



GEMS Wellington
International School

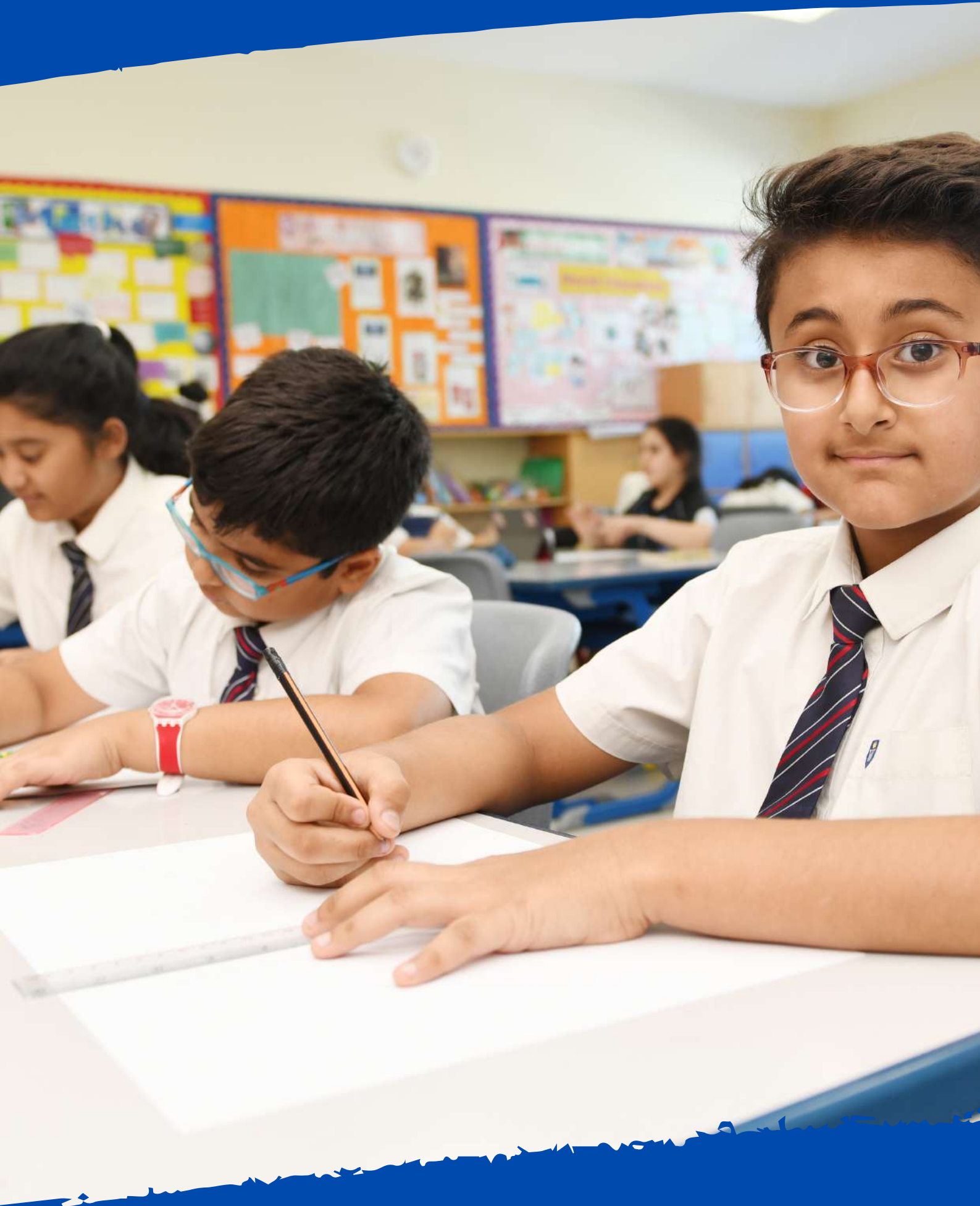
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PARENT HANDBOOK

MIDDLE SCHOOL

ACADEMIC YEAR 2022-2023



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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 and 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. Students 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



الاستقبال
RECEPTION



WELCOME

WELCOME TO GEMS WELLINGTON INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



Oliver Thompson
Head of Middle School

GEMS Wellington International School offers a unique learning journey, where our students are at the forefront of everything that we do. This is particularly relevant in the Middle School, where students approach some of the most crucial years in their life; a time of rapid growth, not only in their academic journey, but also in their social, physical and emotional journey as well.

As students transition into the Middle School, we consolidate the skills that they learn in the Lower School, developing a greater level of competency, knowledge and understanding of the British curriculum in preparation for their transition into the Upper School.

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 and cultivate a performance mindset. 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'.

Pastoral care in the Middle School underpins our family ethos and ensures that all students feel valued, safe and confident, and are also able to build positive relationships that will help them on their learning journey through the school.

I am delighted to be able to welcome you to the Middle School.

Warmest regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "O. Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a flourish at the end.



WELCOME FROM OUR HEAD BOY AND HEAD GIRL



Talha Haroon
Head Boy for 2022-23

GEMS Wellington International School creates an enabling, inclusive environment which inspires each student to achieve and succeed. With its global outlook, the school provides its students with unending and unmatched opportunities both academically and personally. In addition, through a balanced curriculum that encompasses academics, sports, and the arts, Wellington truly cultivates rounded and balanced personalities. A sense of community and togetherness that is hard to replicate has made WIS outstanding for the previous 12 years. This captivating environment, along with students who are constantly motivated to reach new heights, makes it an absolute privilege to be GEMS Wellington International School's Head Boy.



Salma Mahmoud
Head Girl for 2022-23

GEMS Wellington International School is home to innovation, collaboration and creativity. Students are given endless opportunities to pave a path that enables them to set, and undoubtedly achieve, sustainable and fulfilling goals within both personal and scholastic realms. Led by incredible and dedicated members of staff, the GCSE and IB academic programmes provided at upper school guide our students to value challenge and self discipline, along with transferable skills that promise future success. The environment at our school cultivates well rounded, tolerant individuals who are driven towards progress and it is an honor to be surrounded by this source of inspiration daily.



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.

Morning Drop Off

7:15 - 7:35am

Drop Off at Gate 2, Gate 3 and Gate 4

Start of Day

7:40am

The National Anthem for the United Arab Emirates is played at 7:40am

End of Day

Monday to Thursday

Year 5-6 - 3:05pm

Year 7-9 - 3:10pm

Collect from Gate 4

Friday

Year 5-6 - 11:50am

Year 7-9 - 11:55am

Collect from Gate 4



The below protocols have been put in place during the 2021/2022 academic year to ensure the health and safety of students and staff in the school and are reinforced across all lessons in the Lower School each day. These protocols are reviewed on a regular basis and you will be informed of any updates that we make going into the 2022/23 academic year.

Middle School students attend school face to face. Classrooms and corridors have been adapted in line with KHDA and DHA guidance to enable the correct social distancing measures and safety protocols. All staff, and students in Year 2 and above are required to wear a mask.

A form of Remote Learning Provision will be available if you are able to present a DHA PCR test. Please make sure the PCR test is sent to our clinic wis_medicaldepartment@Gemseducation.com and Absence Team via absences_wis@Gemsedu.onmicrosoft.com.

Please note that home tests/lateral flows are not accepted.





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 students to:

- Attend school at every available opportunity during term time
- Arrive to school on time every morning (learning starts at 7.40am)
- Be on time to all lessons
- Students in Middle & Upper School to take responsibility for obtaining and completing work when absence cannot be avoided

We expect parents to:

- Send their child to school at every available opportunity during school term time
- Support their child in arriving at school on time every morning
- Support their child by arriving punctually for their child's collection at the end of the day
- Endeavour to schedule medical appointments outside of school hours
- Avoid students travelling during term time
- Inform absence_wis@gemsedu.com, the class/form teacher and the Head of Year by 7.30am if their child is going to be absent from school that day with the reason for the absence
- If your child has a COVID related absence, please also inform health_wis@gemsedu.com in addition to absence_wis@gemsedu.com
- Use the GEMS Connect App to monitor and support their child's attendance
- 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 2 weeks 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 Year and parents will be contacted where there is persistent lateness.



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 and outside of School. The 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.

The uniform is compulsory throughout the School and may be purchased from the Threads store, Times Square. Alternatively uniform can be ordered online from: www.threadsme.com.

Additional Uniform guidance is below:



Shirts	Boys: shirts should be tucked in and top button fastened Girls: tailored shirts may be worn over trousers unless they are long
Skirts	Below the knee or worn with tights
Trousers	Must be full length Optional item – plain black belt
Socks	Boys: Plain black or navy Girls: Plain navy or white socks, navy tights
Shoes	Smart formal plain black leather closed toe shoes - No trainers/casual shoes
PE Uniform	WIS Laggings may be worn UNDERNEATH the shorts: Hat and water bottle must be taken to every PE lesson
Hair	Tied back and off the face. Discreet black, white or dark navy hair accessories. All hair must be of natural colour, no less than Grade 2 cut. No extreme hairstyles/cuts/hair sculpture.
Jewellery	The only permitted jewellery items are: a watch, discrete religious jewellery and 1 small stud earring in the lobe of each ear. No other body or face piercing is permitted. Tattoos are not permitted
Make Up/ Nail Varnish	Nail varnish is not permitted. Make up is not permitted until Year 12/13 where, if worn it must be discrete.
Facial Hair	Only for religious reasons
Religious Coverings	Head coverings - plain black, white or navy blue





GEMS Wellington International School is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all students and young people. We recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect students from harm, abuse and exploitation. We acknowledge our duty to act appropriately in response to any allegations, reports or suspicions 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 students, young people and adults. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the safeguarding of children at WIS then please contact one of the Designated Safeguarding Leaders below.



Ms Natalie Twigger
Lower School



Ms Sarah Wright
Middle School



Ms Sophie Gathercole
**Upper School & Whole
School Lead**

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads have received training in dealing with sensitive issues surrounding child protection of 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.

Lanyards:

All employees and visitors to the school are required to wear a lanyard for identification purposes. Yellow parent lanyards can be obtained from the reception and this must be done as soon as possible. Photographs are required on the ID cards in the lanyards for identification purposes. In order to apply for a parents lanyard, please complete and return the application form to our reception team on reception_wis@gemsedu.com with clearly labelled photographs of your child and anyone that collects your child from school (Parents/ Guardians/Nanny etc).

Maintaining site security is of the utmost importance. As a result, parents who do not display their lanyards will not be permitted entry to the school site.

Lanyard Details:

- Blue = GEMS Wellington International School staff
- Yellow = Parents/Guardians – including nannies, maids & drivers
- Pink = People who attend the school regularly, such as external Music Teachers, Invigilators
- Green = Contractors (escorted by a member of staff)
- Orange = Parents & Staff in school for External ECA's

Those attending the school regularly and will be in contact with the students (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 safeguarding of your children very seriously and it is important that everyone can be identified.





The Middle School curriculum looks to develop and guide students on their journey from Year 5 through to Year 9, in preparation for their GCSEs.

Years 5 and 6

Our Year 5 and 6 students will be embarking on a specialist approach to the teaching of English, Mathematics and Science. Students will continue to have a class teacher, now known as a Form Tutor, who will teach them all of the foundation subjects. The class teacher will also be a specialist in either English or Mathematics, meaning your child will also be taught either English or Mathematics by another specialist teacher. Students in Year 5 and 6 will also study an additional 60 minutes of Science each week. This extra 60 minutes of Science will be co-taught by a specialist Science teacher from the Science department. Another positive change in the Performing Arts means students will study Dance, Drama and Music every week. Furthermore, students will also study Design Technology for the first time in Year 5 and 6 this year, due to our newly installed STEAM labs, which will provide our students with high quality, specialised DT equipment. Other non core subjects that students will study are: Computer Science, Art and Physical Education. In addition all students will study Arabic, Social Studies of the UAE and the Moral Education Program (MEP). Muslim students will follow the Islamic Studies curriculum.

Information relating to the National Curriculum for Key Stage 2 (Years 5-6) can be found through the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-primary-curriculum>

As a British Curriculum School we follow the guidelines above with some adaptations to suit the international context of the school.

Year 7, 8 and 9

Students in Year 7, 8 and 9 follow the KS3 National Curriculum for England. All students are taught by Secondary qualified specialist teachers in all subjects including: English, Mathematics, Science, Modern Foreign Languages, History, Geography, Physical Education, Computer Science, Drama, Art and Music. In addition all students will study Arabic, Social Studies of the UAE and the Moral Education Program (MEP). Muslim students will follow the Islamic Studies curriculum, whilst non-Muslim students will complete an alternative Real Life curriculum. Students in Year 7 will all be given the opportunity of studying one of three Modern Foreign languages (Spanish, French and German). In Year 9 students are provided with the opportunity of choosing between History or Geography and also have the opportunity to start the IGCSE Mathematics and Science courses.

Information relating to the National Curriculum for Key Stage 3 can be found through the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-secondary-curriculum>

Detailed curriculum booklets are published on D6 each term to explain specific aspects of the curriculum as the year progresses.

At GEMS Wellington International School, we pride ourselves on the opportunities we provide for our students both from an academic and personal perspective. Our Explore, Enrich, Excite (EEE) Programme allows our students to explore the world around them, provide enrichment to their already outstanding curriculum pathways, as well as excite their minds for the future world.

Our EEE offer complements our in-school calendar and annual global events, as well as the stage of education that our students are currently experiencing. From FS1 to Year 13 each child has access to opportunities designed to prepare them for the new world around them, as well as build upon already established interests.

Over 200 clubs and opportunities are usually offered as part of our EEE provision that is split into five domains (STEAM, Creativity, Sport, Music and Performing Arts, and Wellbeing), this enables students who have a variety of different interests to choose a bespoke provision that best suits their individual needs, remaining consistent with the values, attitudes and attributes of the High-Performance Learning program inside and outside of the classroom. Our EEE provision offers students a wide range of activities to engage with, including;

- Project Based Learning
- Internal and External Competitions
- Guest Speakers

Please access GEMS Connect for the link to our fantastic new EEE website where you will see some of the great opportunities available to our students next term.

In addition to this we are pleased to share with you via GEMS Connect our ESM External EEE Booklet. This gives you some fantastic information on the wide variety of paid clubs on offer both at WIS and online.

ESM



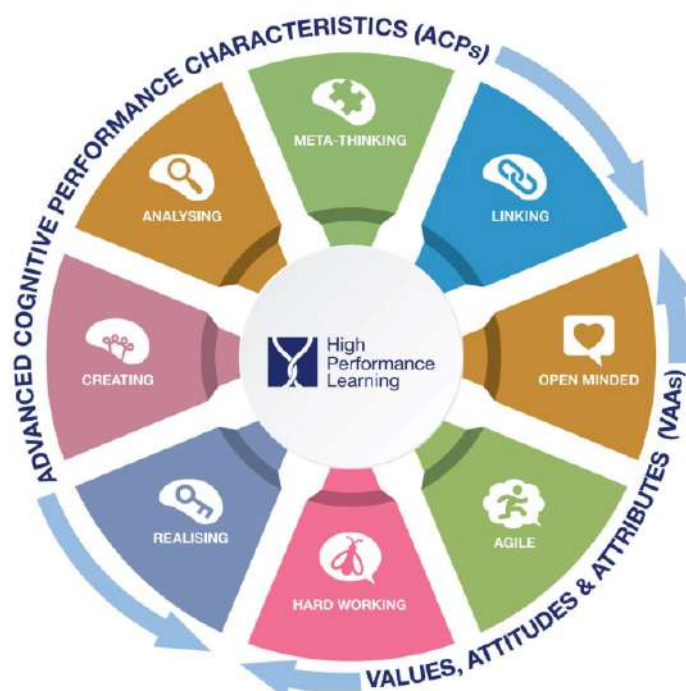


At GEMS Wellington International School our High-Performance Learning (HPL) programme instills within our students that they can achieve the very best grades through the development of appropriate learning habits. To reach the very top, students need to work hard, ask for help when they need it, and, 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 characteristics) 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 encourage students to practice and improve their Values, Attitudes and Attributes (VAA's) 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 ACPs 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, your children 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.





Parental Communication in the Middle 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, GEMS Connect, 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.
- Weekly newsletter from the Head of Year sharing some of the learning and activities the students have participated in over the past week and informing you of important dates and events coming up in your child's House.
- If you have a query, concern or comment please do reach out to your child's Form Tutor or Head of Year via e-mail.
- We will also host a variety of coffee mornings and information evenings which you will be invited to.

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.

Administration Contacts

Please see below for information relating to our key admin contact, who can support you with queries that you may have.



Eleanor Morse
Admissions Director



Emily Lander
Admissions Secretary



Megan Troxler
Parent Relations Executive



Bijili Binu
Admissions Assistant



Pauline Magege
Receptionist



Claudia Lloyd
Receptionist

GEMS Connect



- Please ensure that you download our **GEMS Connect App**. This is our main form of communication and will enable you to view and access all Termly Academic Reports and update any personal details relevant to home/school communication. This will also provide you with a host of GEMS related products and initiatives.

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



- If you do not wish for your child to be featured on Social Media, please contact our Admissions Manager directly on pre_wis@gemsedu.com

Website



- Our website provides you a wide variety of information that you may find helpful. On the website, you can discover more about our Leadership Team, as well as book appointments with them, as well as key information about the curriculum, our policies, enrollment, student life, our school calendar, and so much more. The website address is www.wellingtoninternationalschool.com

WISway Newsletter

- Our weekly method of communication to parents is the WISway newsletter, which provides key messages, weekly highlights and details upcoming events throughout our school. This newsletter is released weekly through our GEMS Connect app and sent directly to parents.



A FUTURE-FOCUSED
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



KEY CONTACTS

For any queries or concerns In the first instance, you should contact your child's Form Tutor and then their Head of Year. 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.

Pastoral Leader Email Addresses:

Head of Middle School (Mr Thompson) - o.thompson_wis@gemsedu.com

Assistant Headteacher - Year 5-7 (Ms Harvey) - c.harvey_wis@gemsedu.com

Assistant Headteacher - Year 8-9 (Mr Ellis) - m.ellis_wis@gemsedu.com

Head of Year 5 (Ms England) - h.england_wis@gemsedu.com

Head of Year 6 (Mr Edwards) - a.edwards_wis@gemsedu.com

Head of Year 7 (Ms Ryan) - s.ryan_wis@gemsedu.com

Head of Year 8 (Mr Hawksworth) - l.hawksworth_wis@gemsedu.com

Head of Year 9 (Ms Edwards) - j.edwards_wis@gemsedu.com

Some other key email addresses are:

PA to Principal - (Ms Doherty) – secondaryadmin_wis@gemsedu.com

Deputy Head of Learning and Teaching (Mrs Standing) - j.harrison_wis@gemsedu.com

Deputy Head of Arabic and Islamic (Ms Hamdan) – h.hamdan_wis@gemsedu.com

SENDCo (Mrs Nicola Harrison) – n.harrison_wis@gemsedu.com

Middle School Counsellor (Ms Santos) - c.santos1_wis@gemsedu.com



Our Medical Team

Our fully qualified Clinical Team are on hand to support and look after the children in the event of illness or injury. Our medical team are well qualified health professionals who have a wealth of experience in their field, alongside many years working within Dubai Schools.



Dr Ishrat Jehan



**Kristine Caculitan
(Nurse)**



**Jissa Wilson
(Nurse)**



**Mary
(Nurse)**



**Rashida
(Nurse)**

What should your child do if they feel unwell?

The school clinics are located between the swimming pool and the sports hall. If your child feels unwell during a lesson then they should speak to their class teacher who will provide them with a note to attend the clinic. If they feel unwell during Break or Lunch time then they can escort themselves to the clinic.

The clinic is operational between 7.30am-4.30pm Monday-Thursday and 7.30am-12.15pm on Friday. 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.

If your child is treated at school, the medical 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. If you are collecting your child from the school because they are ill or injured then your child will need a green medical slip to ensure that their attendance records are updated.

The email address for the Clinical Team is wismedicaldepartment_wis@gemsedu.com and you can also call the school on **04 307 3000** and ask for the medical team. **Please note for all COVID-19 related enquires including questions or relevant documentation please contact health_wis@gemsedu.com**

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.



WISPA

Our GEMS 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 2022/23. 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'.



Above and Beyond



We are delighted to share with you our **'Above and Beyond'** website for our Middle School students, which can be accessed from the start of the summer break.

The website holds a variety of engaging activities for students to complete in their own time.

This was a successful initiative that we launched over the last Summer break, with every intention of helping to not only reinforce learning that has taken place this term, but to also prepare your child for the start of the 2021/22 academic year.

Please see the information available on the Above and Beyond website:

<https://sites.google.com/gemswis.com/middle-upper-above-beyond/home>

