



GEMS Wellington
International School

مدرسة جيمس ولينغتون
الترشايبولال

11
YEARS
OUTSTANDING
تميز

PARENT HANDBOOK

UPPER SCHOOL

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021



WELCOME

WELCOME TO GEMS WELLINGTON INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



Maryssa O'Connor
Principal - CEO

I am delighted to be able to welcome you to GEMS Wellington International School, our consistently outstanding school in the centre of Dubai. WIS will always strive for academic attainment and personal wellbeing, for creating a supportive and inclusive community whilst also celebrating individual successes and for a fulfilling education that endures long after the examination results have been published.

Our purpose as educators is to encourage intellectual curiosity, independent thought and effective learning habits. From an early age, we encourage pupils to be dynamically intellectual, culturally creatively and develop independence, so by the time they leave Sixth Form, they are well prepared for the expected, but can also tackle the unknowns.

The success of a student cannot be measured only by their academic success alone, but also by the development of their social and interpersonal skills and contribution to school life. Pupils have over ninety clubs and activities, encompassing the creative arts, outdoor education and a vast array of sports, to choose from in school. We help our students to develop existing interests and to find new ones that will stay with them for life

Here at WIS our students are individuals with potential, unique strengths and interests and I believe that it is our duty as a school to add value to each student by helping them achieve academic success and the joy of learning in an inclusive community in which all our students, parents and staff feel challenged, valued and successful.

With regards,

M O'Connor





WELCOME

WELCOME TO GEMS WELLINGTON INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



Sarah Wright
Head of Upper School



Alex Harrison
Head of Upper School
(Term One)

We are delighted to welcome you to our school community here at GEMS Wellington International School.

We are a family-orientated school in the centre of Dubai that has been rated as 'Outstanding' for over 10 years and we are incredibly proud of the ethos, values and vision of the school, upheld by teachers, students and parents alike.

We are a wholly inclusive school, that strives not only for academic excellence and achievement for all, but also a school that allows students to see that there is greatness within them beyond the realms of the classroom. It is essential that we nurture and develop our students in order that they reach their full potential. We encourage our students to fully engage with learning, not just in the curriculum, but by providing them with opportunities to enhance the skills that they possess through our comprehensive extracurricular programme: 'Explore, Enrich, Excite'.

Our purpose as educators is to encourage intellectual curiosity, independent thought and effective learning habits. From an early age, we encourage students to be dynamically intellectual, culturally creative and develop independence, so by the time they leave our Sixth Form, they are well prepared for the expected, but can also tackle the unknowns.

Welcome to your journey within our Upper School WIS community.

With regards,

Sarah Wright

Alex Harrison





WELCOME FROM OUR HEAD BOY AND HEAD GIRL



Chetan Nair
Head Boy for 2020-21

"Welcome to WIS. We very much look forward to welcoming you to our school community. For me, the IB program has helped me to develop holistically and delve further into my subjects of interest, while also allowing me to explore sides of study that I wasn't aware of, such as TOK and writing research papers in the Extended Essay. It has taught me valuable life skills in time management and collaboration, while consistently furthering my education."



Poushali Ray
Head Girl for 2020-21

"Studying the IB program at WIS has taught me that there's more to learning than just textbooks - it's as much about the experiences, the gratitude, and the teamwork as it is about revision, exams and coursework. We look forward to welcoming you to our school, with excellence at the centre of everything."



OUR SCHOOL DAY

At GEMS Wellington International School we believe that good attendance and punctuality are vital indicators of an outstanding school. These factors are also key in enabling students to make the most of their learning opportunities and prepare for a successful transition into the world of higher education or employment.

School Day Starts 7:40am

School Day Ends 3:00pm (Sunday - Wednesday)

1:15pm (Thursday)

CEP 7:40 - 8:00am (CEP)

CEP (Curriculum Enrichment Programme) takes place in Tutor Rooms on House Corridors. If your child arrives to their Tutor Room after 7.40am, they will be marked as late. The National Anthem for the United Arab Emirates is played at 7:55am – students will leave for their first lesson after the National Anthem.

Lesson 1 Starts 8:00am

Break 10:00 - 10:20am (Sunday to Wednesday)

10:40 - 11.15am (Thursday)

Lunch 12:20- 1:00pm

Bell rings at 12.50pm - students expected to go to lockers to prepare for afternoon lessons.

End of school day 3:00pm (Sunday-Wednesday)

1.15pm (Thursday)



Any barriers to punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as swiftly as possible by introducing and reinforcing the policy below.

We expect that all students will:

- Attend school every day as per the published academic calendar
- Arrive on time every morning
- Be on time to all lessons
- Take responsibility for obtaining and completing work when absence cannot be avoided.

We ask parents to:

- Support the schools expectations of attendance
- Ensure their child arrives to school on time every morning
- Endeavour to schedule medical appointments outside of school hours
- Avoid students travelling during term time
- Inform absence_wis@gemsedu.com or call reception on 043484999 or send a text message to 0569962428 by 7.30am when your child is absent
- Work with the school to resolve issues and ensure their child has good attendance and punctuality
- Inform the school in the event of a student contracting an illness or suffering an injury which is likely to involve an absence of 3 days. Medical notes will be required for absences of 3 or more days
- Complete a leave of absence form (available from reception) in advance of a scheduled absence (PLEASE NOTE– this will be sent to the Head of School and may or may not be authorised after review).

KHDA states that students should not have more than 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days of unauthorised absence. Should this be exceeded then students are at risk of losing their place at the school. Outstanding attendance is 98% as a minimum.

Students who arrive late must go to the Attendance Officer in the Admin Office (Second floor, opposite English corridor) and receive a late slip BEFORE they go to their lesson.

Punctuality is monitored by the Heads of House, and the Heads of Year within the IB Team, and parents will be contacted where there is persistent lateness.





OUR UNIFORM



The aim of our uniform is to ensure that students take pride in being members of the GEMS Wellington International School community. Personal presentation is therefore very important and a high standard of personal appearance is expected of all students at all times, both inside the School and outside in the local community.

Our students are our ambassadors when they are in the Dubai community and, what they do and say, and how they look, reflects on all of us. Students will continue to create a positive impression of GEMS Wellington International School by leaving school in their uniform and wearing it with pride.

For students in Year 10 and Year 11:

The uniform is compulsory throughout the school and may be purchased from Threads. Uniform can be ordered online from: www.threadsme.com or uniform can be bought directly from the store.



There are some new items being introduced this year for WIS students. Please note that items from 2019/20 academic year can continue to be worn for 2020/21 until they are phased out. This refers to:

- The fleece jacket has been replaced by a hoodie for PE days.
- The PE polo shirts have been replaced with a higher-grade material.

For students in Year 12 and Year 13:

Our students in Year 12 and Year 13 are role models for the younger students around them. We therefore expect the highest standards of business dress from our oldest students.

- Boys and girls are permitted to wear a black, navy blue or grey suit of their own choosing.
- **Boys:** White collared business shirt, tucked into trousers. House colour tie, or school tie, must be worn up to the collar, with top button done up
- **Girls:** White collared business blouse, tucked in or tailored for over the trousers



The only permitted jewellery items are:

- A watch
- One very small stud earring in each ear: no other body or face piercing is permitted





GEMS are driven by a singular purpose – to put a quality education within the reach of every student. For our students, we are a window into a vibrant tomorrow – to their future, and their endless potential. We recognise that in order to ensure all our students achieve their potential we must first ensure students feel safe, and are safe.

GEMS Wellington International School is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. We recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. We acknowledge our duty to act appropriately in response to any allegations, reports or suspicious of abuse. Paid staff and volunteers will endeavor to work together to develop an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

Lanyards

All employees, parents and visitors to the school are required to wear a lanyard for identification purposes. Yellow lanyards can be obtained from Reception. Photographs are required on the ID cards within the lanyards for identification purposes. New parents must request their lanyards by providing a photograph to the Reception desk.

Lanyard details

Blue = GEMS Wellington International School Staff

Yellow = Parents/ Guardians – including registered nannies, maids and drivers

Pink = People who attend the school regularly, such as external Music teachers and Examination Invigilators

Green = Contractors (escorted by a member of staff)

Orange = Parents and Staff in school for External ECAs



In school we have "Designated Safeguarding Leads" who have received training in dealing with sensitive issues surrounding child protection with both students and parents. It is our duty of care to follow up anything which a student may disclose to us. In some cases this might mean you are invited into school to discuss a situation that your child has raised. If necessary, we seek support and follow professional advice for our families from suitable agencies in Dubai.

Those attending the school regularly and will be in contact with the children (e.g. pink lanyard wearers) will have completed all of the necessary safeguarding checks and training.

Please do not be offended if we do not let you into school without the proper identification. We take the safeguarding of your children very seriously and it is important that everyone can be identified.



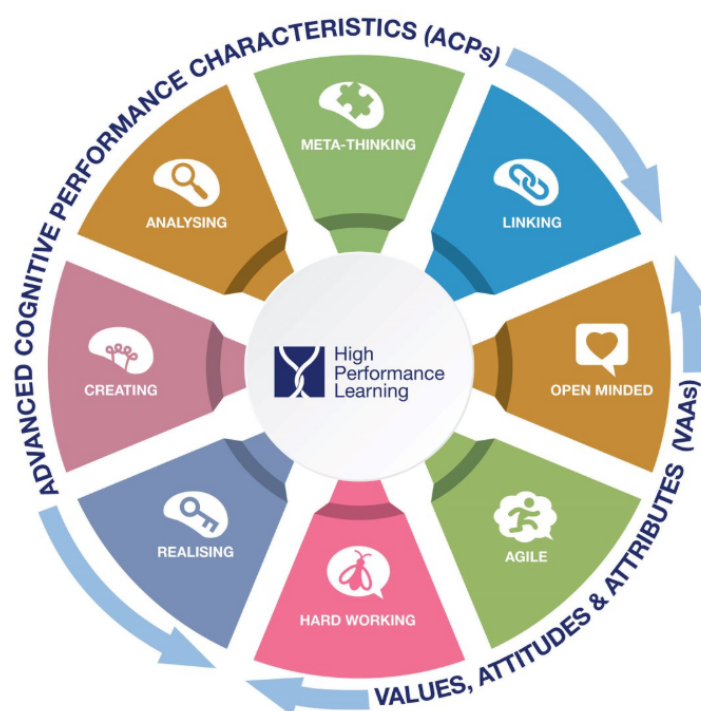


Everyone wants a high performing education system, but education systems continue to assume that only a minority of children can reach high levels of educational performance. At GEMS Wellington International School our High-Performance Learning (HPL) programme instills within our students that they can achieve the very best grades through the development of appropriate learning habits. To reach the very top, students need to work hard, ask for help when they need it, and, most importantly, believe that they can do it. For them to believe it is possible, it is essential that parents and teachers model that positive assumption, known as our 'Performance Mindset'. As a 'World Class School', accredited by HPL, we do not let our students think "I'm not good enough", but encourage them to believe that with enough hard work that anything is possible and that they can achieve excellence.

The ACPs (Advanced Cognitive Performance Indicators) and VAAs (Values, Attitudes and Attributes) form the key principles of HPL. The ACPs are "thinking skills" and these require practice in order to become a high performer. At WIS we call these 'The HPL Brains' ensuring that our students are encouraged to think analytically and creatively, alongside encouraging them to link ideas and concepts, with the expectations that this is done accurately and quickly to train the brain effectively. In addition to this our students reflect on their learning by 'thinking about thinking', always ensuring they consider 'how' and 'why' they have arrived at a particular conclusion.

At WIS we encourage the belief that success is not possible without the right attitude, so we encourage students to practise and improve their Values, Attitudes and Attributes (VAAs) too, with a focus on three core areas: hard work, empathy and the ability to be agile. These life skills are the DNA of a WIS student.

In school, students develop these ACP's and VAAs explicitly in lessons, but it is also vital for them to continually improve outside of school, realising how they affect every aspect of their lives. In the end, by developing their ACPs and VAAs, the students will become more efficient learners and will be ready for their exams, for further study, work, and for the rest of their lives. WIS prides itself on our students not just being ready for the next stage of their academic journey: our students are ready for whatever challenges in life come their way and as High-Performance Learners, they will tackle life head on with a thirst to overcome any obstacle.





"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. The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities."

International Baccalaureate® Organisation

For students in Year 12 and Year 13, the International Baccalaureate® (IB) learner profile describes a broad range of human capacities and responsibilities that go beyond academic success. They imply a commitment to help all members of the school community, learning to respect themselves, others and the world around them. Each of the IB programmes is committed to the development of students according to the IB learner profile. The profile aims to develop learners who are:

- Inquirers
- Knowledgeable
- Thinkers
- Communicators
- Principled
- Open-minded
- Caring
- Risk-takers
- Balanced
- Reflective

IB LEARNER PROFILE

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

<p>Reflective Give thoughtful consideration to your own learning and experience. You are able to assess and understand your strengths and limitations in order to support your learning and personal development.</p>	<p>Balanced Understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for yourself and others.</p>	<p>Knowledgeable Explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, you acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.</p>
<p>Open-minded Understand and appreciate your own culture and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. You seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and you are willing to grow from the experience.</p>		<p>Inquirers Have a natural curiosity and learn to acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. You actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.</p>
<p>Risk-takers Approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. You are brave and articulate in defending your beliefs.</p>	<p>Principled Act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. You take responsibility for your own actions and the consequences that accompany them.</p>	<p>Communicators Understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. You are willing to work in collaboration with others.</p>
<p>Caring Show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. You have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.</p>	<p>Thinkers Exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognise and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.</p>	



GCSEs

In Years 10-11, students prepare for and sit their GCSE examinations. These are British qualifications that are taken by all students aged 16 in the UK. We carry out a blend of IGCSE (International GCSEs) and regular GCSE courses. There is no difference in the acceptance of IGCSEs and GCSEs - the only difference is that the International qualifications tend to use less UK/British examples in the questions and can therefore better suit students studying in an international setting.

Core Subjects (these are subjects that will be taken by ALL students)

- English Language & English Literature = 2 GCSE grades
- Combined Science = 2 GCSE grades or Accelerated Triple Science = 3 GCSE grades
- Mathematics = 1 GCSE and Further Mathematics (invite only) = 1 GCSE
- Core PE (non-GCSE, not examined)

This leads to 5 core GCSE's for all students and the possibility of up to 7 core GCSEs for accelerated Mathematics and Science students.

Option subjects:

- Students are required to select four subjects that they would like to study, one of these must be a language.
- Subjects include – Business Studies, Economics, History, Geography, Art, Music, Drama, Photography, Psychology, PE, Design Technology, Dance, Media, Computer Science, French, Spanish, German & Arabic.
- We also offer BTEC qualifications in Business Studies and Creative Media. These are vocational qualifications which are assessed using coursework rather than exams.

Overall, this leads to between 8-11 GCSE qualifications for all students.

International Baccalaureate

In Years 12 and 13 we offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) course of study. We offer three different pathways:

- IB Diploma (IBDP) - students take 6 subjects, 3 at Higher Level and 3 at Standard Level plus the Core of Theory of Knowledge, Extended Essay and CAS.
- IB Careers Related Programme (IBCP) - students take a vocational qualification (BTEC Creative Media or Business), two IBDP subjects, and the Core including a reflective project.
- IB Courses - students can take a bespoke subject combination such as less than 6 subjects and a mixture of HL and SL subjects. They do not have to take the Core.

For further information International Baccalaureate - <https://www.ibo.org>

Entrance onto our IBDP programme will be dependent on GCSE or MYP results due to the demands of the courses and pathways. If you have any questions about the curriculum, please do not hesitate to contact our Deputy Head of Curriculum, Mr James Rostron - j.rostron_wis@gemsedu.com.

OUR RESULTS



In 2019, we achieved the best GCSE results in the school's history



In 2019, Anuja Venkataramani achieved 45 IB Points: only 275 students globally achieved this point score

65% of all GCSE grades were graded at 9-7/A*-A, the highest available grades



In 2019, our average point score was 34. The world average was 29.65

97% of all GCSE English and Mathematics grades were graded at 9 to 4



62 level 7s were achieved across the cohort



33% of all English Language grades were graded at Grade 9 (UK average = 2.8%)



Our graduates attend some of the best universities in the world, including:

71% of students achieved A*-A/9-7 in GCSE Mathematics (UK average = 20.4%)

45% of students achieved grade 9 in Biology (UK average = 12.5%)

- University of Durham
- McGill
- University of Manchester
- King's College, London
- Imperial College, London
- Penn State
- Purdue

Across the Sciences, on average, 92% of students achieved a grade 9-7 across Biology, Chemistry and Physics

46% of students achieved grade 9 in Chemistry (UK average = 13.2%)

37% of students achieved grade 9 in Physics (UK average = 12.6%)





Parental Communication in the Upper School

There are several ways in which the School will communicate with parents:

- Face to Face communication is important with our parents for all students. We encourage you to build relationships with all members of our school community.
- Please download our free app, D6, for direct parent communication; our Reception team is here to help with the set-up process. This is our main form of communication with parents.
- Direct emails or SMS to the main contact—parents are asked to confirm who this should be, i.e. mother or father. If you wish to have both parents alerted then please let the Registrar or PRE know by emailing either registrar_wis@gemsedu.com or pre_wis@gemsedu.com and they will update our records to reflect this.
- Weekly newsletter from the Head of House or Head of Year (Year 12 and 13) sharing some of the learning and activities over the past week and informing you of important dates and events coming up in your child's year group.
- If you have a query, concern or comment please do reach out to your child's Form Tutor or Class Teacher via e-mail
- We will also host a variety of coffee mornings and information evenings which you will be invited to, depending on the purpose as most of these tend to be Year Group specific

Expectations

- Please allow us 48 hours to respond to an email from you. On some occasions it may take longer for us to fully respond but you should hear back from us within 48 hours.
- We ask that emails are written in a courteous manner to our staff. If an email is sent regarding a concern we will do our utmost to respond and rectify the situation. However, we do ask that you write to in a polite manner and avoid the temptation to make generalisations.

Social Media

We celebrate the successes of students and teachers on our social media pages and we share the latest news on a daily basis. We use Facebook ([GEMS Wellington International School](#)), Instagram ([gems_wis](#)) and Twitter ([@gemswis](#)).

For safeguarding reasons we ask that you do not post pictures of other students at school events on social media.



Eleanor Morse

REGISTRAR



Marisa Joy Ruthkowski

ADMISSIONS SECRETARY



Rana Hashem

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS



Bijili Binu

ADMISSIONS ASSISTANT



Natasha Lamb

EVENTS AND MARKETING
COORDINATOR



Vimbisio Mangoro

RECEPTIONIST



For any queries or concerns In the first instance, you should contact your child's Form Tutor and then their Head of House, or our Head of Sixth Form. These members of staff are the best informed to help with any query you might have. If necessary, they can then pass your query to a member of staff who is better placed to help.

If you have an appointment with a member of staff, then please come to the front reception desk where our reception staff will contact the person you have the appointment with. They will meet you and escort you to the designated meeting room. It is always best to ensure that a prior request is made for an appointment, so that our teachers and staff can plan accordingly for your visit to school.



Some other key email addresses are:

Head of Upper School (Sarah Wright) - .s.wright_wis@gemsedu.com

Head of Upper School for Term One (Alex Harrison) - a.harrison_wis@gemsedu.com

PA to Principal - CEO - (Deborah Wareham) - principal_wis@gemsedu.com

PA to Principal - Upper School - (Claire Doherty) - secondaryadmin_wis@gemsedu.com

Deputy Headteacher for Curriculum and Assessment - (James Rostron) - j.rostron_wis@gemsedu.com

Deputy Headteacher of Standards/Quality Assurance (Joanne Standring) - j.harrison_wis@gemsedu.com

Deputy Headteacher of Arabic and Islamic (Habiba Hamdan) - h.hamdan_wis@gemsedu.com

Assistant Headteacher for Progress and Standards (Rebecca Kennedy) - r.kennedy_wis@gemsedu.com

Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion (Wendy Harris) - w.harris_wis@gemsedu.com

Upper School SENDCo (Nicola Harrison) - n.harrison_wis@gemsedu.com

IBDP Coordinator (Kavita Bedi) - k.bedi_wis@gemsedu.com

IBCP Coordinator (Beth Swinscoe) - b.swinscoe_wis@gemsedu.com

What should your child do if they feel unwell?

Our fully qualified Clinical Team are on hand to support and look after your child in the event of illness or injury. Dr Ishrat Jehan and Nurses Jissa Wilson and Christine Bravo have a wealth of experience in their field, alongside many years of working within Dubai Schools.



Dr Ishrat Jehan



Christine Bravo



Jissa Wilson



Kristine Caculitan

The school clinics are located between the swimming pool and the sports hall. If your child feels unwell during the school day, they should speak to their teacher who will then decide if a visit to the Nurse or Doctor is necessary. The teacher will then ensure they make their own way, or are escorted to, the Clinic. If a student needs to go to the nurse during lesson time, they will be sent with a note and issued with a visit note after their visit.

The Clinic is operational between 7.30am-4.30pm Sunday-Thursday. If the Clinical Team decides your child is unwell they will call home to let you know or to ask you to collect your child from school. This also applies to our Post 16 students.

If the child is treated at school, the Clinical Team will send home a green medical information slip so you are aware of the treatment.

Examples of this are; Plaster on a minor cut, cream administered for mosquito bite.

The email address for the Clinical Team is wismedicaldepartment_wis@gemsedu.com and you can also call the school on 04 348 4999 and ask for the medical team.

Sending medication to school

If your child requires medication and has to take it during the school day, you should send this with a note and instructions to the nurses. The student will attend the clinic at the required time and the nurses will ensure the right amount of medication is administered.



IncludeMe

A very warm welcome from IncludeME to all new parents at GEMS Wellington International School.

IncludeME is a support group set up and run by WIS parents for parents and guardians of children who need extra support to succeed at school. We work as “parents as partners” with school leaders, staff and the WIS community to promote inclusive practices in every aspect of school life. The leadership and inclusion teams also passionately believe in the importance of inclusion and the positive impact it can have on the whole WIS community.

Our aim is also to provide parents with emotional and practical support and guidance. We regularly organise social events, workshops, seminars and presentations often with specialist guest speakers. In addition, IncludeME parents have wealth of experience with their own children and are therefore often able to guide you to the best place to seek professional help and also be there when you just need someone to talk to.

When you come to a meeting you will find a welcoming group of close knit friends who are all at different stages of their journey parenting a child who learns differently. We are here to celebrate with you and also help when you need someone to discuss your concerns.

If you would like further information or would like to be added to the WhatsApp group please contact us. We look forward to meeting you in the new academic year.

Best wishes,

Saba Alam - Chairperson - IncludeMe

Includeme.wis@gmail.com

**WISPA**

Our Wellington International School Parents Association (WISPA) are an integral part of the WIS school community and with more than 5000 parents in the school, the organisation is ever expanding, with a calendar full of events.

WISPA's aim is to promote our ethos of 'Parents as Partners', creating a bridge for increased parental partnership with events that bring together the WIS community. They play an important role in supporting the school's leadership team in developing the strategic vision for the school, creating opportunities to ensure that everyone has a sense of belonging to the WIS school community.

WISPA look forward to another successful academic year in 2020/2021. If you would like to get involved please reach us out on wispadubai@gmail.com or find us on our closed Facebook page – 'WIS Parents Support Group / WISPA'.

Amanda Jones - Chairperson - WISPA



