



## CURRICULUM HANDBOOK

Foundation Stage 2

2023 - 2024

EXPLORING LEADERSHIP



مدرسة جيمس متروبول  
GEMS Metropole School  
MOTOR CITY

**GEMS**  
EDUCATION





## Introduction

### Welcome to Infant School

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

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

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

**Emily** Smith  
Head of Infant School



### Welcome to Foundation Stage 2

On behalf of everyone at GEMS Metropole, I am delighted to welcome you and your child to our Foundation Stage Two community.

We are excited that you are joining us as you start your educational journey with us at GEMS Metropole.

In Foundation Stage Two the children learn through purposeful and meaningful play opportunities that allow them to be leaders in their learning. Our continuous provision provides opportunities for them within both the outdoor and indoor learning environments.

The children are given the opportunity to explore, engage, create and investigate as they learn how to become independent learners, taking on challenges as they learn how to communicate effectively and work in collaboration with others.

Throughout the year there are many opportunities for you to be involved in your child's learning, we always value your support. We would love to invite you to come, look around your child's learning spaces where you can also take part in our exciting workshops.

**Alesha** Dublin  
Head of Foundation Stage 2



## Infant Leadership Team

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**1 Emily Smith**  
Head of Infant School

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**2 Emily Shepherd**  
Deputy Head of Primary

**3 Neil Corrigan**  
Deputy Head of Primary

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**4 Alexander James**  
Assistant Head of Primary

**5 Brynn Cooper**  
Assistant Head of Primary

6



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**6 Gemma Brown**  
Assistant Head of Primary

**7 Erin Nelson**  
Assistant Head of Primary



## The Metropole Curriculum Journey

At Metropole, our programme of learning embodies the GEMS Education core values and ensures that students receive a high-quality education in a happy, supportive and nurturing environment, where they are encouraged to explore and take risks.

Teachers plan challenging, well-organised and interesting lessons which engage and motivate our students. There are regular opportunities for leadership, enquiry based learning, critical thinking, decision-making and problem solving where students are encouraged to take an active role in the learning opportunities they encounter. All staff have high expectations of both students and each other.

## Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum – FS1 and FS2

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## The National Curriculum of England Years 1-11

From Years 1-11 students follow The National Curriculum of England and are exposed to a wide range of compulsory subjects which includes: Mathematics, English, Science, Computing, Design and Technology, History, Geography, Art and Design, Music, Physical Education, Modern Foreign languages.

The national curriculum is a non-textbook curriculum which provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge they require to be educated citizens. It introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said, and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievements.

## Ministry of Education Curriculum

Alongside the Early Years Curriculum and National Curriculum of England, students also study the Ministry of Education Curriculum. Through this, students learn Arabic, Islamic Studies and Moral, Social and Cultural Studies.

The UAE leaders along with GEMS Metropole promote the learning and using of Arabic language as it is considered a fundamental pillar of the Emirates national identity, its people's history and its deep-rooted traditions. The Arabic framework supports both native and non-native Arabic speakers. This framework illustrates the levels expected to be achieved by the learner in each of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Where Arabic is the student's non-native language, the curriculum links the achievement of these levels to the number of years spent in studying Arabic, regardless of the learner's current grade.



## High Performance Learning at GEMS Metropole

GEMS Metropole School is on a very exciting journey to become world-class! Students at Metropole develop the language and skills to help them explain the current stage of their learning and the next steps they need to take to improve and deepen their understanding. The High Performance Learning approach recognises that all learners have the potential to achieve the very highest results and develops the attitudes and performance characteristics required for this to happen.

High Performance Learning is based around a framework that includes 30 generic characteristics that students need to develop to be high performing learners. These are based around, 'How we think' and 'How we behave'. High Performance Learning is embedded throughout the curriculum at Metropole and across the wider school. We truly believe that all students can be high performance learners and we strive for all our students to have a performance mind-set and reach their potential and beyond!



## Forest School

Throughout the academic Year, Foundation Stage will learn a variety of skills and gain a great deal of knowledge and understanding as part of their Forest School sessions. However, the main focus of Foundation Stage Forest School sessions will be on developing children's communication and language, fine motor skills, inquisitiveness and risk-taking when exploring the natural environment around them.

Foundation Stage learn the Forest School song and develop their listening skills by sharing a different story each week. They have one focused session a week as well as access to the different outdoor areas every day, in which they have free use of the area to explore using the skills they have learnt in their forest school sessions.

During their Forest School time, the children will begin to learn, with support, how to tie shoe laces, use tools safely, use natural resources to build mini dens for small animals, as well as creating natural art. The children also learn games to play with their friends.

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







## Termly Topic Overviews

### Term 1A: Can you tell me a story?

In this first topic of the year 'Tell me a tale' the children will explore the story 'Goldilocks and The Three Bears'. Our focus will be on, finding out who created the mess with the porridge oats and broke poor baby bear's chair. For our finale, we will be inviting parents in to have some yummy porridge with us and perform the story that we have been learning. You might even spot some of the changes we have made!

### Term 1B: Can you tell me a story?

In this term we continue with our topic of 'Tell me a tale', looking at more traditional tales. We start by finding footsteps on the bridge in the playground. What animal do they belong to? Where are they going? We soon discover 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' story.

Throughout this topic we will learn how to innovate parts of the story by changing elements like the characters or the setting. We will look and observe how things change when we heat or cool them. To end this very traditional term, we will be baking gingerbread men with the parents in class following our very own written recipe books. Let's just hope they don't run away!

### Term 2A: Where are we in the world?

This term we dive into the 'Deep blue sea', we will explore ocean life, focusing on our first investigation, how to make bubbles and asking ourselves if we can change the shape of them. We will have the opportunity to find out which objects float and sink and if adding anything to the water affects this. Now, Barry the fish with fingers gets very busy in our story, so it is time to find out what we can do with our hands. Can you paint a picture with your fingers? Can you help your friends? Barry takes us on a journey as we look more closely at different parts of the story including, the introduction, beginning, problem, solution and ending. As part of our finale we invite the parents in to get crafty and see what you can make, with your fingers in the classroom.





## Foundation Stage 2: Curriculum

### Communication and Language

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

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

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



## Foundation Stage 2: Curriculum

### Physical Development

At GEMS Metropole the outdoor learning areas provide ample opportunities for the children to not only develop physically, but also to incorporate and use all the skills they have been taught in the classroom.

Our outdoor environment is a place where children can, explore and manage their own risks in a safe environment. GEMS Metropole has a bespoke sand area that has been designed to enable children the freedom to explore while having the space to develop their control and movements.

One of the areas we are most passionate about is being healthy. Children at GEMS Metropole are actively encouraged to bring a healthy lunch to school and our community rooms offer a sociable space for children to enjoy these.





## Foundation Stage 2: Curriculum

### Personal, Social and Emotional Development



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

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







## Foundation Stage 2: Curriculum

### Literacy

At GEMS Metropole we want our children to develop a passion for reading and writing for pleasure from the start of their learning journey. Our expectation is that children will leave the foundation stage unit with the strategies and skills to read and write simple sentences, ready for them to build on these skills in Year 1. One of the first steps to enable children to access the joy of books is for them to learn the sounds associated with each letter and, critical to this, is the use of a structured phonics scheme.

Our children follow a bespoke synthetic phonics programme that has been tailored to integrate specific UAE links that are relevant and familiar to the children. The programme allows children to engage with phonics in a multi-sensory way using real life objects, play and rhyme. This systematic teaching of phonics, along with working in partnership with parents, really supports early reading and writing and provides children with a firm foundation on which to build.

Throughout school, we use Talk 4 Writing to support early stages of writing and storytelling. Children are provided with text rich stories to support their oracy, imagination and creativity. Our aim is for children to verbally retell stories through images and symbols that they are able to process independently and in their own way.

### Phonics

At GEMS Metropole, we believe that every child should have the opportunity to become a happy, fluent reader. The MTS Phonics Scheme offers a coherently planned sequence of lessons that supports the effective teaching of phonics within EYFS, KS1 and, where appropriate, KS2.

Throughout Phase 1, young learners develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to discriminate between and use auditory, environmental and instrumental sounds. Phase 1 is taught in FS1 at GEMS Metropole and runs throughout the teaching of Phonics Sets 1-5. In FS2, children work within Set 1-3. Here, learners are introduced to phonemes/sounds and graphemes/letters systematically. They also learn to develop and apply blending and segmenting skills for reading and writing.

In KS1, children work within Sets 4 and 5. The coherently planned sequence of lessons within Set 4 allows opportunities for children to apply their phonics knowledge and skills as the prime approach to reading and spelling. It focuses on phonetically decodable two-syllable and three-syllable words and the alternative ways of pronouncing and representing the long vowel phonemes. Furthermore, children will develop their ability to attempt to read and spell increasingly complex words. By Set 5, children explore spelling patterns and grammar while also developing a breadth of knowledge, skills and understanding in the recognition and spelling of common exception words.

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

## What Phonics looks like in FS2?

In FS2 we follow an adaptation of the Read Write Inc (RWI) phonics programme. We systematically teach and plan following the RWI order of sounds. At the beginning of the year, teachers focus on a different sound each day, the children will be shown the sound, be introduced to the correct pronunciation and will then be shown a rhyme to support them with the letter formation. The lessons will follow a set structure and the children will focus on these sounds and apply them in reading and writing. Every lesson children will be exposed to reading green words (words which can be decoded) and reading red words (words which require to be learnt by sight reading). Children will read RWI books to support their learning and reinforce sounds they have been learning, along with accessing writing and comprehension tasks that match each book. Phonics lessons happen four times a week and the children will also be given star words each week to practice reading at home, these are linked to the learning that is happening in class. The children are assessed every half term and will be placed into groups to ensure consistent progress is made throughout the year. Parents will be required to read regularly with their children at home to support their learning further.





## Foundation Stage 2: Curriculum

### Mathematics

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

In Gems Metropole, staff use their knowledge and expertise to plan Mathematical activities, in and outside the classroom through practical hands on activities. In lessons we provide children with the opportunity to solve problems practically and with a purpose. Our highly skilled staff tailor learning to meet the needs of all children through addressing common misconceptions while supporting new concepts.

### Understanding Of The World

We are passionate about providing our children with the opportunity to observe objects and materials. Each classroom has been specifically designed to enable children the space to investigate and explore in a scientific way. Children are taught key skills in predicting, observing and evaluating to help them make sense of the world around them.

Throughout the Foundation Stage, our designated investigation areas provide children with open-ended opportunities to make links with other areas of the curriculum, while using the many resources that are readily available. We are exceptionally proud of how our children are able to find things out for themselves and then record this using pictures, short films and written work.

### Arabic B

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



## Expressive Arts and Design

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



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



## Foundation Stage 2: Communications

### Parent Workshop Information

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

### Resources To Support My Child

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

**Ictgames** - For literacy and math's games

**Topmarks** - For literacy and math's games

**Oxfordowl** - For support with reading

## FS2 Communication

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

### Class Email

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

### Weekly Infant Newsletter

Every Friday you will have access to the infant newsletter. This includes information relevant to the infant school and can be accessed through GEMS Connect as well as through your email.

### Head of Primary Newsletter

This will be received bi-weekly and will be available on GEMS Connect. This newsletter contains a wider view of what is happening within the school.

### GEMS Connect / School Reports

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





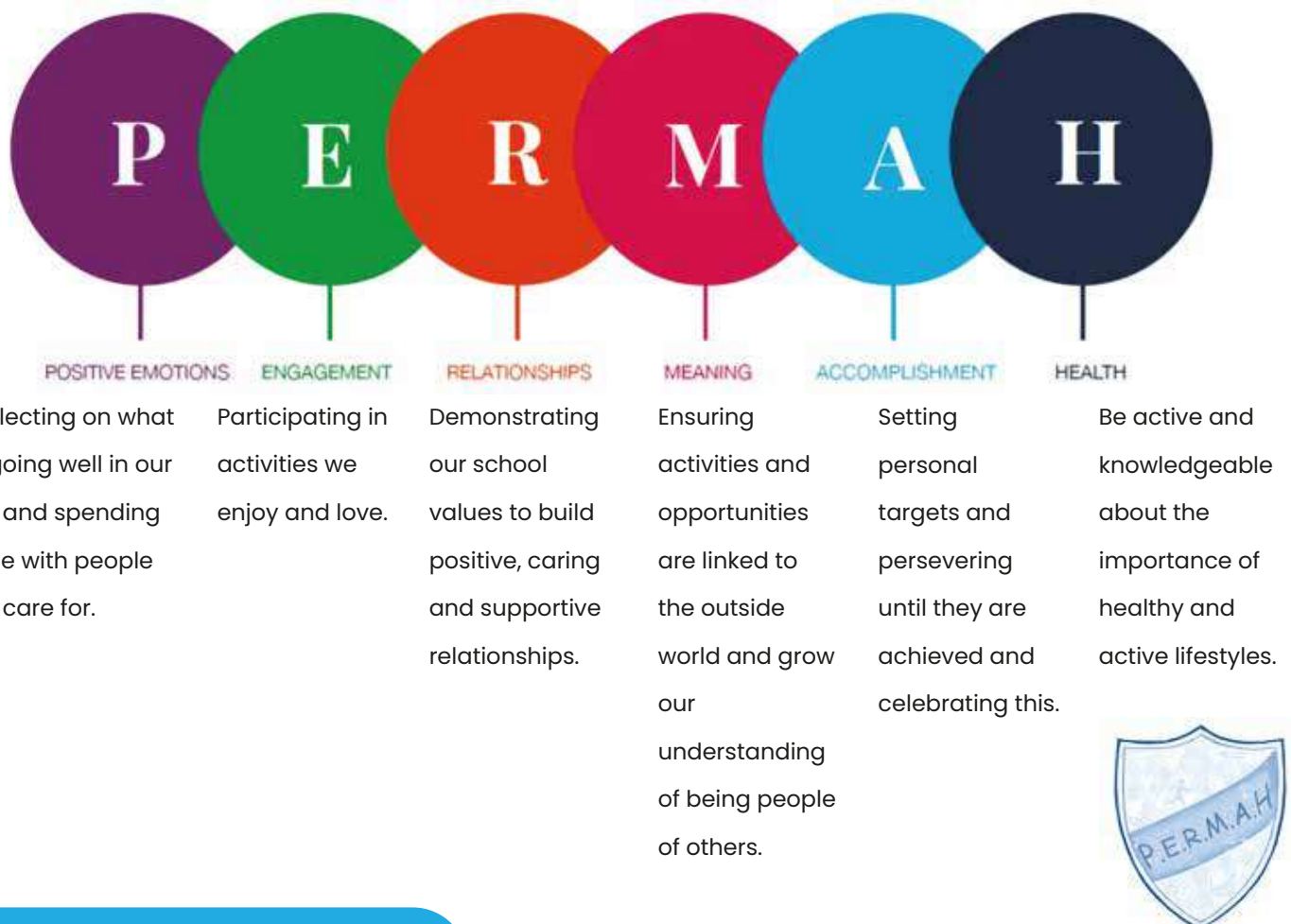
## Student Wellbeing

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

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

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

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







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