



Foundation Stage One (FS1)

Parent Handbook 2023-2024



Welcome

Meet our Senior Leadership Team

A very warm welcome to Dubai English Speaking School.



I hope you and your child will soon feel part of our DESS family. Joining a new school can be daunting and so the aim of this handbook is to provide you with all the important information about school in one place to help ensure your child's transition into our school is a smooth one. We value our partnership with parents and so, should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school Reception (telephone 04 3371457) or our Parent Relations, on dessparentrelations@dessc.sch.ae They will then pass on your query to the relevant person. Please keep this booklet for your reference.

I look forward to meeting you soon, either on the gate in the mornings or at our New Parents' Forum which is held every term and I hope that your connection with DESS is a long and happy one.

Mrs Catherine Dando
Headteacher



Thank you for choosing the best school in Dubai for your child(ren)! Yes, I am biased. But as a Dad of two boys who are loving life at DESS and having the pleasure of being the Senior Deputy Headteacher, means I know how the health, happiness and welfare of the children is central to everything we do. We really value the community feel we have at DESS, and a large part of my role is ensuring you, as parents, are communicated with effectively, have opportunities to have your say and to be fully involved in school life. I look forward to meeting you and your child/children soon and welcoming you into the DESS family for what, I am sure, will be a fun, exciting and successful time together.

Tony Clarkson
Senior Deputy Headteacher



I would like to welcome you and your child(ren) to our DESS family. I am very much looking forward to building relationships with all of our new families and hope that you have a wonderful start to your child's learning journey with us. This year I will be overseeing Foundation Stage as well as Arabic, assessment and reporting to parents across the school. I am passionate about ensuring that all children have exciting, engaging and purposeful learning experiences that supports their development and love of learning. Should you wish to meet with me at any point throughout the year, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Liz Miller
Deputy Headteacher



It is with great pleasure that I extend a warm welcome to DESS. In my role I oversee the curriculum, inclusion, and Islamic education, I am committed to ensuring that your child receives a well-rounded and holistic education. I will also be working closely with Key Stage One and am dedicated to fostering a nurturing and stimulating environment where your child can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. This year, I will also be a parent at DESS, as my eldest daughter will be joining FS1. As a fellow parent, I understand the significance of selecting the right school for your child and assure you that we will work hand in hand to provide the best possible experience for your family. I look forward to getting to know each of you as we embark on this exciting journey together.

Ruth Gibson
Deputy Headteacher



As we embark on another exciting academic year, I extend a warm welcome to DESS. I have the sincere pleasure of leading irresistible Learning and Teaching across the school, ensuring that we continue to provide a secure, inspiring, and purposeful environment and educational approach in which our DESS children can truly flourish. This year, I will also be overseeing Year 5 and Year 6. I very much look forward to seeing you in and around our school community. Please stop and say hello, or if you wish to reach out to me at any point, don't hesitate to get in touch.

Victoria Atkinson
Assistant Headteacher



This is my first year at DESS and I am excited to join this very special school community. In my role I oversee Years 3 and 4, whole school literacy, PE & Sport and professional development for staff. I also look forward to working with our Junior Leadership Team (JLT) on a range of exciting initiatives around school. I have enjoyed a career that is characterised by strong, positive relationships and providing children with a love of learning, and teachers with a reason to walk tall through the school gates every morning. Please do not hesitate to say hello, introduce yourself or reach out at any point throughout the year. I very much look forward to seeing you all around school very soon.

Sam Bowen
Assistant Headteacher



Welcome to Foundation Stage One.

We look forward to welcoming your children here at DESS. Our highly experienced and passionate team consistently ensure that we deliver our curriculum in an innovative and dynamic way, in order to meet the individual needs of every child so that they can reach their full potential. We wish your child every success throughout their school journey with us.

Lauren Woodall, FS1 Year Leader



Our Vision

We nurture independent, confident and resilient learners who respond to challenge and aspire to reach their full potential. We aim to develop self-worth, mutual respect and enjoyment in the process of learning. These qualities are vital in preparing our learners for the diverse challenges of tomorrow.

Our Sustainability Promise

We promise to look after our planet, to change habits and take responsibility for the size of our footprint on the natural world.



Safeguarding

DESS acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring that any Safeguarding incidents are appropriately addressed. We will protect all children who attend DESS in accordance with the laws of the country and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children. Working in partnership with children, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children's welfare. Our full safeguarding and child protection policy can be found on the DESS website. Please contact any of our DSLs should you have any Safeguarding concerns:

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)



Tony Clarkson
Senior Deputy Headteacher
Lead DSL



Liz Miller
Deputy Headteacher
DSL



Ruth Gibson
Deputy Headteacher
DSL



What is the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)?

The EYFS is a very important stage, as it lays the foundations for your child's future learning. Their early years experience should be fun, active, exciting and engaging, within a happy, secure environment, where they feel confident to express themselves, explore, make choices and take risks.

As a guide for children's development from birth to the end of FS2, we recommend you view the documents below. They will be continually referred to when discussing your child's development and progress throughout the year and can be downloaded by clicking on the links below:

[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#)

[Development Matters Revised Curriculum 2021](#)

[Birth to 5 Matters Document](#)

The Development Matters Framework describes how early years practitioners should work with children in their care to support development and learning. It describes how all concerned can make sure that your child achieves the most they can in their earliest years of school life.





The 7 Areas of Learning

The EYFS is structured into 7 areas of learning and development, which guide professionals' planning and assessment. Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through these 7 areas. These have been categorised into prime areas and specific areas.

The 3 prime areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning; they underpin all that we do in FS1.

The 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

The prime areas will help the children to develop the 4 specific areas.

Whilst importance is placed on academic achievement, children are also taught social skills, which encourage respect for other people, their religions and cultures.

How will children be learning?

Children in FS1 learn by playing and exploring, being active and through creativity and critical thinking; learning experiences take place both indoors and outdoors.

Every child develops at their own pace, therefore, by getting to know your child, observing their play, talking and playing with them, practitioners can assess learning and plan exciting experiences, which are appropriate for their developmental needs and interests.

**Remember that what your child brings home in their head,
is more important than what they bring home in their hands.**



Why do children need to learn through play and be active?

It enables them to:

- Learn in a non-threatening, fun, exciting environment
- Develop learning that is memorable
- Experience multi-sensory learning
- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world around them
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules and boundaries
- Practise and develop ideas, concepts and skills
- Take risks, make mistakes and make choices
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Investigate and solve problems
- Engage the brain so it creates new pathways between the right and left sides of the brain
- Make connections between their learning

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

PSED is an integral part of our curriculum and permeates through all our daily activities. The PSED skills that the children learn will enable them to interact positively and effectively with their peers and adults, be independent, work collaboratively with and begin to consider the feelings of others, talk about their learning, talk about and manage their feelings and behave appropriately.

How can you help at home?

- Encourage your child to play with other children, organise playdates or trips to play centres.
- Help your child to regularly express their feelings at different points in time e.g. when they are happy or sad.
- Talk about right and wrong behaviour and how their actions can affect others.
- Begin to give your child the responsibility of carrying out small tasks around the home.
- Encourage independent toileting skills before your child begins school, eg. can they pull down and pull up clothing and go to the toilet by themselves?
- Encourage dressing independently eg. can they attempt to take off own jumper, pull up and down zips, put shoes on and off by themselves?



Physical Development

Physical development is crucial. At DESS, we develop physical skills, alongside all other areas of the curriculum.

The main emphasis in FS1 will be on having the confidence to move in a variety of ways, negotiate space, climb, balance, draw shapes such as lines and circles with whole body movements and developing body awareness. Children need to have control over their gross motor skills before they can develop good fine motor skills (necessary for writing).

Movement also fires up the brain; whole body movement can help to create new pathways between the left and right side of the brain, therefore improving cognitive ability.

At DESS, we encourage the children to be healthy through physical activity and making healthy food choices. In addition to the daily opportunities for Physical Development, your child will have weekly swimming and PE lessons from specialist teachers.

How can you help at home?

- Provide opportunities for daily physical activity e.g. running, climbing, jumping, crawling, sliding, skipping, hopping and catching large balls.
- Allow your child to take part in messy play. Play with sand, flour and water, playdough etc to help your children gain an awareness of where their hands and fingers are.
- Talk about healthy food choices and model eating well.
- Make eating an important time of the day.
- Put some music on and dance!





Communication and Language

Effective speaking and listening skills are essential for children to be able to achieve their potential and access all areas of the curriculum. At DESS, we embed communication and language within all activities. In FS1, your child will learn how to talk to express their feelings, interests and experiences. They will learn to speak in sentences, communicate with their peers during play, follow instruction and listen to others. The adults will help your child to develop and widen their vocabulary and provide them with opportunities to practise these new words in context. Confident verbal skills are also the basis for a child to become a successful writer, which they will develop in FS2.

How can you help at home?

- Allow your child lots of time to talk and express themselves.
- Ask your child about their day at school and other events in their life.
- Encourage your child to talk in full sentences.
- Encourage effective listening skills by providing opportunities for children to listen to stories and join in with repeated refrains.
- Talk about new words.
- Ask your children questions e.g. who, what, where?

Literacy

Literacy skills and knowledge are interwoven through all activities in FS1. Each week, we have a new story linked to our half-termly themes. This book will be used as a stimulus for the play activities throughout the week. We are passionate about developing a love of reading and of books through dedicated reading areas and the sharing of books in a range of contexts. The children visit the library once a week and are able to take part in story time and choose a book to bring home and share.

As the year progresses, we will gradually increase the focus on discussing the features of books and looking for print in the environment.

The children's pre-writing skills will be encouraged through daily physical activity. In play activities, there are opportunities to 'mark make' using a range of materials. Your child's rhythmic awareness will be nurtured through rhymes and simple songs.

How can you help at home?

- Model being a reader and writer.
- Share books on a daily basis, including their weekly school library book.
- Sing rhymes and songs and encourage your child to join in.
- Messy play and toys to develop fine motor skills: pegs and peg boards/simple jigsaws.



Phonics

The focus at the beginning of the FS1 year will be on environmental sounds and listening skills to enable the children to be able to hear and distinguish between different sounds. We will then move onto teaching the children to recognise, hear and say the 26 letter sounds through a range of fun, active and play based activities.

- Talk about letter sounds, not the letter names. Watch the videos on the following website link if you are not sure of the letter sounds www.mrthorne.com
- Ask your child to show you the actions that they are learning for the weekly sounds.
- Practise writing these sounds, put some music on and dance with whole body movements first!
- Look for objects that have the sounds of the week at the beginning.
- Play with letters and make simple consonant-vowel-consonant words eg. using magnetic letters, letters in the bath tub, a letter treasure hunt.

Mathematics

Mathematics in FS1 is taught through practical, active and context-based experiences. Play activities are carefully planned to enable the children to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in number, calculating, shape, space and measures. The adults will help the children to develop their mathematical vocabulary, for example, the names of the shapes or language associated with addition, subtraction and comparing objects and quantities. A daily whole class maths session develops the children's number and calculating skills through a fun, movement-based approach.



How can you help at home?

- Look for and talk about numbers and shapes in the environment.
- Count on a daily basis, for example, counting stairs, cars, claps, jumps, objects.
- Sing number songs.
- Talk about groups of objects and compare quantities.
- Play fun counting and number maths games.

Understanding of the World

Understanding of the World encompasses your child's understanding of the world, people and their communities and technology. It guides children in making sense of their physical world through exploration and investigation. Practical activities will encourage the children to talk about their observations, how things work, why things happen and show care for living things in their environment. We aim to develop your child's understanding of their own culture, for example by talking about family celebrations and special occasions, and to be able to comment and ask questions about their local environment. Technology and computing skills will be introduced alongside play based activities and will be used to support the children's learning.

How can you help at home?

- Talk about your child's immediate environment.
- Encourage your child to ask their own questions and be curious and inquisitive.
- Read non-fiction books together to create discussion.
- Celebrate and talk about special occasions.
- Investigate materials through messy play, cooking and playing outside.
- Play with small world models, for example, farms.
- Make toys work by pressing parts or lifting flaps and discuss what is happening.





Expressive Art and Design

As outlined in Development Matters Guidance, we create an environment where children have the opportunity to express themselves in a variety of ways. This area of learning includes Art and Design, Music, Dance and role-play. We aim for children to be imaginative and to use a range of materials, tools and techniques. Percussion instruments and voice sounds are used in role-play and story-based activities; children are encouraged to explore the different sounds and how they can be changed. Children will be taught how to role-play as adults play with them, enabling the children to use a variety of props and materials in an imaginative way while developing their use of new vocabulary. Alongside the classroom-based activities your child will also be taking part in weekly specialist Dance and Music lessons.

How can you help at home?

- Provide opportunities for your child to be creative eg. junk modelling, painting and drawing.
- Play with construction sets eg. stacking blocks and making enclosures.
- Role-play with your child - all you need are some large cardboard boxes, pieces of fabric and your imagination!
- Enjoy singing together.
- Listen to and talk about a variety of music.
- Create music with your child by banging, tapping and blowing objects.





General Information

School Calendar - Academic Year 2023-24

WINTER TERM 2023

First day of Term for staff / INSET	Wednesday 23rd August 2023
First day of Term One All new children only (FS1-Y6)	Monday 28th August 2023 Monday 28 th August - Wednesday 30 th August 2023 (<i>full details to follow</i>)
Year 1 Induction All children on site	Wednesday 30 th August 2023 (<i>full details to follow</i>) Thursday 31st August 2023
<i>Prophet's Birthday*</i>	<i>Friday 29th September 2023*</i>
<i>Staff INSET Day</i>	<i>Monday 16th October 2023</i>
<i>Half term</i>	<i>Tuesday 17th October - Friday, 20th October 2023</i>
<i>Commemoration Day*</i>	<i>Friday 1st December 2023*</i>
<i>National Day*</i>	<i>Saturday 2nd December 2023*</i>
Last day of Term One	Friday 8th December 2023

SPRING TERM 2024

First Day of Term Two	Tuesday 2nd January 2024
<i>Half term</i>	<i>Monday 12th - Friday 16th February 2024</i>
<i>Ramadan starts*</i>	<i>Sunday 10th March 2024*</i>
Last Day of Term Two	Friday 22nd March 2024

SUMMER TERM 2024

<i>Staff INSET Day</i>	<i>Monday 8th April 2024</i>
<i>Eid al-Fitr*</i>	<i>Tuesday 9th April - Friday 12th April 2024*</i>
First Day of Term Three	Monday 15th April 2024
<i>Staff INSET Day</i>	<i>Friday 31st May 2024</i>
<i>Eid al-Adha*</i>	<i>Monday 17th to Tuesday 18th June 2024*</i>
Last Day of Term Three	Friday 5th July 2024

* Actual dates are subject to change - please do not book any holidays until confirmed by the school

Public Holidays

During the year, the school will be closed on Islamic holidays or possibly periods of mourning. Often little notice for closure is given; therefore, parents are encouraged to check with the local newspapers, radio and the iSAMS Parent App (mobile version) or the DESSC Parent Portal (desktop version). When the Government declares “the public sector will be closed”, all schools must by law, remain closed. DESS will wait for notification from the KHDA on each occasion.





The School Day

- You are requested not to bring your child to school before the gates open.
- The school can only be responsible for your child after this time.
- If your child arrives after the register is taken, they will be considered late.
- Your child should be collected promptly at the end of the day from their classroom, and please note the early finish on Fridays (all classes).

School Timings

The timings for Foundation Stage One are as follows:

Monday to Friday
Drop off: 7.45-8.00am
Pick up: 12.30pm

Parents may drop their child off in their classroom from 7.45 - 8.00am. If your child arrives after the register has been taken, they will be considered late.

The end of the day for FS1 children is 12.30pm. Please be punctual at pick up time, as it can be stressful and upsetting for the children if they are late being collected.

For the first week of term, there will be a staggered intake to ensure that each child has a smooth start to their new school experience. Further details will follow.

Attendance (including absence/late arrivals/early departures)

We believe every school day is mandatory for our children to obtain the most from his/her schooling; therefore, we endeavour to support all children to have outstanding attendance. All attendance and punctuality is monitored closely and the school will get in touch with parents if absence drops below 95% and/or becomes a concern. Attendance is formally reported on mid-year and end of year reports.

Lateness should be avoided wherever possible as it can disrupt learning and affect the ability for your child to settle quickly at the beginning of the school day, therefore we will also follow up with parents where lateness in the mornings is a regular concern.

Absences such as sickness should be reported to the school Reception by phone on 04 337 1457 or the absence registered on our DESSC Parent Portal or App or via our website before 8am.



Our attendance expectations are:

Needs Improvement	Good	Very Good	Outstanding
Below 94%	94-95%	96-97%	98-100%

SuperClub@DESS

Our SuperClub@DESS runs for our Foundation Stage One children, after school on a Monday - Thursday from 12.30pm to 2.15pm. To find out more about this service, please see the link below:

[SuperClub@DESS After School Provision](#)

Learning at DESS

Learning at DESS is irresistible! The teachers creatively merge the National Curriculum for England and Wales with UAE curriculum requirements, whilst being genuinely child-led in their approach. To ensure our teaching and learning is excellent, our lessons are delivered in a way that is meaningful, relevant, challenging, and progressive for all our children. Our philosophy of depth of learning and application of knowledge and skills through enabling, innovative environments and the use of technology, ensures the children at DESS organically acquire independence, a thirst for knowledge and exploration amidst a true love for learning.

The 6Cs



At DESS, we are fully committed to nurturing the whole child. We pride ourselves in not only on delivering academics, but also in equipping our children with invaluable learning skills that are crucial in building both their character and resilience, to ensure that they are future-ready.

Across the school, DESS' 'Developing Character: The 6Cs' initiative nurtures, fosters and encourages the development of the following skills: Critical Thinking, Compassion, Creativity, Communication, Collaboration and Curiosity. Our children develop these skills in all curriculum subjects.

Learning@DESS Newsletters

Each fortnight, you will have access to your child's Learning@DESS Newsletter. Within this newsletter you can find important and insightful information into what has been happening in the classroom during the previous fortnight, including all class-based and specialist-based subjects. The newsletter also contains helpful reminders and any year group-specific messages.





Home Learning

Children and families at DESS are encouraged to invest time in practising their reading at home and learning their spelling words through independent rehearsal. There may also be some recommended, year group-specific home learning activities which will be explained at our 'Meet the Teacher' evening in September, as well as listed in our Home Learning Policy. Please reach out to your class teacher at any time if you require any information or support.

Open Afternoons & Fab Finishes

Keen to have a look at your child's learning? Each week, you are more than welcome to come along and view your children's books, classroom, and learning environments. Days and times will be communicated in due course, and please ask your child's class teacher when your child's open afternoon is if you are unsure. Although open afternoons run on a weekly basis, there is no obligation for you to attend every week.

At the end of a unit of work or study, parents and families may be invited into school for a year group's 'Fab Finish'. This is a celebration of the learning that has taken place over the course of a term, and you will be notified in advance of this happening.

Inclusion

At DESS, we take immense pride in being a truly inclusive school, where every child is valued and nurtured. We understand that, as parents, you may have concerns or worries about your child's education and wellbeing. Your partnership with us is vital in ensuring your child's success. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any concerns, worries, or questions you may have. Together, we can create a supportive and inclusive learning environment that sets the foundation for your child's lifelong growth and happiness.

We have a specialised team, known as the Learning Zone team, who provide additional support across the school to ensure that the children receive individualised support and resources to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Whether it's tailored learning plans, assistance with specific learning needs, or emotional support, the Learning Zone team is here to help your child reach their full potential.

We are dedicated to fostering a culture of inclusivity, respect, and understanding, where every child feels valued and empowered.

Wellbeing

The care and provision for student and family wellbeing at DESS is paramount. Our Wellbeing Team, which includes our Wellbeing Lead, Sarah Curran and Student Advisor, Louise Oakley, ensures that first wave quality teaching of social, emotional and wellbeing skills enables all students to recognise and understand their bodies and minds and allows them to become their best selves.





From FS1 to Year Six, every student is nurtured and enabled to flourish through their many learning opportunities and experiences at DESS. The breakout spaces and calm corners encourage self-regulation and acceptance of emotion and energy levels. To support students to regulate and navigate through their behaviours and actions, we encourage students to identify their Zones of Regulation, giving them the vocabulary and awareness to name the feelings and thoughts occurring internally which have an impact on their behaviour.

Use of Images/Photographs

During the school year we like to take photographs and videos of DESS children participating in various activities, demonstrating their learning and enjoyment of life at DESS. These photographs are often displayed around the school but can also be used in the yearbook, on our website and on our DESS social network accounts. If you would like your child excluded from the above, please confirm this in writing to dessmarcomms@dessc.sch.ae prior to your child's start date, otherwise we will presume you are in agreement with the above to take place, for the duration of your child's time at DESS.

Local Walks

When the weather permits, we occasionally take the children on short walks in the surrounding areas. This is always done safely. You will be notified in advance of any of these events taking place.

If you would like your child excluded from either of the above, please confirm this in writing to the school prior to your child's start date, otherwise we will presume you are in agreement with the above for the duration of your child's time at DESS.

Buses

If you would like your child to use the school bus service, please contact the school bus co-ordinator. The bus co-ordinator must be notified if your child is not travelling on the bus on any given day. Early Years (FS1 & FS2) are collected from their classrooms by the bus staff. The school bus co-ordinator email address is dessbuscoordinator@dessc.sch.ae



Lunch Boxes

Lunch boxes must be clearly marked. Your child will need:

- A water bottle and an additional drink with their snack.
- Sufficient food for one snack (unless attending SuperClub@DESS, where your child will then need sufficient food for two snacks).

A varied diet containing adequate energy and nutrients is essential for growth and development, which at times can be very rapid. It is important children have a positive attitude to healthy food. Excessive sugar, colourings and fats can make concentration difficult.

Popular lunchbox contents are:

- Fruit and vegetables
- Hummus
- Cheese
- Raisins
- Dried fruit
- Cereal bars (nut free please)
- Bread/sandwiches
- Small yoghurts with spoon



*Children are not allowed to share food.

Please note that we have a strict **NO NUTS, NO SESAME SEEDS** and **NO PORK** policy at DESS. Cans or fizzy drinks, sweets and chewing gum are also not allowed. Please ensure grapes, cherry tomatoes, olives etc are cut in half. Chocolates, biscuits and crisps should only be provided once a week as a treat.

Lost Property

DESS cannot be held responsible for any lost property. Students should not bring valuable items to school. Any watches should be taken off and kept in the classroom before taking part in PE. Any items found are placed in the lost property lockers. All belongings should be clearly marked with the child's name, to make attempts that it can be returned to the owner.





Information from the School Nurse

Infection Control Guidelines

The school nurse provides first aid and emergency care during school hours. If your child requires hospital care, every attempt will be made to contact you. It is vital that you report your up-to-date contact and emergency details and you complete the hospital consent form.

DHA stipulate that all students in FS1, Year 2 and Year 5 are required to have a school medical examination. When new students join DESS they are also required to have a school medical, regardless of their year group. The medical examination is carried out by our School Doctor and the School Nurse is present throughout. Parents are notified prior to their child having their school medical and are contacted by the School Doctor when the medical has been completed.

The Ministry of Health requires a record of your child's full immunisation history to be kept by the school. Your clinic, family doctor and the school nurse will be able to advise you regarding the immunisation programme in-line with UAE recommendations. Please provide a photocopy of your child's full immunisation history with their name and class written on it. The medical history form should be completed fully **before** your child starts school and handed to the school nurse with a recent photograph.

Any medication required during school hours must be given to the nurse and the appropriate dispensing form completed. The medication will not be dispensed without full details and consent being given. Please note children are not allowed to keep any medicine in their bags for obvious safety reasons.

If your child has any serious allergies or medical conditions that we should be aware of, please bring this to the attention of the School Nurse before their start date.

Please help us to keep the DESS community healthy by complying with the following regulations. Please do not send your child to school with:

- **A fever**, not to return to school for 24 hours after the last temperature of 38°C (100°F).
- **Vomiting**, not to return to school for 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting.
- **Diarrhoea**, not to return to school for 24 hours after the last episode of diarrhoea.
- **Conjunctivitis**, red, watery infected eyes.

If your child is assessed by the school medical staff and thought to have a contagious illness you will be contacted to collect them from school immediately. If your child is sent home from school with vomiting, diarrhoea or a fever of over 38 degrees they will not be permitted into school until at least 24 hours have passed.

You can contact the School Nurse using the following email addresses:

Nurse Susan - dessseniornurse@dessc.sch.ae

Nurse Lorna - dessnurse@dessc.sch.ae

Please also meet our DESS Medical Team below, including our School Doctor, Dr. Francoise Jacolino-Belonje: [DESS Medical Team](#)





School Uniform

At DESS, uniform is a very important part of school life, as we believe that it gives our young people a sense of belonging to the DESS community, a focus for the school day ahead and an overall sense of pride.

Uniforms are purchased through Trutex. The DESS uniform shop is open Mondays to Thursdays from 7.30am - 4pm. **DESS Uniform Shop contact number: +971 50 865 5104**

There is also an online pre-ordering service to help parents with purchasing:

dess@trutex.com

THE SCHOOL UNIFORM IS COMPULSORY AND MUST BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO.

All items need to be labelled with your child's name.

Consistent uniform items for all children in all year groups:

- Red school hat (wide brimmed hat or cap) with DESS logo
- Black school shoes or all black trainers (no logos)
- Plain white ankle socks (to be worn with dress)
- Plain grey ankle socks (to be worn with shorts or trousers)
- Red cotton blend knitwear (cardigan/jumper) with DESS logo
- Back pack (red DESS back pack preferred, but not compulsory). **NO** trolley bags
- PE/Swimming bag
- White or grey tights (no leggings) for the winter months, if required

Foundation Stage One Only:

Red and white striped cotton dress with zip front and DESS logo

OR

Grey shorts with DESS logo, worn with red and white stripe short sleeve shirt with zip front and DESS logo.

For all enquiries and feedback, please email dess@trutex.com or call 050 8655104



Houses

All children are allocated a House (families are in the same House). Each class is divided into the four Houses, which are:

Leopards (green) / **Panthers** (blue) / **Jaguars** (red) / **Lynx** (yellow)





The PE Kit you buy for your child will match their House colours.



PE Lessons

For PE lessons please ensure your child has:

- Shorts and polo shirt in the correct House colour with DESS logo (please note, the House colour may be different to the Class colour)
- Sports trainers (easy-to-wear with non-marking soles and velcro fastenings)
- White ankle socks
- DESS hat
- Water-bottle
- No jewellery is to be worn for any physical activity and hair must be tied back.
- Earrings should also be removed or taped.
- Please ensure all items of kit are clearly labelled with your child's name.
- Children should wear their PE kit to school on their PE days.

Your child's teacher will inform you of which day the PE lessons will be.

NB: Please note that any child not taking part in lessons for medical reasons must provide a note (for extended periods of illness a doctor's note should be provided).

Swimming Lessons

For Swimming lessons please ensure your child has:

- Towel
- Swimming costume or trunks with DESS logo
- Rubber shoes/flip flops
- Swimming hat in the appropriate House colour
- Goggles are not allowed for FS in order to develop water confidence skills.
- Please ensure all items of kit are clearly labelled with your child's name.
- When they have swimming, they should bring their swimming kit in a separate bag.



NB: As with PE lessons, swimming lessons are a vital and compulsory part of the curriculum. If your child is in school, they will be expected to swim. If children are absent for longer than one session, a doctor's note is required.

Hats

All children are expected to bring their wide-brim hat or cap to school to wear when they are outside for break and PE. The school nurse makes the decision regarding temperature and humidity combined, to ensure it is safe for the children to play outdoors.

Birthdays

We would like to invite all children to come to school wearing non-uniform on their birthday. If their birthday falls on a weekend, they can wear their own clothes on the Friday or the Monday or if it falls in the holidays, they can wear them at the beginning or end of term. Cakes and donuts are not allowed to be brought into school as this is against our healthy eating policy.

Special Days - Non-uniform

If you are celebrating your home country's celebration day e.g. Diwali, Chinese New Year etc, then your child is invited to wear their national dress to school on this day.

Children's Presentation

- Hair should be neat and tidy. Long hair should be tied back.
- Fringes should not obscure the eyes.
- No jewellery.
- No nail varnish.



Communication

Please let our Parent Relations know if you need any support with your child's transition or indeed if you have feedback on the process. Teachers are very busy throughout the day and are not able to answer emails or take calls, so please do make our Parent Relations your first port of call for all messages or queries. Please use the email: dessparentrelations@dessc.sch.ae or call the school's main reception.

The Parent Relations other main area of responsibility is Extra-Curricular Activities (ECAs). We offer many exciting ECAs for the children in Y1-6, with currently over 100 ECAs on offer weekly. Parent Relations is very happy to take calls or to meet with you face-to-face, should you prefer.

Communication between home and school on any matters affecting your children and their education is valued. Your first point of contact is always the teacher (as they know your child best), followed by the Department Leader. However, should you need to discuss anything further, request a meeting or if you wish to email your concern, please contact our Parent Relations by emailing dessparentrelations@dessc.sch.ae or by calling school Reception.

Parental Feedback

We strive to obtain parental feedback as often as possible, this could be from informal conversations, parent surveys or Parent forums, where all parents are invited to join the Senior Leadership Team. We use this feedback as a valuable tool for the school to hear parent opinions.

Change of Information

It is important that any change of details, including address and contact numbers must be kept up to date. Amendments can be made via the DESSC Parent Portal/App or by informing the school Reception of any changes. In the case of any emergency, it is our registered contact information we will use.

Reporting Progress and Attainment to Parents

There will be an opportunity to meet your child's class teacher and ask questions about the coming academic year at our information evening in the first few weeks of Term One. You are always welcome to arrange an appointment to meet with your child's class teacher during the year to ask about any aspect of their learning. We formally report to parents twice a year with a mid-year report in February and an end of year report in June.

We also hold two parent/teacher evenings; in Term One and Term Two. Formal written reports are published to parents electronically via the iSAMS Parent App (mobile version) and the DESSC Parent Portal (desktop version).





Seesaw and Ladders at Home

On occasions, teachers may use a platform called Seesaw to further enable learning that is happening in a lesson or the classroom. As a parent, you can see your children's Seesaw account and the posts that they make. Please bear in mind this is not a formal learning portfolio and may not be engaged with every day; it is only used when it enhances a learning opportunity. Seesaw is also not used as a home-school communication tool (please contact the Parent Relations as note above). You will receive further guidance on how to set up access to your child's Seesaw account.

We also use Learning Ladders which shows your child's targets, progress and attainment. Information about Learning Ladders will be sent to you within the first month of your child starting at DESS.

Communication Network

To reduce paper usage, information and school notices are posted to the iSAMS Parent App (mobile version) and the DESSC Parent Portal (desktop version). We urge parents to download this resource to their desktop or phone. Instructions are included in your information pack and on our school website. Please notify the school Reception if your contact details change.

DESS Parent Portal and iSAMS Parent App

The Parent Portal and App are our main channels for communicating with parents. They work in conjunction with our Management Information System and allow us to share child-specific and key school information with you, via your smart phone or tablet device. They provide quick and easy access to a range of features, some of which are mentioned below:

- Download your child's academic school reports.
- Access useful websites from quick web links.
- Report your child absent due to medical reasons.
- View your contact details and alert us when your details change.
- Reset your password and recover your username if you forget them.

Before your child starts at DESS, you will receive an email detailing your registration number, registration password and set-up instructions. It is important that you set up your portal account and download the app as soon as possible or you may miss important information.

Should you experience any problems setting up the portal account or downloading the app once you are in receipt of the activation information please email portal@dessc.sch.ae for assistance.

In addition to this, there are a number of **optional** social media platforms which we use to share and celebrate the day-to-day learning at DESS. These include your child's Seesaw page, Facebook and Instagram pages.





Please follow us on the following social media platforms:

Instagram: @dubaienglishspeakingsschool

Instagram: @dessfoundationstage

Facebook: Dubai English Speaking School (@DESSDubai)

YouTube: Dubai English Speaking School

Please visit our website: www.dessc.sch.ae

How to communicate with SLT:

- SLT are available for meetings and are present on the gates at drop-off and pick-up for any questions
- You can email the Headteacher's PA, the SLT PA, Reception or the Parent Relations
- Attend Parent Forums and Workshops

Other forms of communication are used for specific information regarding your child:

- Checking your child's Home School Information Diary (FS1)
- At the door questions with the class teacher
- Weekly drop-in sessions in class (timetabled)
- Formal Parents' Evenings and Parent Information Sessions
- Learning Ladders (Ladders at home)

For parents unable to come into school, our Parent Relations will also ensure your queries reach the right person and are answered. Her email is dessparentrelations@dessc.sch.ae

Parents in Partnership (PIPs)

There are also many great ways to get involved at DESS. If you would like to sign up as one of our PIPs, please email: dess_parentsinpartnership@dessc.sch.ae

There are no official class reps at DESS because we want to encourage a direct relationship between every parent and the school. Please also be aware that there are no official WhatsApp groups; all DESS communication for parents will be shared via the DESSC Parent Portal/App.

We look forward to working in partnership with you.

