



PARENT KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK

2017 -2018

Inspiration.
Integrity.
Achievement.



Welcome

It gives me great pleasure to introduce you to The KAUST School Kindergarten. The Kindergarten team looks forward to meeting and welcoming you, your child and family into our vibrant learning community.

The notes below contain important information about the start of the school year.

We value the importance of the three-way relationship between parents, students and teachers. This is essential to ensure your child enjoys an engaging and productive year. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher, the Assistant Principal or the Principal with any questions or concerns that you may have.

Finally, I trust that your relationship with The KAUST School Kindergarten will be a positive one.

Warm regards,



Justin Somerville
Kindergarten Principal



Kindergarten Guiding Statements

The KAUST School Early Childhood Center provides a play-based approach to teaching and learning. As an IB World School, we use the PYP *Curriculum* framework. Elements of the [Reggio Emilia](#) approach to early childhood teaching and learning have inspired our guiding statements. These Guiding Statements underpin our practice.

Children are unique, curious, and creative individuals who are natural learners and rich in potential.

Children are unique individuals whose points of view need to be listened to and respected. Children are competent and capable individuals who can take responsibility for their learning. They have an innate desire to discover, learn, and make sense of the world. Children express their ideas, construct and demonstrate their understanding in multiple ways including artistic expression, constructive play, imaginative play, and role play. They have the right to realize and expand their potential.

Children's play is an inquiry into the world around them.

Play capitalizes on children's natural curiosity and exuberance. Through play, children test and revise their ideas to make connections between previous and current experiences. They construct their own meaning and understanding of how the world works. Play enables children to develop a sense of autonomy and identity, as well as their ability to make informed decisions. Children become increasingly skilled at being group members, initiating and working together, asking questions and exploring possible worlds through imagination. Purposeful play requires time. Our schedule includes uninterrupted blocks of time during which we provide a balance between a classroom rich in child-initiated play and playful focused learning.

Our Kindergarten Program is underpinned by the values and beliefs of the IB PYP Framework.

We offer a transdisciplinary, concept-based curriculum that is engaging, relevant, challenging and significant for learners in the 3-6-age range. Through an inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning, children engage in authentic, meaningful learning experiences which enables them to take action. This approach also supports students to develop transdisciplinary skills, attitudes and knowledge, thus empowering them to become independent, life-long learners and resourceful, internationally minded global citizens. We understand the importance of mother tongue in the acquisition of language.

Children learn through relationships with other people.

Children socially construct their knowledge and understanding of the world by interacting with other people and with the surrounding environment. They need opportunities to participate in collaborative learning activities involving dialogue, conflict and negotiation. A quality learning community involves effective partnerships between parents, teachers, and children. Connections with home and family are integral to learning in the early years.

Our learning environment actively supports physical, social, intellectual and emotional development.

We offer a learning environment that provides individuals with a sense of belonging, reinforces respect and empathy and promotes effective communication. Our children are encouraged to be active and take thoughtful risks, to recognize their own accomplishments, to take responsibility for their actions and to develop resilience and positive self-esteem. Teachers and children can modify spaces to provoke and extend inquiry, or to respond to the needs of the learners. We provide a variety of human-made and natural resources that are readily available for the children to discover, explore, and construct meaning from. Environments are intentionally created to invite exploration, provoke curiosity, engage the senses and celebrate the children’s learning journey.

Teachers are facilitators of learning, researchers, collaborators and co-learners. They recognize the reciprocal relationship of teaching and learning.

Teachers support and encourage children on their learning journey. They provoke, co-investigate and challenge ideas through the use of open-ended questions and provocations of many kinds. Teachers acknowledge that making mistakes is part of the learning process. They maintain respect for the children’s own ideas and hypotheses. Teachers observe children closely, listen to them carefully and give value to their theories, so that they understand the children’s thinking and make informed decisions about how to guide children in their learning. Teachers share and discuss documentation of the learning process with children and colleagues to identify the next steps in the learning process. Students are actively involved in the self-assessment of their own learning. Teachers develop reciprocal relationships of care, respect and trust with their students in which quality learning can take place. Teachers value exchanges and interactions between children and adults as they construct, revisit, and re-construct theories and understanding. As part of a collegial learning community, teachers participate in collaborative, reflective practices with colleagues. Reciprocal relationships promote professional growth through dialogue, collaborative planning, joint analysis and interpretation of documentation. Teachers keep up with current research and teaching trends through internal and external professional learning and development opportunities.



2016 / 2017 TKS Kindergarten Staff List

Principal: Justin Somerville

Assistant Principal: Jessica Dalton

Learning Support Team: Aisha Oliver (Counselor), Yasmeen Ghunaim (Counselor), Cherry Jarvis, (Learning Support)
Paul O'Callaghan (Psychologist)

Librarian/Tech Integration Specialist: Candace Taylor-Weber

K1	K2
<p>Pedagogical Coordinator: Ingrid McCormack</p> <p>Grade Level Teachers: Cilla Giannopoulos Shelagh Stafford Marwah Ashrour Rebecca Somerville Katarina Sladakovic Emily Cunniff Olga Pacheco Jenny Curiano Claire Devey Sarah Sharp David Watts Rikke Kosgaard Ayse Koruklu</p> <p>Single Subject Teachers: Arabic Language: Wejdan Khan Islamic Studies: Dina Akeel PE: Zack Smith Performing Arts: Lisa Barrington</p>	<p>Pedagogical Coordinator: Hannele Uariachi</p> <p>Grade Level Teachers: Leanne McKay Amnah AbuShaheen Karen Fielke Megan Read Katherine Adaci Virpi Abouzeid Stephanie Fairall Mel Read Smita Vaidya Kielly Arbuthnot Eric Bakken TBA</p> <p>Single Subject Teachers: Arabic Language: Marwa Gadry Islamic Studies: Dina Akeel PE: Erwin Agustina Performing Arts: Lisa Barrington</p>
K3	
<p>Pedagogical Coordinator: Melanie Agustina</p> <p>Grade Level Teachers: Fabiana Queiroz Rebecca Kent Joshua Doyle Rinanti Susbandayani Elaine Manalastas Gayani Newns Kate Loucks Claudine Silich Heather Gatenby</p> <p>Single Subject Teachers: Arabic Language: Ahmed Alzahrani Islamic Studies: Dina Akeel PE: Trudy Vriend Performing and Visual Arts: Katie Hoffman</p>	

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Teaching and Learning

Curriculum

The curriculum in the Kindergarten is based on the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme. This framework is used to help design and frame our early years programme (www.ibo.org). Reggio Emilia is our inspiration for the way we deliver our curriculum through inquiry (www.reggiochildren.it). Units of inquiry are planned collaboratively by grade level teams. Four units are covered in K1 and K2, and six in K3. The Units of Inquiry are developed taking into account the children's natural interests, with room left for emergent projects to develop. All subject areas i.e. Language, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and the Arts are integrated in the Units of Inquiry.

Assessment

Assessment is a natural, ongoing and important part of daily learning. Students are observed in a variety of situations, and a wide range of assessment strategies are used. The teacher observes the children to:

- Build up a clear picture of the child and his or her interests
- Identify what and how the child is thinking and learning
- Assess the effectiveness of the environment on the child's learning
- Assess the child's progress and development, and to identify the next steps.

It is important to identify the needs of each child and to view learning as a continuum, with each student achieving developmental milestones in different but relevant ways. Through listening and observing, areas of learning that the children particularly enjoy can be identified, and stimulating experiences can be planned to consolidate or extend the learning further.

Specialist Subject Classes

Specialist teaching and learning programs are integrated with the Unit of Inquiry in authentic ways whenever possible.

Arabic Language

K1: the Arabic Language teacher joins the children in their homeroom class for Arabic Language twice a week for 30 minutes.

K2: the Arabic Language teacher joins the children in their homeroom class for Arabic Language once a week for 60 minutes.

K3: children go to Arabic language class twice a week for 45 minutes.

Islamic Studies

Children of the Muslim faith attend Islamic Studies once a week for 30 minutes in K1 and K2 and 45 minutes for K3.

Physical Education

In K1 and K2 children go to PE lessons twice a week for 30 minutes. In K3 children go to PE lessons twice a week for 45 minutes.

During PE lessons children become aware of the capabilities of their bodies and how they may use them effectively. They explore a number of activities, which develop motor skills that may later be applied in various sports. Children learn the importance of physical fitness. They learn to follow directions, be aware of rules, and work as a team.

The Arts

In K1 and K2 children go to Performing Arts lessons once a week for 30 minutes. In K3 children attend combined Arts lessons (Performing and Visual Arts) once a week for 90 minutes.

The Arts (PA and VA) are also an integral part of teaching and learning in homerooms.

Visual Art

Children have the opportunity to use, and experiment with a variety of materials, and develop coordination through drawing, painting, printing, folding, cutting, gluing and constructing.

Performing Arts

Elements of the program include:

- Performing – singing and playing instruments
- Creating and composing
- Listening

Through a variety of songs and pieces children develop an understanding for singing as opposed to talking , high and low pitch, loud and quiet and sound and silence. Through music they work on being able to keep time, explore rhythm and move creatively.

Children also have the opportunity to participate in a variety of dramatic activities such as role play, mime, puppet theatre, and plays. They use drama to examine concepts from the Unit of Inquiry being studied, and as a tool for developing the skills associated with reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Library Media Center

There are two libraries in Kindergarten, one in Harbor West and one in Harbor East. Each week your child will have an opportunity to check out books from the library. Parents of students

enrolled in the KAUST School may check out an additional ten books under their name from any of The KAUST School libraries.

Media and Technology

During the Kindergarten, students are introduced to media resources including books, audio, video, computers and other tools and materials. Most of these experiences take place in the classroom environment and technology is used to enhance teaching and learning.

[KG Ed Tech Philosophy](#)

Student Support

In the early years, we believe that students learn best when they have skills and resources to communicate and interact effectively in a social setting. The focus of the student support program is to foster a positive school environment for all students. In collaboration with all stakeholders i.e. students, families, teachers, and administration, the school counselor provides:

- Transition support
- Social skills development
- Skill boost programs - friendship, social skills, conflict resolution
- Family support
- Teacher support
- An effective referral and follow-up process
- Effective consultation and collaboration with the entire educational team as well as any other relevant external resources regarding students with identified concerns and needs.

Parent Communication

Parents are our partners in the education of their children. We value your input and strive to maintain open communication on a regular basis and in a variety of ways including:

Blogs: The primary form of communication with parents is via classroom blogs. It is important that parents read the blogs on a regular basis (at least once a week) to be kept informed of the learning that is happening for your child and of events that are being organized. Your child's teacher will inform you when the blogs are available and how to subscribe. You are able to view and download photos of your child from the blog.

Note: Emails will only be sent to parents for whole Kindergarten and individual communication. All class communication will be via blogs.

Parent Drop ins: we host a parent/child drop-in session the day before school starts. This is an opportunity for you and your child to meet their teacher and to find out where their classroom is before the first day of school.

Back to School Night: On Tuesday 22nd August, parents are invited to come and meet with your child's teachers to receive an overview of the school year and the day to day life of your child at school.

Parent Teacher Conference: Take place over a week in mid-October and are an opportunity to connect with parents individually and discuss the year ahead, focusing on how their child is settling into Kindergarten, progress to date, and next steps. This conference is key in establishing an effective partnership with parents; teachers share insights, as well as seek those of parents, about each child using the Approaches to Learning (ATLs) as a framework:

- Social skills
- Communication skills
- Self-management skills
- Research skills
- Thinking skills

Written reports: In February and June you will receive a written report. The reports reflect what your child has learned, the progress that has been made, and which areas require further development.

Student Led Conference: will be held on the 20th of March 2017. The purpose of the meeting is for you and your child to engage in a conversation about learning. Children are encouraged to reflect on their work and to choose samples that highlight successes and progress in their learning. On this day, your child will attend school with you for approximately one hour only; there will be no regular classes on this day, and you should make child care arrangements for the rest of this day, as necessary.

Open houses: Once a year, usually at the end of a Unit of Inquiry, you will be invited to attend an "open house." Your child will show you his/her learning and engage you in activities around the room.

Assemblies: are held once a year. They are celebrations of student learning in which children showcase their work through a song, a play, a poem or in a variety of other ways.

Partners for Learning: This is a school-wide event, organised twice a year that parents are encouraged to attend. Teachers across the school offer a variety of workshops and presentations on different topics. Kindergarten teachers will provide sessions designed to inform about early childhood development, our Kindergarten program, and how you can help your child at home.

Kindergarten Events

As a Kindergarten, we participate in two school-wide events throughout the year. Book Week will take place in December and International Week in February. More information will be shared closer to the date.

A Kindergarten Field day will take place on 19th December for K2 and 20th December for K3. K1 will run a modified Kindergarten Field Day towards the end of the year; more information will be provided closer to the date.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety

We are very aware of the need for a healthy and hygienic environment. Hand washing is taught and carefully monitored, and care will be taken with cleaning of tables, toys, door handles etc. If your child shows signs of illness, please do not send him/her to school. This is to minimize the risk of other children or adults becoming sick as well.

Nurse Information

When children can go to school

If your children have any of the following symptoms, they do not have to be excluded from school, if they feel well enough to participate in regular school activities.

- Sniffles, a mild runny nose with clear minimal discharge, mild cough, without fever (see guidelines below)
- Vague complaints of aches, pains or fatigue and not affecting his/her performance at school
- Rash without a fever, not spreading
- Red eye without yellow or green discharge

When children will be sent home from school

Our school staff serves as the link between parents and children. When a child complains of illness, it is the responsibility of the school nurse to note and communicate common symptoms

such as fever, vomiting, and diarrhea to parents. The school nurses are not allowed by law to diagnose specific illnesses, and we are not equipped to care for an ill or injured student for an indefinite amount of time. Parents are responsible for picking up their child in a timely manner once notified by the school. If the parents are unable to come when notified, they must inform the nurse who they are allowing to act on their behalf to pick up their child.

When children should stay home from school

Children should not attend school if they have an illness that prevents them from participating in routine classroom activities. If your child feels too sick to go to school, please keep him/her at home.

Children are also excluded if they have symptoms of possibly contagious or serious illnesses that they might spread to other children.

Colds

A runny nose is not necessarily cause to keep your child home. However, keep him/her home with a colored nasal discharge, fever, bad cough, headache, nausea, vomiting or if the child is too tired or too uncomfortable to function at school.

Cough

A child needs to remain home if he/she has a dry/ productive persistent, barking and hacking cough or is unable to practice respiratory etiquette (turning away from others and covering mouth) and proper hand washing.

Fever

Children must be fever free for 24 hours (without the aid of a fever-reducing medicine) before returning to school. They need to stay home if they have the following temperature:

Mouth (oral): 37.5 C/ 99.6 F and higher

Ear (tympanic): 37.8 C/ 100 F and higher

Head lice

Please notify the school nurse and grade level teacher if your child has head lice. For a noted infestation of lice your child may not return to school until he/she have been treated.

Your child may return with a Parent Response Form after her/his first treatment with a lice-removal product. Your child's school may recommend options for head lice treatment.

Please check this [link](#) for a more comprehensive list of illnesses and symptoms advising when a student should stay home.

Administration of Medication at School

Where possible, medication should be given at home. If necessary, medication may be administered at school by the school nurse, with written permission from the parents. Please refer to the school's [Administration of Medication at School – A Guide for Parents](#).

Toileting

Children must be toilet trained and not wear diapers to attend TKS. A child is considered toilet trained when he or she can complete the following steps unassisted:

- Know when he/she needs to use the bathroom
- Alert the teacher or get to the bathroom on his/her own
- Know how to get his/her trousers and underpants off and on
- Clean his/her own private parts with paper or hose
- Put all toilet paper in the bowl/bin
- Flush the toilet

We understand that young children have occasional accidents, particularly during transition times, such as when a child begins school. A child who has had an accident needs to know when he/she has had an accident, alert the teacher, be able to clean him/herself and be able to change his/her own clothes with minimal assistance. The school does not keep extra clothing and parents are responsible for providing spare clothing that the child may need through the day.

If staff have reason to believe a child is not completely toilet trained, the teacher will arrange to discuss the matter with parents; the child may need to stay at home until he/she is fully toilet trained.

Guidelines Regarding Biting

Biting happens in almost every early childhood setting. Although biting may be part of normal development for toddlers, when children reach the age of 3, it is not regarded as acceptable behavior.

At the Kindergarten, we take every instance of biting seriously. We have strategies to deal with biting and take the following action:

First biting incident

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm "No Biting. Biting hurts."
- The injured child will be comforted and attended to. The wound of the injured child shall be assessed and cleansed with soap and water and ice applied (if necessary).
- Staff will remove the child who has bitten from the situation and try to find out what led to the incident. The rule will be restated, "Biting is not allowed." Staff will discuss how the child can respond to similar situations in the future while maintaining eye contact, using a calm, firm voice and language the child can understand.
- The parents of both children will be notified of the biting incident.
- Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.

Second biting incident

- The classroom teacher will meet with parents to let them know that there is a problem and the procedures that will be followed to deal with it. Teachers and parents will collaborate to form a plan of action for both home and school to address the behavior.
- The classroom teacher will be mindful of children who indicate a tendency to bite to avoid biting situations before they occur.
- The classroom teacher will reinforce non-biting responses to situations and reinforce appropriate behavior.

Third biting incident

- If an occurrence happens a third time the parent/guardian will be called to pick up the biting child. The child may return to class the following day.

If the bite is very severe and breaks skin, the child who has bitten will be sent home even if it is the first bite. We encourage parents to work in collaboration with us to reduce and eliminate biting using positive approaches to behavior guidance.

Organization

Contacting the Kindergarten

Principal	Justin Somerville	808 6365	justin.somerville@kaust.edu.sa
Assistant Principal	Jessica Dalton	808 6403	jessica.dalton@kaust.edu
Office Coordinator	Alison Winfer	808 6320	alison.winfer@kaust.edu.sa
West Receptionist	Leona Kelly	808 6267	leona.kelly@kaust.edu.sa
East Receptionist	Zainab Lary	808 6408	zainab.lary@kaust.edu.sa

Contacting Your Child's Teacher

Please do not contact your child's teacher by phone during class time. You can leave a message with the receptionist or send an email, and the teacher will contact you when possible.

School Calendar

[2017-2018 School Calendar](#)

First Day of School

Your child's name is listed in the reception area and outside his/her classroom. Please accompany him/her into the room to meet the teacher. PLEASE KEEP YOUR CHILD WITH YOU UNTIL YOU HAVE GREETED THE TEACHER AND YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN "SIGNED IN" TO THE CLASSROOM. There will be activities for your child to do in the classroom. You are free to leave when your child is comfortable and settled.

School hours

Kindergarten 1	8.00am to 12:15pm
Kindergarten 2	8.00am to 1:00pm
Kindergarten 3	8.00am to 2.00pm

*On Tuesdays, Kindergarten 3 is released at 1:25pm to accommodate transportation for early release day in the Elementary school.

For the first 13 days of school, K1 and K2 will finish an hour early at 11:15am and 12:00pm, respectively. From Sunday 10th September (after the Eid break), they will finish at the regular times listed above.

Absent Students

If your child is going to be absent from the school due to illness etc please advise your child's teacher via email. If your child is going to be absent for anything other than an illness e.g family matters, please complete the [Student Absence Notification Form](#).

[Attendance policy and guidelines](#)

Class Attendance

Classes begin at 8:00 am in the Kindergarten.

Leaving School Early/Arriving at school late.

If students need to leave before the end of the school day, the parent must contact the school at the beginning of the day to explain the reason. A student cannot leave early unless notification has been received from the parent. If parents notify the school in advance of late

attendance (due to a medical appointment, for example) the late arrival will be recorded as excused.

Reporting an absence

Parents must notify the school by email by 7:45 am if their child is going to be absent. Email the homeroom teacher prior to 7:45 am, and the school reception if it is after 7:45 am.

Sickness absence of more than 2 days requires a medical certificate.

Harbor West: leona.kelly@kaust.edu.sa

Harbor East: zainab.lary@kaust.edu.sa

If parents anticipate that their child may be out of school for an extended time due to illness, they should inform The KAUST School immediately.

Late Attendance (Tardy)

Students arriving after the start time are recorded as tardy. Tardies that are out of the control of the parents or the student (for example; school bus arriving late) will not be counted against the student.

Procedure for Addressing Attendance

Where there is concern regarding a student's attendance, the school will take the necessary steps to address the absences. This could include meetings between the student's family, school administrators, and a representative from Human Resources.

Transportation

The KAUST transportation department organizes designated school bus stops at which parents or caregivers will need to drop off and pick up their children. A supervisor from the school will also be on each bus in the morning and the afternoon.

If there is no one to collect your child at the bus stop, your child will be brought back to school and you will be contacted to collect your child from school. Please note that the bus supervisors can only release your child to their parent or regular caregivers. Any changes should be advised to the school receptionist. For K3 children only, parents may give permission to the building receptionist for their child to walk home from the bus stop alone.

To register your child for the school bus service or to make any changes please contact the school receptionist. Your bus details will be forwarded to the next grade level at the end of the year. There is no need to re-register each school year.

If you are new to the school, you will be contacted with a link to complete the bus registration for your child. If you have more than one child in school you must complete a link for each child. Please note, a child must be registered for the bus in order to ride it.

If your child usually travels home on the bus and you collect him/her from school please advise the receptionist of the change.

If you come to pick up your child, please wait outside the classroom. The teacher will bring your child to the door when he/she sees you. If your child is travelling on the bus, please confirm that the teacher has this information before you leave on the first day of school.

Items children need for school

Items that should be brought to school daily are as follows:

- a reusable water bottle (labeled clearly with your child's name) and filled with drinking water

Items that may be stored at school:

- a sun hat for outside time (labeled clearly)
- an extra set of clothes (to be replaced as needed)

Please do not bring personal items or toys from home. It is easy for these to get lost and this can cause distress. If your child has difficulty leaving a very special item at home, please talk with the teacher.

Please apply sunscreen before your child comes to school. The first "outside time" is between 8 and 10 am. The number of insects has diminished due to the efforts of Pest Control. If your child is susceptible to insect bites, please apply insect repellent before coming to school in the morning. If you wish to leave insect repellent and/or sunscreen in the classroom for re-application, please label this clearly with your child's name and give it to the teacher.

Dress for students

Clothing should be comfortable keeping in mind that the students will be involved in play which may be messy. Shoulders should be covered. On days where students have PE, we recommend that students wear suitable footwear for active play. Students are advised to bring something warm to wear in the air-conditioned buildings.

Snacks and Lunch

Food is not provided at school. Please make sure your child comes to school each day with enough food and drink to cover the time (s)he is at school.

Within the daily schedule there will be two breaks set aside for eating and drinking in K1 and K2. In K3, in addition to a morning snack, the students will also eat lunch at school mid-day.

The importance of healthy food and drink cannot be stressed enough. Children are encouraged to drink water whenever they need to. Big water bottles are readily available for children to refill their own bottles.

Birthdays

We understand this is a special day and that your child might like to bring in a cake (individual pieces i.e. cupcakes are preferred) to share with classmates. Please arrange a mutually convenient time with the teacher in advance. Please note that it is not possible to light candles in the school. We also kindly request you not bring presents or party bags for the other children. Birthday party invitations may only be distributed at school if the entire class is being invited.

Other Celebrations

We have a diverse student population in the Kindergarten with a number of nationalities represented. It is not possible for us to acknowledge all of the celebrations and festivals for each culture. TKS celebrates host country's national and religious celebrations as well as International Week and International Parade of Nations. However, it is accepted that children may wish to share information about their home country's celebrations with others, **but we discourage sharing of food due to religious and medical considerations.**

Lost and Found

Lost and Found is located in the reception area. Please label all items and check periodically for your child's missing items. Items not claimed within a school semester will be donated to the recycle centre.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

We believe that education is enhanced by a strong partnership between home and school. The Parent Advisory Council is designed to facilitate structured communication between the parent community and school administration. The council is not a decision-making group. Its purpose is to promote discussion and feedback. While parents are always encouraged to dialogue directly with their child's teachers, counselors or principals regarding individual concerns, the PAC structure provides a vehicle for two-way communication of a more general nature. The Principal seeks to ensure that the membership of the council reflects the diverse nature of the parent community. The council meets monthly.

