



**2017-2018**

**Year 4**

**Parent Handbook**

## Mission Statement of AAESS

AAESS is an aspirational and exciting learning environment, providing a high quality education based on the National Curriculum of England and Wales for students aged between 3-18 years.

At AAESS we are ambitious for our students, having high expectations and believing that everyone has the ability to succeed and reach their potential. As such we are dedicated to providing stimulating and challenging learning for all pupils, enabling them to find and develop their individual talents as they move through school to become the leaders of the future. We are proud of our modern facilities and spacious grounds which are used effectively to enhance pupils' learning. We value success in wider areas such as sport, music and art as highly as we do academic achievement.

We also recognise that in order to achieve fully, our students need a caring and supportive environment in which to grow and flourish. We appreciate diversity and encourage students to be pioneers who take risks and develop a love of learning to take with them throughout their life.

As an established and well respected school within the community of Al Ain, we welcome every opportunity to further strengthen links with local citizens. We strive to ensure that our students leave school with a set of values and a perspective on life that enables them to succeed in whatever they choose to do.

## AAESS Vision

**Our vision is to promote excellence in all spheres of the school's work.**

**For our students we hope to:**

- Create new and high quality experiences in learning.
- Challenge and support every student to excel.
- Aim to continually improve our accommodation and resources.

**For our parents we hope to:**

- Enhance our feedback about student's progress.
- Develop additional ways of involving parents with the school.
- Improve the quality of our home-school communication.

**For our school in the wider community we hope to:**

- Promote the school's achievements to all stakeholders.
- Engage in local, national, and international initiatives.
- Develop further beneficial links with other institutions.

## Year 4

The year 4 group consists of 4 classes with 1 LSA shared between 2 rooms. Class sizes vary from 25 – 28 children and are situated in the main building in the Year 4, 5, 6 corridor.

The teachers, along with their learning support assistants, aim to make each child's learning at school a positive, stimulating and exciting experience. Our aim and objective is to focus on each and every individual child providing the best possible opportunities to progress to the best of his/her ability.

### Core Subjects include:

- **English Language** (*Reading, Writing, Grammar, Spelling, Speaking and Listening*)
- **Mathematics**
- **Science**

### Integrated Curricular subjects include:

- **History**
- **Geography**
- **Art/Design and Technology**
- **PSHCE** (*Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education*)
- **Computers**

### Specialised subjects are taught by specialised teachers and include:

- **Physical Education**
- **Music**
- **Arabic**
- **Islamic Studies** (*for our Muslim students*)

## Start and end of the school day

**7:15am** - Children may enter the playground.

**7:35am** – Students line up on the “Blue Area” for the UAE National Anthem.

*(If you arrive while the anthem is being played, we kindly ask that you stand in place until it is completed)  
\*The anthem will be played in class until our new outdoor sound system is completely installed\**

**7:40am - 7:50am** - Registration.

*(If you arrive after 7:50 please go to the primary reception to obtain a late-slip)*

**2:30pm** - Children are collected from their designated pick-up zones by parents/guardians, care-givers, or named person.

*(Please note that contrary to previous years, older students **WILL NOT** be permitted to collect younger siblings after school. Children will only be released from class to the care of an adult, or a relative in 6<sup>th</sup> Form. We have had many issues with younger children not being properly supervised after being picked up by a brother or sister)*

**2:40pm** - Any children not being met will be escorted by their teacher or LSA to the agreed zone to wait for pick-up. *(This location will be communicated to you at a later date, and is subject to change throughout the year)*

## 2017-2018 School Trips

**In compliance with ADEC regulations, all trips will take place within Al Ain city limits.**

Our first trip is scheduled for **November** to **Al Ain Zoo**. The students will be given the chance to explore, interact and learn in an interesting and educational environment. For more information about the facility, its programs, and policies, please visit:

<http://www.alainzoo.ae/en/>



Our second trip will be in **February**. We will take the children to **Al Towayya Park** and enjoy Art activities, a picnic, followed by some team building games and competitions.



Our third trip will be in **May** to **FunBlock**. The students will be provided with a unique opportunity to interact with their peers in a safe, supervised, and stimulating environment. For further information about **FunBlock**, please visit:

<http://landmarkleisure.ae/>



## Spelling

Classes will be divided into four spelling groups with word lists tailored to the needs of each set of students. These groups will be determined by assessments done during the first two weeks of school. Students will complete weekly activities based on their spelling lists, which will help ensure that words are not merely memorized but practically applied in written work. The word lists have been created in close consultation with the National Curriculum Spelling Document. Weekly lists will consist of 10 words, with 3 words being common to all groups. These 3 words will directly link to topics being studied at that point in time. Please keep in mind that the goal of our spelling programme is to increase vocabulary and familiarity with spelling patterns. Our hope is that work in spelling lessons will help improve written work across the curriculum. Spelling should **never** be a stressful activity. Spelling levels will be re-evaluated at the beginning of each term.

## Homework

Homework books will be handed in by students on **Sunday**, and sent out again by **Monday** each week. Homework will include Math, English, Spelling and Integrated Curriculum subjects, (*Social Studies, Art, Science, ICT*) as well as a levelled home reader available through RAZ-KIDS. (**More information on the RAZ-KIDS Reading Programme can be found on the next page**) As homework is a valuable tool used to re-enforce what is taught in the classroom, we ask that it be completed to the best of your child's ability **each week**. Homework will be given using a **50 Point Challenge** format. We will provide more information on this in the coming weeks.

## Library

Year 4 classes will have **one** 40-minute library period every alternate week. Students who show themselves to be avid readers (*and demonstrate responsible behaviour*) may be given special permission to exchange books during their break times in the weeks between library visits.

**Please note that lost books will be subject to a 50 AED replacement fee. If the book is subsequently found and returned, the money will be reimbursed.**

## Math Classes

Your child will be put into a Math class according to their abilities and strengths. It is for the benefit of your child that we put them into the best learning environment possible. Please see the National Curriculum Expectations available in the "Primary Paths" section of the school website for Year 4 topics of study.

### Other helpful Math sites:

<https://www.iknowit.com/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/levels/zbr9wmn>

<https://uk.ixl.com/math/year-4>

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/7-11-years/ordering-and-sequencing-numbers>

<http://www.math-aids.com/>

## Reading at Home



As part of our Balanced Reading Programme, Year 4 students will be given access to RAZ-KIDS. RAZ-KIDS is an online resource that provides levelled books on a range of interesting and exciting topics. It offers a three tiered approach to reading instruction by engaging children in **Listening, Reading and Comprehension**. Through diagnostic assessments, students will be assigned a reading level within the first two weeks of school. They will then be given access to a personal reading account which will track and monitor their progress throughout the year. It will be expected that students **listen to, read, and complete a comprehension quiz** on at least **one** self-selected book at their level per week. Students are of course welcome (*and encouraged*) to read more!

Further information will follow, but in the meantime please visit <https://www.raz-kids.com/> to learn more about the functions of this educational tool.

## Novel Studies

In addition to normal day-to-day reading, we will conduct three focused novel studies during the year. Instruction throughout the curriculum will be linked to the topics, characters, and themes found within each story. In past years some students have found it helpful to purchase their own copies of the novels. This is definitely encouraged, but we would ask that students not read too far ahead of the class as this may complicate certain classroom activities.

The novels studied in Year 4 will be as follows:

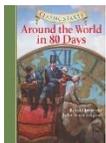
**Term 1** – *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by: Roald Dahl



**Term 2** – *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* by: Judy Blume



**Term 3** – *Around the World in 80 Days* by: Jules Verne



# What to bring to School

## Hats and water bottles:

Please ensure that your child has a **hat** and a **water bottle** with them every day. Students who come to school without these items will not be permitted to play outside. Furthermore, please **label** hats, water bottles, lunch boxes and school sweaters, as they are often and easily mixed up.

## Stationary:

We have stationary (*pens, pencils, markers, colour pencils, erasers etc.*) available for use in the classroom, but it would be helpful for students to come to school with their own pencils and pencil cases. Students sometimes move classrooms for different subjects and having their own stationary easily accessible cuts down on time searching for materials at the beginning of class.

## Books to read:

**Independent reading** is a key component of a balanced literacy programme. Time will be allocated each day for your child to read independently. While we make an effort to have interesting and relevant texts available in the classroom, we can't cater to all preferences and tastes. Students who come to school with their own books which reflect their personal reading interests, are normally more engaged, and ultimately show more reading progress over the year.

## Toys/Games for break-time:

With the move to Year 4 comes a move to a new playground. Year 4 students will no longer have access to the play structures they have grown accustomed to over the past few years. Year 4, 5, and 6 students will rotate breaks between the covered "blue area" and the soon to be completed turf field. Students are welcome to bring games, skipping ropes, footballs etc. to school for use at break-time. (*Even fidget spinners are permitted as long as they do not make appearances in class!*) Students must be responsible with their possessions and be respectful when sharing the belongings of others.

## Healthy Lunches:



We will be promoting healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. We kindly ask that students are provided with wholesome and nutritious lunches and snacks. Year 4 students may also choose to bring money and purchase food from the canteen at lunch time. Students who choose this option are still expected to bring water and healthy snacks. Large bags of potato chips will not be permitted except in the case of class celebrations. A reminder that we are a **nut-free** school. Please be mindful of this as there are a number of students with severe nut allergies. We will also be enforcing a no **Flaming Cheetos** policy in Year 4. We thank you in advance for your co-operation.

## Meet Your Teachers



Hello 4P,

My name is **Mr Poisat**. I am very excited to teach, learn and grow with all of you this year. I have been working as a teacher in Al Ain for 8 years and prior to that I worked in South Africa where I am originally from. Most of the children in Year 4 this year already know me as I taught them 3 years ago. It is very cool seeing all the old faces as well as the new ones. My hobbies consist of playing golf and fishing. Here are a few things that previous students have said about me:

- *“Mr. Poisat is nice, funny, and always makes people laugh.”*
- *“He is funny, kind, but can get mad when students don’t behave sensibly.”*
- *“He wants his students to always try their best.”*
- *“Mr. Poisat is the coolest teacher ever! He loves playing golf and telling jokes.”*
- *“Mr. Poisat is funny, but can be strict when he needs to be.”*
- *“Mr. Poisat loves rugby.”*



**Hello 4T,**

My name is **Mr. Thorenton**, but everyone calls me **Mr. T**. This is my fourth year at AAESS, and I am really looking forward to working with all of you! I am originally from Canada, but have lived abroad for the past 13 years in South Korea, Qatar, and the UAE. I love playing hockey, (*I am of course referring to **ice** hockey*) travelling, and reading. Believe it or not I play hockey here in Al Ain! My favourite hockey team is the Ottawa Senators. My least favourite team is the Toronto Maple Leafs. I am very excited to help you learn, develop, and challenge yourself this year. Here's a few things that past students have said about me:

- ***“He LOVES hockey!”***
- ***“Mr. T is very fun, but can be serious too. You will learn a lot from him!”***
- ***“He is a happy teacher, but don’t make him mad!”***
- ***“Mr. T always tries to help us when we don’t understand something.”***
- ***“He is kind, funny, fair, and loves hockey!”***
- ***“Mr. T has met the President of Belarus.”***



**Hello 4S,**

My name is **Mr Sacks**. I'm from Port Elizabeth, South Africa. I have a Bachelor of Education Degree with an Honours Degree in Child Psychology and Whole-School Development. I am in my third year of full-time teaching, and I am **REALLY** excited about teaching Year 4 at AAESS! I have a big love for rugby. I represent the Al Ain Amblers Men's Team, and also coach the Under 16's.

Here's what a few of my previous students have said about me:

- ***"Mr. Sacks is very kind to his students."***
- ***"I'm going to miss Mr. Sacks SOOOO much!"***
- ***"Thank you Mr. Sacks for teaching me how to play rugby."***
- ***"Mr. Sacks is cool!"***



**Hello 4RS,**

My name is **Mrs Sheppard** and this is my first year teaching at AAESS. I am originally from England where I taught Primary for five years. I also taught one year in Saudi Arabia. I have two grown-up children who live and work back on UK shores. My husband and I are excited to make a fulfilling and happy life here. I can't wait to meet you all and look forward to our learning journey together. Here's a few things that past students have said about me:

- ***“BEST TEACHER EVER!”***
- ***“Thank you for all that you have taught me!”***
- ***“Be careful; she has eyes in the back of her head!”***
- ***“She is kind and very funny.”***
- ***“She tells great stories.”***



Hi! My name is **Ms. Darin** and I come from Palestine. This is my second year in Year 4 at AAESS. Before that I worked in Year 3. I am really looking forward to meeting all of you! Here is what a few of last year's students have said about me:

- *"Ms. Darin is always very helpful."*
- *"Ms. Darin is really good at Reader's Theatre!"*
- *"She is really kind and can help you with Math."*
- *"Ms. Darin is always there to help when you need it."*
- *"She really cares about us!"*



My name is **Ms. Pillai**. I have been working in AAESS since 2011. Previously I was in Administration, but for the last three years I have been working in Year 4. I am looking forward to helping your child develop this year. Here's what some of last year's students said about me:

- *"Ms. Pillai always helps me in English when I make mistakes."*
- *"She is very kind, caring, and always ready to help"*
- *"If we have a problem, Ms. Pillai always helps us solve it."*
- *"Ms. Pillai is very nice and interesting to talk with."*
- *"She is very gentle and kind."*



# Assessment

Assessment is a central part of your child's education. It is important to remember that assessment should *never* be stressful or scary. The ultimate goal of assessment is to improve student learning. Teachers gather information in a variety of ways throughout the year to better inform their instruction as well as address and support the learning needs of individual pupils. We encourage our students to be active and engaged partners in the process. Through the use of assessment *for*, *as*, and *of* learning, teachers get a precise picture of the goals, needs, and progress of our students.

## Assessment **FOR** Learning

- a tool used by teachers to gauge where students are in their learning, where they need to go, and how best to get them there
- helps teachers plan future instruction and assessment to reflect the learning needs of individuals within the class
- helps teachers set appropriate and achievable learning goals
- **Examples:**
  - **KWL charts**
  - **Teacher questioning**
  - **Recorded Teacher Observations**
  - **Reading Conferences**

## Assessment **AS** Learning

- the advancement of a student's ability to be self-critical
- students develop the skills necessary to provide meaningful reflection, feedback and assessment to both themselves and their peers
- actively engages children in their learning
- the development of these skills is a multi-step process, and initially requires support, modelling and guidance from the teacher
- **Examples:**
  - **Peer marking**
  - **Buddy Reading**
  - **Self-assessment/Reflections**
  - **Setting learning goals**

## Assessment **OF** Learning

- a task or activity used to measure a student's achievement of a specific expectation
- acts as a summary of learning
- occurs following a period of instruction
- forms the basis of report cards
- **Examples:**
  - **Tests**
  - **Quizzes**
  - **Projects**
  - **Presentations**

## How to help at home

There are many things that you can do at home to support the learning that goes on at school. We all lead very busy lives, but taking just a few minutes every day to read with your child will make a **huge** difference in their development. After reading, you may want to ask them...

- *Did you like the story? Why or why not?*
- *Can you tell me what happened in the story in your own words?*
- *Did anything in the story remind you of something that has happened to you?*
- *Does anything in the story remind you of another book you've read?*
- *Who was your favourite character? Why?*
- *Would you change anything in the story? Why?*
- *Were there any words you didn't understand?*

We have also added a document to the Year 4 section of the school website that lists the expectations for **Reading**, **Writing** and **Math** as outlined in the British National Curriculum. This can be used to help gauge and monitor your child's progress.

## Contacting Teachers

One of our goals this year is to keep the lines of communication open between home and school. The **communication book** is the easiest way to get messages back and forth. This book will be checked every day, but teachers will only write in them when there is something important to convey. Furthermore, school **email** can be used to contact teachers. Due to the busy nature of a school day, responses will likely only be sent by teachers after 2:45pm. If there is a serious matter that requires personal attention, please make an appointment either by e-mail or by writing a note in your child's Communication Book. Year 4 teachers will be available **Mondays** after school from **2:45–3:30pm**. We will also conduct parent/teacher evenings three times throughout the year. You will receive notification and sign-up forms closer to the scheduled day. We hope that by keeping connected with you, we can optimally support your child's learning.

We look forward to a rewarding, productive, fun and successful year! As teachers, we will endeavor to deliver an engaging, comprehensive, and inclusive education that yields strong progression across all areas of the curriculum.

We thank you in advance for your help and support this academic year,



**Mr. Poisat**

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**Ms. Sheppard**

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**Mr. Sacks**

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**Mr. Thorenton**

tmthorenton@aaess.sch.ae