the case. KG1 houses will be assigned ASAP and parents will be informed.

Our uniform suppliers are restocking sizes continuously – please check stock with them on a regular basis if you are still waiting for uniform. Their address and contact details are on the school website.

PE uniforms can be worn to school by all students up to G4 on days when they have PE. For personal hygiene reasons Grades 5 to 8 will be expected to change out of PE uniform into full uniform at the end of the lesson. Trainers should only be worn with PE uniforms.

All items of uniform should be clearly marked with your child's full name and class. All children should bring a clearly labelled water bottle to school every day.

Lunch boxes should be clearly marked with your child's name.

Stationery and Copy Books

Stationery and copy books are not included in tuition fees. It is each parent's responsibility to ensure their child has all of the stationery requested by the teacher in a named pencil case and the copy book pack which is available from the uniform store in the city or the school store. Stationery packs can be purchased from the uniform store or the school store as requested by parents for their convenience. Alternatively parents can request a list of required stationery from the class teacher, reception or the store and can purchase the individual elements from any shop. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure the pencil case remains fully stocked with the requested items throughout the year.

Sanctions and rewards

All children start the week entitled to a reward - golden time – 1.55pm to 2.35pm every Thursday for KG2 to Grade 8, Grade 9 have common room privileges instead of Golden time. If they fail to meet expectations they will lose up to 40 minutes of their golden time in 5 minute increments during the week. If they lose 20 minutes or more they will be removed for golden time by the Senior Teacher or an Assistant Vice Principal. If they lose less than 20 minutes they may remain in the room or area with their peers but will not take part in the chosen activity for the time that they have lost. Golden time is linked to ADEC level 1 behaviours, low-level disruption to children's own or others' learning. Children will get three warnings before losing 5 minutes of golden time. Golden time is tracked electronically on a central drive which any member of the teaching staff can view.

If a child loses 20 minutes or more of 3 golden times they will go on a two week level 1 report. 3 level 1 reports will lead to escalation to level 2 report. We have no tolerance for level two and three incidents such as fighting and children will be placed on the appropriate level 2 or 3 report for two weeks if they are involved in level two or three behaviour incident. When a child is placed on any report, parents will be asked to come in to meet the Vice Principal Mr. Mohammed. Parents will be asked to acknowledge that their child's behaviour is unacceptable and must improve by signing a Level 1, 2 or 3 written warning. With some behaviours such as an isolated incident of theft, a report would be ineffective, therefore in these cases parents will be asked to sign the relevant level 2 or 3 written warning and the child may be suspended for up to 5 days. Failure to respond to 3 level 2 reports will lead to escalation to level 3. Failure to respond to 3 level 3 reports will result in a Governors' behaviour panel meeting and a Governors' behaviour contract. Failure to meet the Governors' targets will result in the referral to the case to ADEC for a school transfer or the withdrawal of the option to reregister or permanent exclusion or school transfer. Each time a new 2 weekly report is issued, it is recorded on ADEC's ESIS system.

Snack, Lunchtime and Water

We are a healthy school and encourage children to eat a healthy snack for morning break and a healthy meal at lunchtime. Food and drinks are available for sale in the school canteen at both break (cold snacks only) and lunch time (hot and cold food). Lunch boxes should be clearly marked with your child's name and class. Grade 1, KG1 and KG2 eat in their classrooms. Whilst they can get food from the canteen, it is more convenient if they can have a packed lunch. There is a cleaner stationed in the canteen throughout break and lunch. Cleaners ensure the KG1, KG2 and G1 classrooms are cleaned and are ready for eating and for learning after lunch.

We are a **litter-free campus** and all the children and staff are expected to use the bins provided to dispose of their rubbish and to leave their eating area clean and litter-free. Children are only allowed to take water on the playground as all food and other drinks should be consumed in the dining room. Children will be asked to pick up their rubbish if they are seen dropping it or leaving it in their eating area. We are also a **nut-free campus** as some adult and child members of our community have severe nut allergies. Air borne nut particles are sufficient

to trigger anaphylactic reactions in some members of our community. We ask that food items sent in to school are nut-free and that if your child eats nuts before school that they wash their hands with soap and water before coming to school. Children should not use the canteen before, during or after school or outside of lunch and break times.

Filtered water is available at all times in all clusters for all children to fill their water bottles. Water bottles should be in school every day and should be clearly labelled with the child's name.

Allergies and Medication

All children who experience anaphylactic allergic reactions whatever the trigger should have an epi-pen in the clinic which is clearly labelled with their name and class in a clear plastic box. All students with asthma should have spare inhalers in the clinic, clearly labelled with their name in a clear plastic box. All other medication should be given to the nurse in a clearly labelled container. All medication to be administered by the nurse requires signed permission from the parents with clear dosage instructions, this can be completed in reception.

Children who are not able to or willing to manage their medical condition or let an adult do it for them endanger their own and other student's well-being. As a result they may be sent home until their condition is stable. Please ensure all parent emergency contact details are always up to date so that we can contact a parent or carer in the case of an emergency.

Birthday Celebrations

We love to celebrate our student's birthdays but we are not a party venue. Please respect that this is an educational establishment and do not ask us to host your child's celebrations. We will distribute invitations for your child and we will distribute birthday cake which should be delivered to reception before 1pm, cut and packaged so that students can eat it at home. All cakes should be sent with a list of ingredients so that we can ensure that it is nut-free and is not given to children with allergies. We will also require evidence that the cake is within its use by date.

Morning Routines

We have closed the road between the front car park and the school's main entrance to staff and parent's cars so that students can cross safely once they have left their parent's vehicle. Thank you for respecting and protecting our student's safety and not moving the barrier to use this road. Please do not park in the bus bays in the morning or after school as it slows the buses arrival and departure and endangers our children as they enter and exit the bus.

The national anthem is played at 7.50 am and we expect all members of our community to stand quietly and respect the national anthem. Lessons begin promptly at 8.05am.

All KG2 to G9 students arriving before 7.45am should go direct to the hall. All KG2 to G4 children should be in the assembly hall by 7.50am for the national anthem. All G5 to 8 students should be in their clusters by 7.50am, if arriving after 7.45am they should proceed directly to their cluster for the national anthem at 7.50am.

All children arriving before 8am should use the glass doors to the left of reception. If arriving after 7.45am G5 to 9 girls should use the girls' stairs and proceed straight to their cluster whilst boys should use the boys' stairs and proceed straight to their clusters. If arriving before 7.45am all KG2 to G9 students should proceed to the hall and wait with their class to be collected by their homeroom teacher.

KG1 children should be taken by parents to the KG1 doors after 7.30am. Entrance to KG1 before 8 am is not allowed through any other door.

All KG2 to G8 children arriving at 8am or later must sign in late at reception.

Parents of all grades are respectfully asked to remain outside the school buildings at both drop off and pick up to support us in maintaining high levels of child protection and safeguarding.

Early Collection

Children will not be available for early collection after 2pm. Requests for all children to be collected instead of getting on the bus or picked up at 2.35pm must be received by reception by 1.30pm by phone or in person

and children must be collected by 2pm from reception by an adult. If they arrive after 2pm parents must wait and all children must be collected from their usual pick up points after 2.35pm. This is so that we can track our students effectively and ensure high levels of child protection and safeguarding for all students at all times.

All parents requesting early collection will need to complete and sign the Early Collection Register at Reception so that we can maintain our fire registers and a record of the children who are leaving early and the curriculum hours they lose as a result. It is essential that we monitor the impact of leaving early on students' progress.

Sibling Collection

Older brothers and sisters will not be allowed to collect younger brothers and sisters as this compromises our safeguarding procedures. All children must be collected by an adult from pick up points according to their grade.

End of Day Collection

Lessons end at 2.35pm, gates will open after 2.40pm, once children are at pick up points. Please ensure your child is collected promptly.

The children can be collected by an adult from the following locations. Please note that siblings must be collected separately by an adult as explained above to ensure that children are not walking through the school unsupervised.

KG1 - KG1 door

KG2 - 3 doors in KG2 outdoor area are labelled with the class names

Grade 1 and Grade 2 – 2 double doors on the running track

Grade 4 and Grade 5 to 9 boys - Dining Room

Grade 3 and Girls from Grade 5 to 9 - first door by Gate 2 (door also available at end of the running track)

At 3pm your child will be moved to the dining room for late collection. At 3.15pm we will start to call home to establish who is collecting the child and when. To access the dining room please use Gate 2 as you do for parent pick up. It will remain open until 3.30pm and children will remain in the dining room for collection until 3.30pm for safeguarding reasons.

Attendance and Punctuality

Late arrival and early collection will impact on your child's curriculum coverage and therefore their ability to fulfil their potential, reach expected standards and make expected rates of progress. For the same reasons high levels of attendance and excellent punctuality should be every parents' aim for their child. As a school we have a target of 95% attendance, please support us in achieving this target by only keeping your children at home when it is absolutely essential. For cases of fever, not controlled by paracetamol, vomiting and diarrhoea should keep your child at home. All non-essential travel should be avoided during term time and will not be approved. Requests for leave and travel on compassionate grounds or for religious observance will be approved.

All of our policies and procedures are in line with ADEC Private Schools Regulations and Policies.

Parent Communication

Teachers will sometimes use the communication book to pass information for younger children, especially in KG1. From KG2 upwards our preferred method of communication is email. Please ensure your email address is

recorded correctly in our system. Please check your email and Student Diaries regularly and feel free to pass information to the teacher by writing an email yourself. We are also asking you to record your child's reading in their communication book. The easiest way for you to accelerate your child's academic progress is to listen to them read in English for as little as 5 minutes a day.

Our teachers will be asking for your email address shortly as we aim to minimise our impact on the environment and send all future newsletters by email. Please contact your child's homeroom teacher by email as your

central point of contact with the school. Teacher emails are detailed in the first newsletter of the year and are always available from reception.

Monthly curriculum newsletters will be produced for each grade up to Grade 5 and for each subject for Grades 6 to 9 so that you can support your child's learning at home. In addition, we are aiming to produce a fortnightly school newsletter which celebrates learning and conveys information relevant to all parents regardless of their child's grade.

Our parent team are also setting up Whatsapp groups and already have a Facebook page to keep parents informed. They will also contact you by email asking you to complete surveys about the school.

We have placed a 'positive parent feedback' book in reception so that you can tell us what we are doing well and which aspects of the school's work you are pleased with.

Please approach us with any concerns so that we can aim to resolve the issue before it escalates. Homeroom and form teachers should be the first point of contact followed by grade or subject leaders, senior teachers,

AVPs and VPs then the Principal. I am not always immediately available but my PA, Ms Vikki, will contact you with the earliest available appointment. We aim to resolve all issues quickly and to the satisfaction of all parties within the limitations of the school policies and procedures.

We value parent feedback and consider it when reviewing policies and procedures.

If your issue is not resolved you can then submit a complaint in writing for the attention of the Principal or if it is about the Principal FAO the Chair of the Board of Governors. You will receive an acknowledgement within 24 hours and the complaints committee will provide their response within 10 days.

When visiting school we can have a translator available for any meetings with teachers or members of the management or leadership team, if required. We also have an Arabic speaker on reception at all times should you need translation.

Homework

All children should have a reading book in their bag at all times. They will get one piece of Maths, Arabic and English homework per week as a minimum. They will also get a weekly Science homework from Grade 6 to Grade 9. Topic projects will be set for KG2 to Grade 5 to be completed with parental support and foundation subjects in upper school will set homework as and when it is necessary to support curriculum coverage. All children will also have regular spelling tests.

Enrichment

A range of after school activities will be available on Wednesdays from 3pm to 4pm. Details of the clubs will be available through the sign up portal on the website. Places will be available on a first come first served basis and will be dependent on children meeting expectations. No buses will be available after enrichment, so when signing children up you must consider how you will collect them. Late collection on three occasions will lead to the place being withdrawn.

Swimming is part of the PE curriculum for G2 to 9. Female lifeguards and instructors will be available later in the year.

Buses

Please be aware that all buses leave school between 2:50pm and 3pm for all grades.

Please ensure your child wears their ID badge. This badge is equipped with a barcode which will text you as your child enters and leaves the bus once activated. This is very valuable technology but it only works if the child is wearing the badge. It is your responsibility to ensure that they leave home with their badge each day. The badge is also one of our health and safety checks to ensure each child is on the correct bus and can be located at all times during the journey.

If your child travels by school bus and you change your accommodation, it is your responsibility to inform the bus coordinator Mr Muthaleeb by placing a call to reception at Al Basma School or by visiting him at school where he is permanently based so that he can try to move your child on to the bus for the new area.

However, please be aware that we cannot guarantee a place on the bus to the new area. If the bus is full you will be placed on a waiting list.

Please be assured that we are trying our best to shorten journey times and have the buses leave school earlier. Please bear with us whilst we try different routes, procedures and solutions as is necessary at the start of every school year with new children on each bus. At the start of every school year there is a settling in period with the buses. As children get familiar with the bus supervisors and the lining up process, buses will leave earlier. As drivers and bus supervisors refine their routes, buses will reach home more quickly. Please note we operate a first on, first off procedure, so a child with the longest journey in the morning will have the shortest journey in the afternoon and vice versa.

Please bear with us for the next two weeks as we speed up the bus systems. If you are still unhappy after 2 weeks, please contact Mr Muthaleeb and copy me into your email

muthaleeb.velocity@gmail.com

If you do not want your child to travel home by bus for any reason please let us know before 1.30pm and collect them from reception before 2pm. After 2pm you must collect them from their grade's pick up point at 2.35pm, we cannot guarantee that if the request is placed after 1.30pm the message will be communicated to all required parties.

All of our buses comply with the ADEC school transport regulations and are fitted with seat belts, AC, GPS and cameras for your child's safety.

Opportunities for Parents to Contribute

We will open applications for a KS4 school governor shortly. Governors influence policy and hold the leadership team accountable for the standards and progress, suspension and expulsion rates, standards of behaviour, attendance and punctuality, recruitment and retention of staff and students and ensure succession planning is in place. Governors meet monthly outside of school hours and may be asked to be on a subcommittee such as Personnel, Behaviour or Complaints which may need to meet more frequently at certain times of the year or at short notice.

The Al Basma Parent Teacher Team is a more supportive and less regulatory body which will meet as and when required to organise the events in the calendar. There will be elections for the Committee with nomination papers going out to parents on 18th September. The parent team host coffee mornings once a month. The first coffee morning is on Thursday 22nd September at 9am in the Board room. Please register your interest and

questions for the school management team with Ms Wilesse. The parent team will organise events such as National Day and International Day celebrations. They will also support and organise student events such as bake sales. This is a lovely way to get involved in our school community and meet other parents.

wilesse@albasmaschool.ae

Further Opportunities for Parents to Contribute

If you believe that you have a skill that the school can make use of in a volunteer or paid capacity, please submit your CV to Miss Vikki stating you are volunteering your services or looking for a paid post.

Lost Property

Lost property is stored in a small room in the admin corridor behind reception. Children can access it during break and lunch times. Lost property will be in reception for parents to view during any parent meetings. Please ensure everything your child brings to school, including their lunch box, is clearly labelled with your child's names, family name, grade and class so it can be returned if lost.

Contact Details

Please ensure that if you change your phone number or email address, the school is kept informed so that we can always contact you in case of emergency and keep you up to date with newsletters and circulars.

Student Permission Request

All children will have received a document for signatures by parents. This covers a number of permissions which are required throughout the year. Please read, sign where required and return back to your child's homeroom teacher by email or hard copy. This form is also available in Arabic if you require. The form allows you to state which email you prefer to receive communication. Please note our system automatically sets email communication to the father's email address. To change this priority please state your preferred email on this form.

Kind Regards

Mrs Allison McDonald