



# Early Years Foundation Stage Parent Handbook August 2023

[www.oryxschool.qa](http://www.oryxschool.qa)

Respect | Integrity | Excellence | Compassion | Responsibility

مدرسة أوريكس العالمية



# Welcome to Oryx International School

## Welcome to Oryx International School Foundation Stage

The purpose of this handbook is to help parents of Foundation Stage children understand how Early Years works and what to expect. It will also include key information about procedures and policies as well as information on how to help your child at home.

At Oryx International School, we believe the first step in your child's education is the most important one. It has been scientifically proven that the preschool years are the most important, as children develop more rapidly during the first five years of their lives than at any other time.

We pride ourselves on providing a unique, learning-enriched environment accompanied by high-quality and experienced Early Years Practitioners for children aged between 3 and 5 years old.

We believe that every child is unique and special and it is our job to provide them with the appropriate attention, care, support and encouragement required to bring out his or her own talents and strengths.

It is at this stage that we lay down the foundation for children's success, both academically and personally throughout life.



# Our Mission, Our Vision, Our Values and Our Team

## Our Mission

Our mission at Oryx is to deliver an engaging, value rich, broad and balanced 'British International Education Programme' to the children of the employees of Qatar Airways by highly qualified and experienced UK curriculum teachers.

## Our Vision

Our vision is to ensure that students leave Oryx International School enabled, confident and ready to face the challenges that their next stage of life will bring. They will have developed effective behaviours that will enable them to thrive and succeed as global citizens of the 21st century.

## Our school values

Respect | Integrity | Excellence | Compassion | Responsibility

## Our Team

Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two year groups which include Foundation Stage 1 (3-4 year olds) and Foundation Stage 2 (4-5 year olds).

Each class will have one class Teacher and one class Teaching Assistant and will be overseen by our Year Group Leaders, the Foundation Stage Phase Leader, Miss Catherine McConville and our Vice Principal, Mrs. Andrea Smith.

| Year Group                                      | Teacher       | Class Name |
|---|---------------|------------|
| Foundation Stage 1 Leader<br>Foundation Stage 1 | Mrs Franklin  | Oman       |
| Foundation Stage 1                              | Mrs Mistry    | Lebanon    |
| Foundation Stage 1                              | Mrs Khatan    | Syria      |
| Foundation Stage 1                              | Miss Feldmann | Kuwait     |
| Foundation Stage 1                              | Miss West     | Jordan     |
| Foundation Stage 2 Leader<br>Foundation Stage 2 | Miss Small    | Nepal      |
| Foundation Stage 2                              | Miss McGuone  | India      |
| Foundation Stage 2                              | Ms Edwards    | Pakistan   |
| Foundation Stage 2                              | Miss Fryer    | Sri Lanka  |
| Foundation Stage 2                              | Mrs Unwalla   | Yemen      |
| Foundation Stage 2                              | Miss Casey    | Bangladesh |
| Foundation Stage 2                              | Miss O'Hare   | Myanmar    |



# Settling In and Preparation

## Settling in Period and Preparation for Starting School

Starting school is an exciting time for young children and their parents. It can be a daunting time too. But with a little preparation and encouragement, most children will settle in easily.

Don't worry... Your child doesn't need to be able to read, write or do sums before they start school! Children start school with a wide range of abilities and their teacher are highly skilled at helping children progress at their own level. What's most important is that you and your child have fun together in those preschool months and years - sharing stories, singing songs, playing games and talking about anything and everything.

### Some tips to prepare...

- Chat with your child about starting school. What do they think it will be like? What are they most looking forward to? Is there anything they're unsure or worried about?
- Look at Facebook, Instagram or the school website together and talk about the pictures, look how happy the children at Oryx are and how much fun they are having.
- Find photos of you and other family members at school, and chat about happy memories from your own school days. You could even set up a play date with children who already attend Oryx.
- Read books together about starting school. Examples include; 'I am too Absolutely Small for School' (Charlie and Lola) by Lauren Child, 'Starting School' by Janet and Allen Ahlberg, 'Topsy and Tim Start School' by Jean and Gareth Adamson, 'Harry and the Dinosaurs Go to School' by Ian Whybrow.
- If your child seems anxious about school, try focusing on the things they'll like best-maybe the sandpit, playhouse or new friends.
- Practise the school morning routine, including getting dressed and eating breakfast in time to leave.
- Practise the school run so that you're both prepared for the school morning journey. It is important that your child arrives to school promptly to begin their school day. This will give them time to settle and warm up.



## What to Expect, and Key Personnel

During our initial settling in period in the first few weeks of school your child may experience separation anxiety. This is perfectly normal behaviour, especially for a child who is starting school for the first time. It can sometimes last for a few days, but in some cases it can last for longer periods of time depending on the individual child. This is something we can work on together to help your child feel safe and secure in their new environment.

- Let your child know you are leaving and encourage them to have a fun day. If you look worried or anxious this will transfer onto your child and make the situation worse. Be positive and reassuring and let them know you will be back.
- Playing with other children whether friends or family members, or other children at the park or playgroups is all good practise for forming friendships at school. Teach your child to ask; "Can I join in?" or "Shall we share?"
- Try to get into the school routine so your child gets used to getting up, going to bed and having meals and snack times that they will get on school days.

- Bath times and stories instead of TV and iPad will help children wind down before bedtime. Also, make time in the evening to chat about your day.
- Nutritious meals and plenty of sleep will help your child concentrate, learn and thrive at school.
- If your child has naps, it would be wise to try phasing this out. This should be more manageable when they have a good bedtime routine.
- It is quite common for children's behaviour at home to change when they first start school. Don't be surprised if your little one become clingier, argumentative, lethargic, excitable or prone to tantrums for a while.
- Let your child get used to school life before introducing after school activities. It is also a good idea to keep the first few weekends quiet too, as they will likely need time to recharge, just as us adults do after beginning a new job or project.

## Before starting Foundation Stage 1 your child should be able to...

- Sit and listen for a short time.
- Enjoy being with other children.
- Use the toilet, clean themselves and wash their hands (Accidents can happen from time to time, it is advisable to keep some spare clothes in your child's locker). - **Early Years Practitioners do not toilet train your children.**
- Recognise their own name when heard.
- Take off their cardigan and put shoes and socks on.
- Hold a book and talk about pictures.
- Share toys with friends.
- Help to tidy up their toys and resources.
- Sit at a table and feed themselves at snack/lunch times.
- Use a tissue to blow/clean their nose.

## Key Personnel

|                                     |                                   |                                    |                |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Mr. Derek Laidlaw</b>            | Executive Principal               | exec.pa@oryxschool.qa              | +974 4036 0063 |
| <b>Mrs. Andrea Smith</b>            | Vice Principal<br>Head of Primary | hop@oryxschool.qa                  | +974 4036 0063 |
| <b>Mrs. Simone Franklin</b>         | Foundation Stage 1 Leader         | simone.franklin@oryxschool.qa      | +974 4036 0063 |
| <b>Miss. Paige Small</b>            | Foundation Stage 2 Leader         | catherine.mcconville@oryxschool.qa | +974 4036 0063 |
| <b>Mrs Mara Talisaysay</b>          | School administrator              | mara.talisaysay@oryxschool.qa      | +974 4036 ???? |
| <b>Mrs. Julie Gano</b>              | School Nurse                      | nurse@oryxschool.qa                | +974 3091 6800 |
| <b>Mrs. Griselda Gonsalves</b>      | Admissions Manager                | admissions@oryxschool.qa           | +974 4036 0085 |
| <b>Miss. Catherine McConville</b>   | EYFS & Year 1 Phase leader        | catherine.mcconville@oryxschool.qa | +974 4036 0063 |
| <b>Miss. Zahr</b>                   | Reception                         | reception@oryxschool.qa            | +974 4036 0063 |
| <b>Mrs. Marietta &amp; Ross-Ann</b> | Finance                           | finance@oryxschool.qa              | +974 4036 0063 |
| <b>Mrs Mariam Khan</b>              | School registrar                  | mariam.khan@oryxschool.qa          | +974 4036 0063 |
| <b>Mrs Griselda Gonsalves</b>       | Admissions officer                | Griselda.gonsalves@oryxschool.qa   | +974 4036 0063 |

# Drop off and Pick up

## Drop Off and Pick Up

| Option 1:     |       | Option 2:     |       |
|---------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| School Starts | 07:15 | School Starts | 07:15 |
| Early Pick-up | 11:45 | School Ends   | 14:00 |

- Children in Early Years can be collected after lunch. Parents must complete the early collection form and hand it back to reception for authorisation.
- Children should be dropped off and picked up by a Parent or Adult who has been registered by the school. **We will not allow any child to be picked up without permission and the required ID.**
- If you are late in dropping your child at school please report to the Reception to register your child.
- If your child is sick please report/email this to Reception by emailing [reception@oryxschool.qa](mailto:reception@oryxschool.qa) AND the Class Teacher.
- Your child should arrive to school with their school bag, a healthy snack and a healthy lunch, a water bottle, wearing sun cream, a hat and in full school uniform.
- Please **label ALL of your child's belongings!**
- It is advisable that children do not bring personal belongings, toys or valuable items into school unless requested by the Teacher. Staff will not be held responsible for lost/damaged items.
- Parents should always wait in the designated area. The class teacher will release your child to you. **Please do not enter the classroom without permission.**

## Transport

Please contact the bus company directly if you need to arrange for your child to use the Oryx School bus service. Their details can be found on our school website.

## Sun Protection

Please ensure that you have applied sun screen on your child before arriving at school each day during the summer months. It is advisable to purchase a longer lasting sun cream so that it will last the entire day.

Children are also required to wear hats outside during outdoor play. You may keep hats in your child's locker for them to access when required.

# Early Years Curriculum

At Oryx we follow the English Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, supported by Development Matters, in order to provide the best possible care and learning for your child.

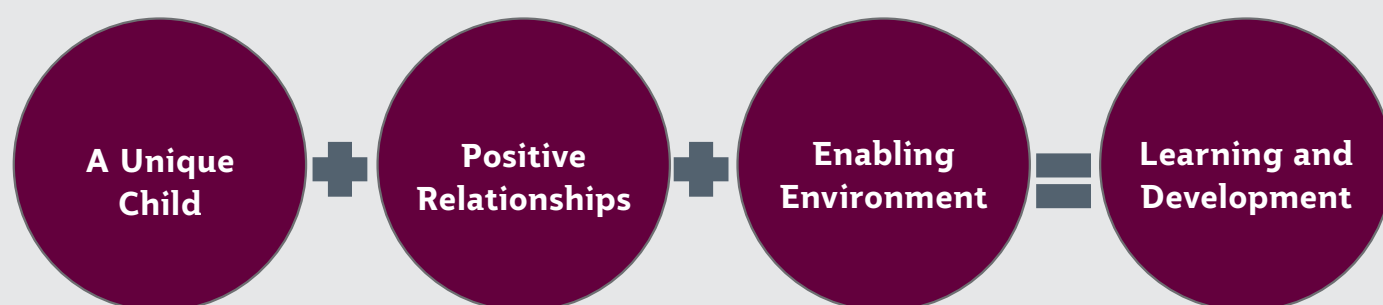
'The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework supports an integrated approach to early learning and care. It gives all professionals a set of common principles and commitments to deliver quality early education and childcare experiences to all children.'

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- **quality and consistency** in all early year's settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- **a secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- **partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practise, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

Four guiding principles shape practice in Early Years settings. These are;

1. Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
3. Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents.
4. Children learn and develop at different rates, learning is not a linear process.





# EYFS Assessment

In Early Years, we use ongoing formative assessment to plan your child's next steps in their learning. Our assessment is guided by the EYFS Framework. We will share your child's learning and attainment throughout the year on Tapestry and formally in three written termly reports and progress meetings.

In the final term of the Foundation Stage 2 year, teachers aim to provide a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, attainment against the 17 Early Learning Goals and their readiness for Year 1. This picture is presented in their final report and made up from professional reflections by teachers and discussions with parents and carers.

There are seven areas of learning that shape our programme. All areas are important and inter-connected.

The three prime areas that are particularly important for building relationships, developing a curiosity for learning and thriving within their development..

| 1. Communication and Language (C&L)    | 2. Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) | 3. Physical Development (PD) |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| Listening, Attention and Understanding | Self-Regulation                                      | Gross Motor Skills           |
| Speaking                               | Managing Self  | Fine Motor Skills            |
|  | Building Relationships                               |                              |

The four specific areas, through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied are outlined below. Teachers plan opportunities for your child's unique interests, needs and development to support their learning within these areas. Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active and through critical and creative thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.

| 4. Literacy   | 5. Mathematics     | 6. Understanding the World      | 7. Expressive Arts and Design    |
|---------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Comprehension | Number             | Past and Present                | Creating with Materials          |
| Word Reading  | Numerical Patterns | People, Culture and Communities | Being Imaginative and Expressive |
| Writing       |                    | The Natural World               |                                  |



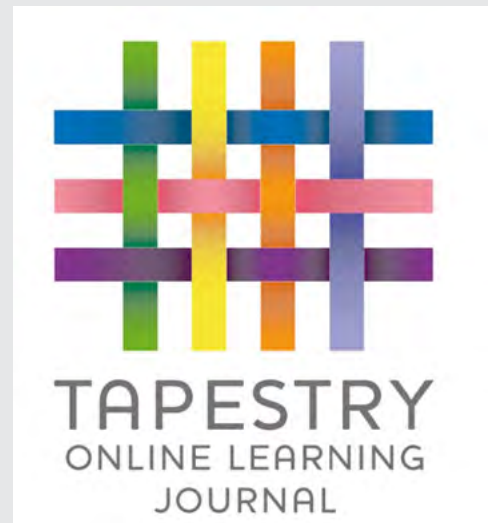


# Tapestry

At Oryx, we use an online learning journal called Tapestry that assists our early years staff and families to share and celebrate their child's learning and development.

Tapestry builds a record of your child's experiences through photos, videos and diary entries. Parents, children and teachers can all add information to a child's Tapestry profile.

- Parents play a vital role in their child's learning journey at EYFS. We want to encourage parents to take part in their child's assessment and learning and development as much as possible. Parents are especially vital when it comes to assessing children whose first language is not English. All of the information and evidence is used by the Class Teacher to then make an accurate summative assessment by the end of the year.



# Reading and Phonics

At Oryx, we follow a specially designed systematic phonics programme called Read Write Inc.

In FS1, we focus on growing children's vocabulary through nursery rhymes, poems, songs and planned talk. We place a huge emphasis on developing children's love of reading through enticing story times.

During term 3 of FS1, we introduce children to their Set 1 Speed Sounds, using mnemonics to help them memorize the sounds that letter symbols represent.

In FS2, children learn their initial letter sounds and how to form the letters with memorable rhymes. Once they know 16 sounds, we teach children to blend these sounds into words.

Toward the end of Term 1, children will take home a levelled reading book each week. Read this, and other books, every day with your child to help them progress in their reading.

By the end of FS2, our goal is for children to read simple sentences containing Set 1 sounds and 10 digraphs.

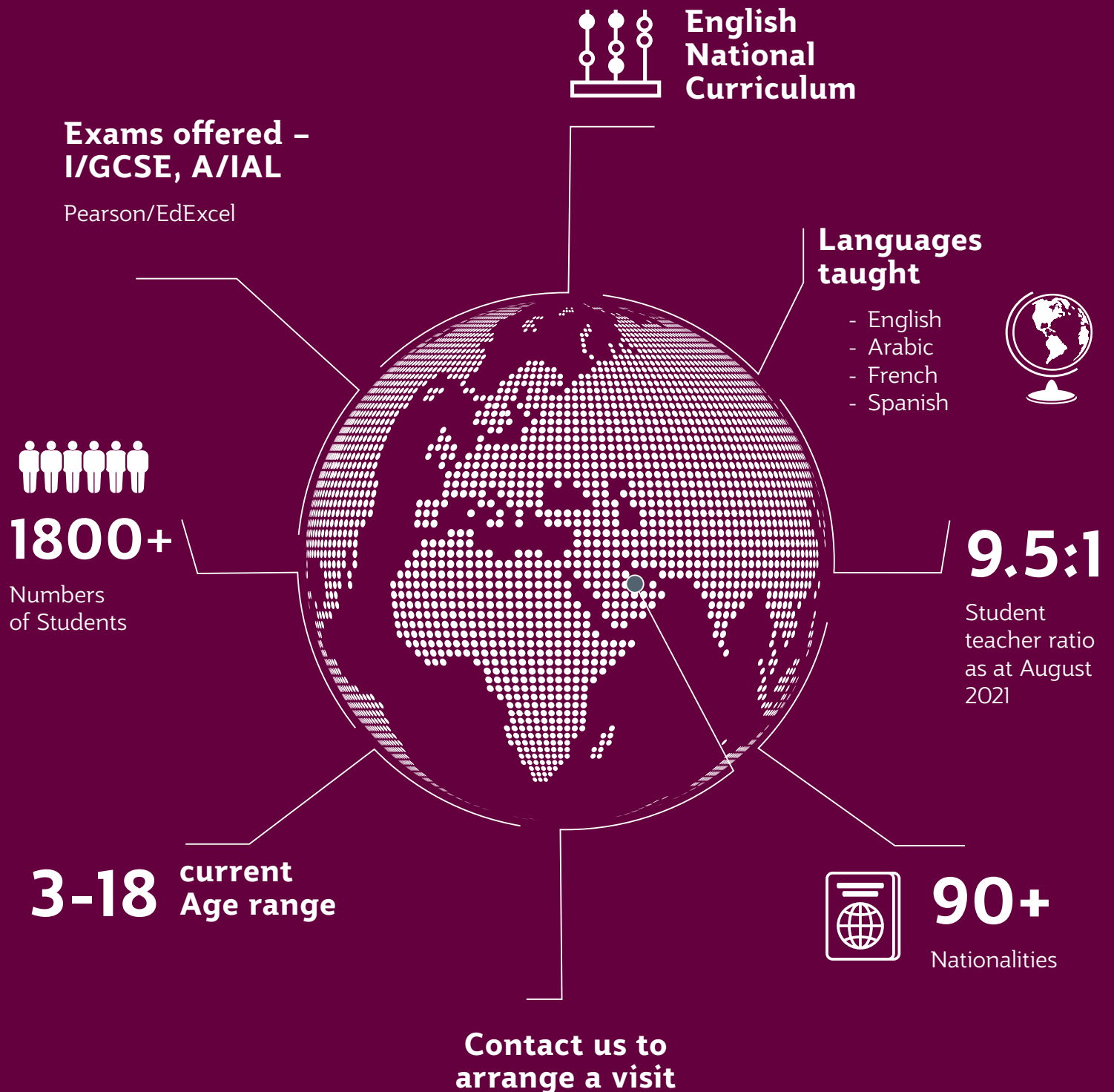


## Useful Links

- Class Dojo: <https://classdojo.com>
- Ruth Miskin Phonics Portal: <https://ruthmiskin.com>
- Tapestry website: <https://tapestryjournal.com>
- Oxford Owl: <https://oxfordowl.co.uk>



# Our school at a glance



British education for  
children aged 3-18 years

[www.oryxschool.qa](http://www.oryxschool.qa)