

THE FOREST SCHOOL



CURRICULUM HANDBOOK

Foundation Stage 2

2024 - 2025

EXPLORING
LEADERSHIP



مدرسة جيمس متروبول
GEMS Metropole School
MOTOR CITY

GEMS
EDUCATION



Introduction

Welcome to Infant School

On behalf of all of the staff at GEMS Metropole School, it is a pleasure to welcome you and your family this academic year.

In the Infant School our focus is on leading learning through play and this is at the heart of everything we do. This takes place in our world class facilities; the forest school, farm and indoor environments. Beyond the school day we provide opportunities for the students to develop extra curriculum interests which are also celebrated inside of school.

Parents are strong partners in our learning and it is a pleasure to invite you in to share our journey through the year to a variety of exciting events. We make no excuses for your children being confident, imaginative learners taking risks to lead change in our community.

Emily Shepherd
Head of Infant School



Welcome to Foundation Stage 2

On behalf of everyone at GEMS Metropole School, I am delighted to welcome you and your family to our community within the Foundation Stage. We are excited you are joining us as you start your learning journey at GEMS Metropole School.

In Foundation Stage Two the children continue to develop their sense of curiosity. They learn how to explore and build upon skills that support their independent learning and confidence throughout all areas of their development.

Children will take on challenges as they learn how to communicate effectively and work in collaboration with others. Throughout the year there are many opportunities for you to be involved in your child's learning through stay + play and other wider school community events.

We invite you to come along and be involved in as much of our school life as possible and take part in our exciting opportunities.

Alesha Dublin
Head of Foundation Stage 2





Infant Leadership Team



Emily Shepherd
Head of Infant School



Lucy Nicholls
Deputy Head of Primary
Achievements



Chris Ebbinkhuysen
Deputy Head of Primary
Pastoral



Erin Nelson
Assistant Head of Primary
FS1 and FS2



Debbie Simpson
Assistant Head of Primary
Year 1 and Year 2



The Metropole Curriculum Journey

At Metropole, our programme of learning embodies the GEMS Education core values and ensures that students receive a high-quality education in a happy, supportive and nurturing environment, where they are encouraged to explore and take risks. Teachers plan challenging, well-organised and interesting lessons which engage and motivate our students. There are regular opportunities for leadership, enquiry based learning, critical thinking, decision-making and problem solving where students are encouraged to take an active role in the learning opportunities they encounter. All staff have high expectations of both students and each other.

Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum – FS2

Children in Foundation Stage Two follow the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS) for teaching and development. This stage is very important in a child's life as it helps prepare your child for school 'readiness' as well as for their future learning and successes. Children learn skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate their understanding through 7 areas of learning and development: Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. All 7 areas of learning are used to plan the children's learning. Teachers make sure that the learning is suited to your child's unique needs. These abilities and attitudes towards learning will support them in achieving a good level of development in all areas, ultimately meeting the Early Learning Goals.

Prime Areas		Specific Areas	
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Building Relationships Managing Self Self-Regulations	Literacy	Reading Writing Comprehension
		Mathematics	Numbers Numerical Pattern
Physical Development	Gross Motor and Fine Motor Health and Self-care	Understanding the World	People, Culture and Communities The Natural World Past and Present
Communication and Language	Listening and Attention Understanding Speaking		Expressive Arts and Design

Ministry of Education Curriculum

Alongside the Early Years Curriculum and National Curriculum of England, students also study the Ministry of Education Curriculum. Through this, students learn Arabic, Islamic Studies and Moral, Social and Cultural Studies. The UAE leaders along with GEMS Metropole promote the learning and using of Arabic language as it is considered a fundamental pillar of the Emirates national identity, its people's history and its deep-rooted traditions. The Arabic framework supports both native and non-native Arabic speakers. This framework illustrates the levels expected to be achieved by the learner in each of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Where Arabic is the student's non-native language, the curriculum links the achievement of these levels to the number of years spent in studying Arabic, regardless of the learner's current grade.



High Performance Learning at GEMS Metropole

GEMS Metropole School is accredited as a World Class High Performance Learning school! Students at Metropole develop the language and skills to help them explain the current stage of their learning and the next steps they need to take to improve and deepen their understanding. The High Performance Learning approach recognises that all learners have the potential to achieve the very highest results and develops the attitudes and performance characteristics required for this to happen. High Performance Learning is based around a framework that includes 4 generic characteristics that students need to develop to be high performing learners. These are based around, 'How we think' and 'How we behave'. High Performance Learning is embedded throughout the curriculum at Metropole and across the wider school. We truly believe that all students can be high performance learners and we strive for all our students to have a performance mind-set and reach their potential and beyond!



Forest School – Where we explore and discover!

Throughout the academic year, Foundation Stage students will learn a variety of skills and gain a great deal of knowledge and understanding as part of their Forest School sessions. However, the main focus of Foundation Stage Forest School sessions will be on developing the child's communication and language, following rules and boundaries, gross motor skills, independence and curiosity when exploring the natural environment around them.

Foundation Stage students learn the Forest School song and develop their listening skills by sharing a different story each week. They have one focused session a week as well as access to the different outdoor areas every day, in which they have free use of the area to explore using the skills they have learnt in their Forest School sessions. During their Forest School time, the children will begin to learn, with support, how to thread, use tools safely (with gloves), use natural resources to create dens for toys, as well as making natural craft. The children also learn games to play with their friends.

Forest School teaches children to care for the environment and encourages them to be sustainable learners and show concern for society. We think about the world around us, where food comes from and we even have opportunities to plant our own bulbs and seeds and are responsible for caring for them.



The Curiosity Approach



We are on a wonderful journey of discovering what awe and wonder is in FS2. We are working towards the Curiosity Approach accreditation. For this, we use a play and child-led approach where the children become the centre of their own development and learning. They are encouraged to explore, experiment, and create, using engaging and open-ended resources. Their innate curiosity is awakened and sparked.

Following the EYFS framework there are three characteristics of effective teaching and learning (CoTEL) which draw upon the values shared by The Curiosity Approach.

These are:

Playing and exploring – where children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’.

Active learning – where children concentrate and keep on trying, even when they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

Creating and thinking critically - where children have and develop their own ideas, and can make links between them, and develop strategies for doing things.



Termly Overviews

Term 1 - Who is in Our Community?

During Term 1 The children will develop new relationships and learn about classroom routines this term. They will develop their sense of curiosity in and around their new stimulating learning environments through their own interest as a class.

They will explore and build upon skills that support their independent learning and confidence throughout all areas of their development as well as developing new skills in how to collaborate in play and learning together. They will be supported with forming new friendships and talk about their families and familiar things at home to give them a sense of belonging in their new learning environment.

In FS2 the children learn to understand the places that form their community are special to them. Throughout this first term the children will recognise and respect differences in beliefs and celebrations which will promote empathy and understanding among the children, fostering a culture of inclusivity.

Term 2 – Where in the World?

During Term 2, the children will experience a continuation of a rich and engaging learning environment. They will be encouraged to pursue their interests, provided with opportunities to ask questions and seek answers, which promotes resilience and perseverance when faced with challenges in all areas of their development as they articulate their thoughts and ideas.

The children will engage in a collaborative learning environment, working together to explore and create within both indoor and outdoor settings, while also exploring the natural world around them. They will further their understanding of cultural awareness by comparing life in the UAE with life in other countries.

Termly Overviews

Term 3 – Where are you going?

Term 3 provides an opportunity for children to understand and discuss various factors that contribute to their overall health and wellbeing. They are encouraged to confidently develop skills that demonstrate independence. Children are supported with solving problems, organise their thoughts and activities, and explain how things work and why.

The children continue to gain a better understanding of the changes in the natural world and observe these. They will be offered opportunities of exploration to investigate, fostering their growth as independent learners and leaders. They are encouraged to face challenges while learning to communicate and collaborate with others.

Children approach all opportunities with curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. They are now applying the skills they have developed to new situations. These abilities and attitudes towards learning will support them in achieving a good level of development in all areas, ultimately meeting the Early Learning Goals



Foundation Stage 2: Curriculum

Communication and Language

At GEMS Metropole we ensure that our children are given the best opportunity to experience a language rich environment. We use talk in the classroom daily, to model and teach children how to widen their language as a means of communication.

Children are encouraged to speak in full sentences while using past, present and future forms accurately. Speaking to teachers and other children supports their oracy skills and children are then able to develop their own narratives and explanations.

Our highly qualified staff at GEMS Metropole ensure that children have the opportunity to refine and articulate their spoken language.



Foundation Stage 2: Curriculum

Physical Development

At GEMS Metropole our outdoor learning environment is considered an extension of the indoor learning space which provides ample opportunities for the children to not only develop physically, but also to incorporate and use all the skills they have been taught. Our outdoor environment is a place where children can, explore and manage their own risks in a safe environment. GEMS Metropole has a bespoke sand area that has been designed to enable children the freedom to explore while having the space to develop their control and movements. One of the areas we are most passionate about is being healthy. Children at GEMS Metropole are actively encouraged to bring a healthy lunch to school and our space offers a sociable space for children to enjoy these.



Foundation Stage 2: Curriculum

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

At GEMS Metropole, we place a high focus on our childrens' personal, emotional and social development as we understand that this is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Our aim is to ensure all children feel a sense of belonging, they are happy and feel safe when coming to school. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable our children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Our children are supported to manage their emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, and to persist and wait for what they want.

Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.



Foundation Stage 2: Curriculum

Literacy

At GEMS Metropole we want our children to develop a passion for reading and writing for pleasure from the start of their learning journey. Our expectation is that children will leave the Foundation Stage with the strategies and skills to read and write simple sentences, ready for them to build on these skills in Year 1. One of the first steps to enable children to access the joy of books is for them to learn the sounds associated with each letter and, critical to this, is the use of a structured phonics scheme. Our children follow a bespoke phonics programme RWI that has been tailored to integrate specific UAE links that are relevant and familiar to the children.

The Read Write Inc (RWI) phonics programme allows children to engage with phonics in a multi-sensory way using real life objects, play and rhyme. This systematic teaching of phonics, along with working in partnership with parents, really supports early reading and writing and provides children with a firm foundation on which to build.

In Foundation Stage 2, we use 'Drawing Club' to support early stages of writing and storytelling. Children are provided with text rich stories to support their oracy, imagination and creativity. Our aim is for children to verbally create their own stories independently and in their own way.





Foundation Stage 2: Curriculum

Phonics

At GEMS Metropole, we believe that every child should have the opportunity to become a happy, fluent reader. The Read Write Inc (RWI) phonics programme offers a coherently planned sequence of lessons that supports the effective teaching of phonics within Foundation Stage.

The young learners develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to discriminate between sounds. Children work within Set 1-3 where learners are introduced to phonemes/sounds and graphemes/letters systematically. They also learn to develop and apply blending and segmenting skills for reading and writing.

The coherently planned sequence of lessons allows opportunities for children to apply their phonics knowledge and skills as the prime approach to reading and spelling. It focuses on phonetically decodable two-syllable and three-syllable words and the alternative ways of pronouncing and representing the long vowel phonemes. Furthermore, children will develop their ability to attempt to read and spell increasingly complex words. Children explore spelling patterns and begin to understand grammar while also developing a breadth of knowledge, skills and understanding in the recognition and spelling of common exception words.

The RWI phonics programme intends to not only provide children with opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding essential for reading and writing, but also, to develop each child's confidence, resilience and engagement in phonics lessons and a love for reading and writing.

What Phonics looks like in FS2?

In Foundation Stage 2, the Read Write Inc (RWI) phonics programme systematically teaches the children following the RWI order of sounds. At the beginning of the year, teachers focus on a different sound each day, the children will be shown the sound, be introduced to the correct pronunciation and will then be shown a rhyme to support them with the letter formation. The lessons will follow a set structure and the children will focus on these sounds and apply them in reading and writing. Every lesson children will be exposed to reading green words (words which can be decoded) and reading red words (words which require to be learnt by sight reading). Children will read RWI books to support their learning and reinforce sounds they have been learning, along with accessing writing and comprehension tasks that match each book. Phonics lessons happen four times a week and the children will also be given star words each week to practice reading at home, these are linked to the learning that is happening in class. The children are assessed every half term and will be placed into groups to ensure consistent progress is made throughout the year. Parents will be required to read regularly with their children at home to support their learning further.



Foundation Stage 2: Curriculum

Mathematics

In Mathematics, we provide children with a high-quality learning environment that supports children with ample opportunities to develop and enhance their skills in counting, awareness of shapes, understanding numbers and number problems. This year in Mathematics, the children will be developing their understanding of numbers to 10. Each week the children will focus on a new number where they will develop problem solving and reasoning skills.

In Gems Metropole, staff use their knowledge and expertise to support and facilitate mathematical activities in everything the children do whether that is inside or outside the classroom through practical hands-on experiences. We provide children with the opportunity to solve problems practically and with a purpose. Our highly skilled staff tailor learning to meet the needs of all children through addressing common misconceptions while supporting new concepts.

Understanding of the World

We are passionate about providing our children with the opportunity to explore and be curious. Our learning environments has been specifically created to enable children the space to create opportunities of learning and ask 'why' and 'how' questions. Children are learning key skills as they engage, observe and tinker to help them make sense of the world around them.

Throughout the Foundation Stage 2, our learning spaces provide children with open-ended opportunities to make links with other areas of the curriculum, while using the many resources that are readily available. We are exceptionally proud of how our children can find things out for themselves and share this independently.

Arabic B

By the end of FS2, the students will be able to identify and name most of the Arabic shapes and short and long sounds and also differentiate between letters and words. Also, the students are expected to be able to spell basic sight words and to identify own name. In listening and speaking, the students are expected to listen to simple stories and songs and to participate in very simple and short conversations on familiar topics.

Expressive Arts and Design

Children at GEMS Metropole are encouraged to express themselves in a way that reflects their own personality, culture and identity. Children are exposed to a rich learning environment that encourages role-play, art and music.

In Foundation Stage our teachers, along with consultations with the children, adapt both the indoor and outdoor environment regularly to support children's interests. These adaptations encourage children to take on different roles where they fully immerse themselves in magical tales through dance and role-play.



Foundation Stage 2: Communications

Parent Workshop Information

Across the year we will be providing many opportunities for you to learn about how children learn specific concepts in FS2. Just in case you are unable to make these dates, we will record so you can access it all year round.

Resources To Support My Child

Please see below a list of websites that you might find helpful when supporting your child's learning at home.

Ictgames - For literacy and math's games

Topmarks - For literacy and math's games

Phonics Play - For support with early phonics listening

FS2 Communication

Over the year we will communicate with you in a variety of ways. You can expect to receive communication for your children in the following ways:

Class Email

Each week, your child's class teacher will email out information specific to your child's class. This will include learning that has happened that week as well as what will be coming up in the following week. It will also detail any upcoming events, trips or important information.

Weekly Infant Newsletter

Every Friday, you will have access to the Infant newsletter. This includes information relevant to the Infant school and can be accessed through the class teacher's weekly email.

Head of Infant School Newsletter

This will be received monthly and will be available on the website. This newsletter contains a wider view of what is happening within the school.

GO4Schools / School Reports

You will receive two reports each term which will be available on GO4Schools for you to review & download.



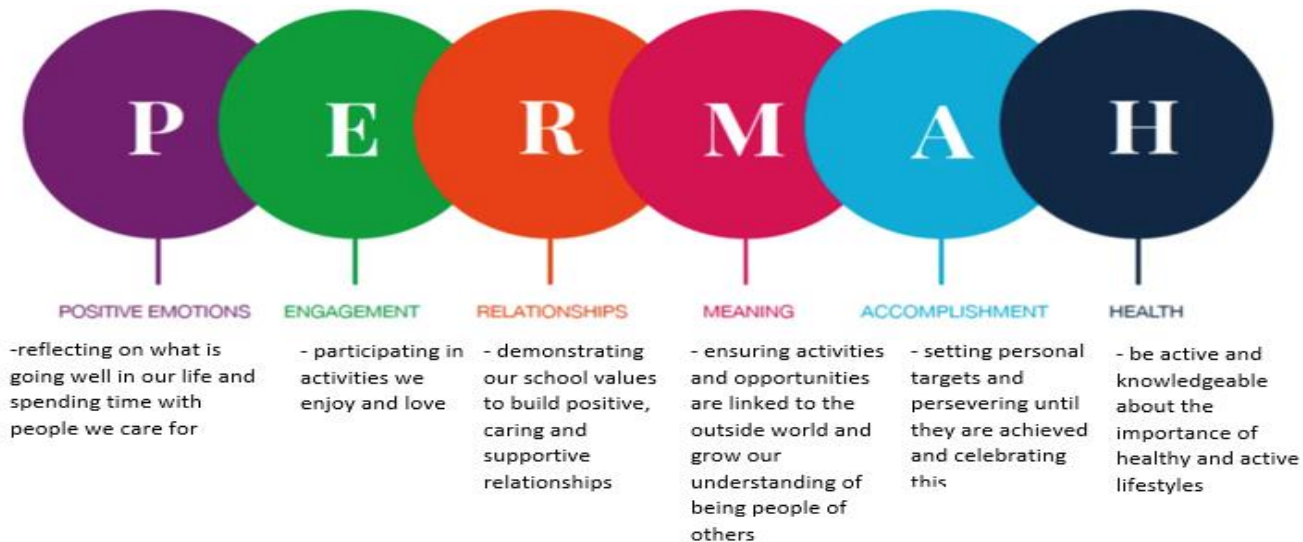
Student Wellbeing

At GEMS Metropole School, we are committed to promoting and supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our students. We recognise that mental health and emotional wellbeing is just as important as physical health. Individuals are better prepared for a happier fulfilled life when they are healthy, safe and thriving.

GEMS Metropole School supports the UAE vision for wellbeing by sharing the following vision:

'We are proactive in promoting wellbeing, allowing us all to personally thrive'.

This vision is based on a proactive, positive psychology model, reinforced through the PERMAH framework allowing our community to build their personal sense of happiness and wellbeing, rather than a reactive only approach. Across the school we achieve this through LEAD time, assemblies, happiness rooms, pastoral curriculum, school events, Metropole Mustangs, School Farm and through the 4 school model we have here at GEMS Metropole.







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