



مدرسة المتحدة الدولية

United School International

The Pearl Island جزيرة اللؤلؤة

an Orbital Education School

# United School International Parent Handbook

2023-2024

# Contents

Click on the link to take you to the relevant section.

[Welcome from our Executive Principal](#)

[Vision, Mission and Aims](#)

[School Ethos](#)

[School Objectives](#)

[School Calendar 2023-24](#)

[Attendance and Absence](#)

[Lateness](#)

[Bullying](#)

[Class Allocation](#)

[Communication](#)

[Drop-Off and Pick-Up Map](#)

[Parking](#)

[Daily Routines](#)

[Leaving School Unaccompanied](#)

[After School Activities](#)

[School Lunches and Snacks](#)

[Stationery Lists](#)

[Enrolment and Admissions](#)

[Concerns and Complaints](#)

[Glossary](#)

[Assemblies](#)

[Birthday Celebrations](#)

[Reporting](#)

[Illness and First Aid](#)

[Visitors](#)

[Homework](#)

[Modern Foreign Languages](#)

[Library](#)

[Parent Society](#)

[Physical Education](#)

[Policies](#)

[Stationery, Textbooks & Other School Supplies](#)

[Bring Your Own Device \(BYOD\)](#)

[Student Council](#)

[Teaching and Learning](#)

[Trips Off Site](#)

[School Uniform](#)

[Hair, Make-Up & Jewellery](#)

[Lost & Found](#)

## A Welcome from our Executive Principal

A warm welcome to United School International.

At United School International (USI) our core values provide the platform for all our young people to achieve with the resulting energy and sense of purpose making USI a truly great place to learn, study and work.

We want children to feel secure and confident, to feel supported and understood, to feel able to turn to those around them for guidance and encouragement. We work together to bring out the best in one another.

Whilst we enjoy world-class facilities in a prime location, it is our people that make our school a special place. USI will house highly talented, dedicated professionals, each with the desire to do the very best by each of the children in their charge, whether that be within or beyond the classroom, sports fields and stage.

We take an innovative approach to education and pride ourselves on having a clear vision of academic excellence, passion for subject knowledge and integrity as well as its holistic approach to all aspects that come together to build an exceptional education.

As a learning community, we are process-oriented; we work through problems, we don't shy away from challenges, we understand that getting things wrong at first is part of getting them right in the end.

We are ambitious in our aspirations but humble enough to accept that there is always more we can learn.

If our students feel confident and secure and if they enjoy their learning, then we believe they will rise to the high expectations we have of them. The pursuit of excellence is a mindset rather than a destination and we work tirelessly to support our children to become the very best they can be.

We are a collaborative and purposeful community. Our children are at the heart of everything we do and nothing pleases us more than supporting them on their educational journey.

We are excited to begin this journey with you and look forward to having you as part of our community.



Ian Temple  
Executive Principal



مدرسة المتحدة الدولية  
United School International  
The Pearl Island جزيرة اللؤلؤة  
an Orbital Education School

# United School International

## Vision, Mission and Aims

### Vision

To prepare all USI students for a rapidly changing world by instilling in them our core values of kindness, respect, a passion for learning and the pursuit of excellence.

### Mission

To provide a safe, nurturing learning environment where everyone is valued and respected. We will create ambitious learning opportunities for students that will help them develop the knowledge, critical thinking skills, and character necessary to succeed through a first-class British education.

### Aim

We aim to ensure that all USI students recognise that hard work, resilience, and commitment are the key factors of success. We will also aim to establish a culture of proactive pastoral care which will focus on their mental and physical wellbeing.



مدرسة المتحدة الدولية  
United School International  
The Pearl Island جزيرة اللؤلؤة  
an Orbital Education School

# United School International

## Ethos

Our ethos rests on the following principles: kindness, respect, a passion for learning and the pursuit of excellence. We are a school that prides itself on the ambitious education we deliver. We want our children to feel secure and confident, to feel supported and understood and be able to turn to those around them for guidance and encouragement. Our children are at the heart of everything we do, whilst we support them on their journey through a world class, holistic, international education at United School International, The Pearl.

## Aims

1. To provide an exceptional educational experience, based on the ethos, values and practices of United School International.
2. To provide an ambitious academic education and to enable each student to achieve beyond their expectation.
3. To maintain a team of teachers to whom each student is important and who can inspire subject passion and enthusiasm.
4. To enable all students to recognise academic excellence and realise that it is attainable.
5. To create a home where individuals are nurtured and the whole personality can grow.
6. To foster a caring and respectful community characterised by excellent relationships between staff and students and between the students themselves, of whatever age, culture and background.
7. To encourage all students to take risks and try something new in an environment which embraces all aspects of educational challenge.
8. To develop an outward looking, internationally minded, community of young people who have a clear understanding of the value of commitment and service to others.



## Objectives

Our objectives are a more specific embodiment of our aims and represent the specific ways in which our aims will be achieved, related to student outcomes.

### 1. **Academic Excellence**

Our students will graduate with exceptional academic skills across a broad range of disciplines. They will have the opportunity to develop a depth of knowledge in areas that they are passionate about and will fully realise their potential. Our students will be aspirational thinkers who have confidence in their own abilities.

### 2. **Broad Experiences**

Our students will leave us with a clear sense of where their passions and interests lie having experienced a wide variety of activities and opportunities outside of our formal curriculum.

### 3. **Global Citizens**

Our students will be prepared for a world with continuously fading borders and where international mindedness is essential. Our students will be compassionate and have a commitment to serving others.

### 4. **School Values**

Our students will develop a strong set of moral and ethical values that determine how they act and interact with others.

### 5. **Future Success**

Our students will not only access leading universities around the world, but they will be equipped with the skills, attitudes and attributes needed to be successful, happy and healthy for the rest of their lives.

### 6. **Character**

Our students will leave us as resilient and confident young people who think independently.

# United School International

## 2023 - 2024 School Calendar

Please visit <https://unitedschool.qa/school-life/school-calendar> to view the 2023-24 school calendar.

## Attendance and Absence

At USI, our expectation is that attendance will not fall below 95% in order for students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Requests for absence during term time should only be made if necessary and are not automatically authorised. Permission should be sought in writing from the Head of School or Executive Principal.

Daily absence should be reported to [reception@unitedschool.ga](mailto:reception@unitedschool.ga) for Primary and Secondary and [eyfsreception@unitedschool.ga](mailto:eyfsreception@unitedschool.ga) for Early Years, who will then notify the appropriate Head of School.

## Lateness

All children should be in their classroom, ready to start their first lesson at the designated time. In Primary and Secondary, if your child arrives after 7.45am they must report directly to reception who will record the attendance.

The school day in Early Years starts at 8am so any parents bringing their children to school later than this will need to report to Early Years Reception.

Any pre-arranged appointments during school time must be communicated with the appropriate Head of School.

## Bullying

Bullying can take many different forms. All of them are wrong. Bullying is unacceptable in any form. It may involve name-calling, threats or hitting. There are some less overt forms such as ignoring or excluding. These last two can be every bit as upsetting as the more obvious forms of bullying. Bullies may need help just as much as those being bullied. Some children can also, by their attitudes or their actions, get others into trouble. It is important to remember these points because bullying happens in so many ways and takes many forms.

Teachers are given regular in-service training on how to recognise and how to deal with bullying. However, it is important that parents work with us to find a solution.

- If you feel your child is being bullied speak to a teacher as soon as possible.
- Make a note of everything you know about the bullying before you speak to the teacher so that you do not forget to mention any important points.
- Remember that this may be the first time that the teacher has heard about the bullying and remember too that your child may not have told you all the facts.



- If your child is involved in a bullying incident, please do not, under any circumstance, reach out to any other parents or students directly. A School representative must be present when the two parties are discussing the issue at hand. The school or other officials should act as mediators between parents.
- Arrange to contact the school again so that you can discuss any action that has been proposed. There is a well-defined and documented school counter-bullying policy. As part of this, all pupils are given the following guidelines:

**WHO TO TELL:** If you see or suffer from any incident which could be bullying, talk to any of the following whom you trust to give you advice:

- The Executive Principal
- The Head of School
- Your Class Teacher
- Any member of staff
- Your parents or guardians
- A friend in your class/ year group

## **Class Allocation**

Each applicant is considered individually after reviewing their previous educational experience. Based on best practice, we do not generally advocate putting students in classes in advance of their age group, but will consider staying back one academic year if needed – however, this is always subject to approval from the Ministry of Education.

Accepted students are allocated to a class based on the following criteria:

- Age according to UK schools' criteria.
- Academic background
- Special circumstances based on observations and for specific social/emotional (non-academic) reasons.
- Other relevant information/evidence.

In certain cases, following a two-week review period, we may decide to place a student in a different class. It is our policy to involve parents in this process and to explain our reasons for suggesting such changes.

Class Teachers are allocated provisionally at the end of each academic year and parents are informed before the start of the new academic year. The school reserves the right to amend this list if necessary.

## Communication

Communication is key to a school relationship between parents and the school. We ask that you follow our [Communications Policy](#), available on the USI website, in liaising with the school.

During the teaching day, our staff priorities are to be working with the children, therefore all parent emails will be answered within 24 hours, except at weekends.

- Telephone or email to class teacher – for notifying Reception of lateness or absence, including if you are going to be late for pick-up.
- Email – is the preferred means of general contact as we can keep a track, forward etc. as appropriate to communicate between home and school.
- Facebook – for social updates and school news. Not for contacting teachers or notifying us of anything relating to your child.

## Educational Communication

### Early Years

Our teachers will communicate regularly through Class Dojo and most importantly face to face at the start and end of the day. Class Dojo is used to communicate whole class experiences, individual observations of each child and it is also a place we use to communicate upcoming events and learning. Each week one of the year team will send an update on the learning and focus for the week ahead. Remember our teaching teams are always available for more in depth conversations on progress, attainment or anything else you may want to discuss. Please connect to you class teacher to arrange a good time.

### Primary

Our teachers will communicate regularly through **Class Dojo** and most importantly face-to-face at the school gate. Once a week you will receive a focused observation with pictures comment and next steps for your child's learning. Each Thursday Primary staff will send an email detailing the week ahead and all that is on offer for your child including reminders, homework etc.

### Secondary

Our teachers will communicate regularly using **iSAMS**, and most importantly face-to-face during our parent/teacher evenings. A secondary school newsletter will keep parents up to date with all the happenings and events taking place in and outside of the classroom.

A monthly newsletter from our Marketing Team will be shared with all parents, featuring news and events and updates on school life. We will also post news stories on our school website, and on social media with lots of pictures of our students in action.

We recommend following the school's Facebook and Instagram accounts if you are on those platforms:

<https://www.facebook.com/USI.ThePearl>

[https://www.instagram.com/usi\\_thepearl/](https://www.instagram.com/usi_thepearl/)

## **Parent Communication**

**Please ensure that school has your up-to-date contact details.** Remember, we need to be able to contact you too, so it's vital that we know about changes to email addresses, phone numbers or your home address. This is essential in case of an emergency.

## **Parking Information**

Parents are asked to park their cars in the public car park only. The speed limit on site is 10 km/h.

To access the school premises, all vehicles will require a registered vehicle pass, which will be issued to you before your child starts school. This must be displayed clearly on the **bottom left** of the car windscreen.

## **Daily Routines**

The drop-off window is between 7:00am and 7:30am at the specific year group drop-off zone. We ask all parents to respect these times. The drop-off zones can be found on the school map, which will be sent to you as part of your Welcome Pack.

If parents need to come into school with their child, they may park in the public car park and use their designated entrance. For safety, please follow the traffic cones where applicable to make your way through the car park.

Early Years car parking is reserved for Early Years parents as we will not offer a bus service for these students.

**Registration is taken at 7:20am for Secondary**

**Registration is taken at 7:30am for Primary**

**Registration is taken at 8:00am for EYFS**

Students arriving after 7:45am will need to enter through designated gates. All Early Years students arriving late after 08:00 should report to the EYFS Reception desk. Primary and Secondary students should arrive to the main entrance and register at the main Reception desk.

If students arrive late, they will miss out on Assembly or class circle time, an important feature of our programme, and this will appear on their school record.

### **School Timings for Primary and Secondary School**

07.00	Gates open & student drop off
07.30	Gates close
07.20	Start of school day and registration taken for Secondary
07.30	Start of school day and registration taken for Primary
14.00	End of academic learning for Primary and Secondary
14.00	Optional After School Activities (ASA) begin
14.15	Buses leave for non-ASA participants
15.00	ASAs finish
15.25	Buses leave for ASA students
15.30	External ASA provision starts (parents must make own transport arrangements for pick-up)

### **School Timings for Early Years (FS1 & FS2)**

07:00-7:30	Early Drop Off in the Courtyard
7:30	Open Classrooms
7:55	Parents and Families leave
8:00	Start of the school day and registration taken If you arrive after 8:00 you need to collect a late pass from the Early Years Reception
13:45	End of the Day
14:00-14:45	After School Provision – separate sign up is needed

Students are to be picked up by parents/guardians from the designated pick-up areas.

The school playground equipment is locked outside of school hours and should not be used without staff supervision.

### **Leaving School Unaccompanied**

Parents of Secondary School students will be emailed a consent form in order for them to give permission for students to leave school without being accompanied by a parent or carer.

Students in Early Years and Primary may not leave school unaccompanied by an adult, or in Ubers or any other form of taxi. They must be collected by a parent or carer, or on the authorised school bus, if this has been booked in advance with our bus operator.

## After School Activities

All after-school options will be presented to parents in Week 1 and will start in Week 2, after the registration deadline.

Most After School Activities are run by USI staff on selected days and times during term time. Clubs offered for age-groups may include Sports, Cooking, Art, Drama and Dance. Students registered for these are expected to attend the clubs regularly, or they may lose their place. Specialised external clubs are offered at an additional cost. These are run by external qualified staff on school premises or in the nearby community throughout the school term. Some clubs may also run during the weekend and/or school break.

In Early Years we run an After School Provision programme between 14:00-14:45. These are external provider run activities that are offered at an additional cost. For more information on the programme please contact the Early Years reception. We advise waiting until your child is settled and managing the full school day before signing them up for additional activities.

## Registration for After School Activities

In order for students to participate in any of our after-school programmes, parents need to register their children in advance. For any activities or clubs where student numbers are limited, places will be filled on a first come, first served basis. Places are reviewed mid termly, and parents notified on availability.

In case of a delayed pick-up or emergencies, parents must notify the school reception before/at the end of the school day, for their children to be put into extended supervision until they are collected.

**Email:** [reception@unitedschool.qa](mailto:reception@unitedschool.qa) or [eyfsreception@unitedschool.qa](mailto:eyfsreception@unitedschool.qa)

## School Lunches and Snacks

School lunches are prepared by an external catering company. Parents are able to pre-order their children's meals online, and students in Years 4 and above can choose their own lunch using a cashless swipe-card system.

Parents may also send their children to school with a packed lunch if they prefer.

Healthy snacks for morning break-time should be brought to school from home.

If you choose to send your child to school with their own packed lunch, please ensure that the contents are healthy and nutritious. Our canteen food will not include any sweets, chocolates or

cakes, or any fizzy drinks – we request that parents follow the same guidelines when preparing packed lunches and snacks.

**Please note that food from fast-food outlets (e.g. burgers and pizza) are not permitted to be brought to school, or ordered from any delivery services.**

As a school, we believe that it is essential for students to have a healthy lunch in order to learn effectively for the entire school day. Therefore it is essential that students are sent to school with either a packed lunch, or with the ability to purchase food from the canteen.

Please note that the school operates a no-nut policy – this includes mangoes, anything containing coconut or sesame seeds, Nutella spread etc. This is vital to ensure the safety of students with allergies. Students are also requested not to share food.

## Stationery Lists

**EYFS (FS1 & FS2)** will require the following items for everyday use within the classroom. Please ensure your child has the listed items for their first day at school.

Please **ensure every item is clearly labelled** with the student's name.

## EYFS Requirements

- Water bottle
- Change of clothes, these do not need to be uniform
- Snack box and separate Lunch box

## Years 1-2 Stationery Requirements

**Key Stage 1 (Years 1 & 2)** will require the following items for everyday use within the classroom. Please ensure your child has the listed items for their first day at school.

Please **ensure every item is clearly labelled** with the student's name.

**All children should have a small pouch with 10/15 face masks always stored in their schoolbag.**

- 1 small to medium sized pencil case (no large/A4 style)
- 6 HB lead pencils (please replace throughout the year)
- 2 erasers
- 1 pencil sharpener
- 6 whiteboard markers (please replace throughout the year)
- 1 highlighter
- 4 solid glue sticks – Bostik/Pritt Stik brand preferred (please replace throughout the year)

- 30cm ruler (no bendy rulers)
- Small scissors
- Coloured pencils
- 3 plastic document wallets
- A4 clip folder (to be brought to school daily)
- Library bag
- 3 packets of tissues
- Antibacterial wipes
- Hand Sanitiser
- Paint shirt (or an old shirt)

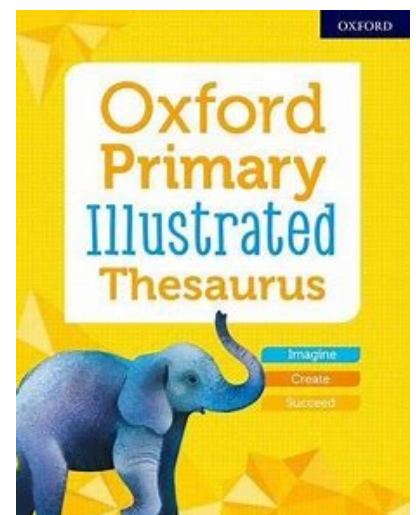
### Years 3-6 Stationery Requirements

**Years 3 - 6** will require the following items for everyday use within the classroom. Please ensure your child has the listed items for their first day at school.

Please **ensure every item is clearly labelled** with the student's name.

- An A4 plastic sleeved display folder
- 2 x document sleeve for Reading and Maths word mats
- Blue, black and red pens
- 2 x blue, black and red whiteboard markers
- 10 x lead HB pencil
- 2 x erasers (small)
- Small pencil case
- 30cm ruler wooden/plastic (no metal/no bendy)
- A USB memory stick for school and home
- 2 x glue sticks
- A protractor and compass
- An A4 clip folder
- Coloured pencils
- A library bag
- Paint shirt/old t-shirt
- 2 packets of tissues
- Hand Sanitiser
- Antibacterial wipes

A Children's Thesaurus is a resource we recommend purchasing – **Oxford Primary Thesaurus** is an example.



## Secondary School Stationery Requirements

**Years 7 and above** will require the following items for everyday use within the classroom. Please ensure your child has the listed items for their first day at school.

Please **ensure every item is clearly labelled** with the student's name.

- Blue, black and red pens
- 10 x lead HB pencil
- 2 x erasers (small)
- Small pencil case
- 30cm ruler wooden/plastic (no metal/no bendy)
- A USB memory stick for school and home
- A protractor and compass
- A library bag
- Paint shirt/old t-shirt
- Hand Sanitiser

Secondary School Students will also need to bring their own laptop to school – [please see our BYOD requirements.](#)

## Enrolment and Admissions

The school accepts applications for enrolment throughout the year. The main entry points are August and January – however, students may join during the school term if required.

In line with the regulations from the Ministry of Education in Qatar, students may not enrol with a school after the end of January.

Our [Admissions Policy](#) can be viewed on the USI website.

## Concerns & Complaints

Please refer to our [Concerns and Complaints Policy](#), available on the school website, to raise any issues.

We ask that all complaints or concerns are raised with your child's class teacher through email or by arranging a face-to-face meeting. If the issue is something you are more comfortable talking to with the Head of School, please contact their PA and they will arrange a meeting with the Head of School or our Executive Principal.



## Glossary

There are some terms we regularly use here at United School International.

These include:

<b>Block:</b>	6 weeks - 8 weeks of learning, depending on the length of the term.
<b>EAL:</b>	English as an Additional Language, for those students who need additional language support to access the curriculum
<b>DSL:</b>	Designated Safeguarding Lead – Executive Principal, Head of Primary, Head of Early Years & Head of Secondary.
<b>KS:</b>	Key Stage refers to the specific stages of a student's education according to the English National Curriculum.
<b>EYFS:</b>	Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery FS1 and Reception FS2).
<b>KS1:</b>	Years 1 and 2.
<b>KS2:</b>	Years 3 to 6.
<b>KS3:</b>	Years 7, 8 and 9 (Lower Secondary).
<b>KS4:</b>	Years 10 and 11 (Middle Secondary)
<b>KS5:</b>	Years 12 and 13 (Upper Secondary). Sometimes also referred to as 6 <sup>th</sup> Form.
<b>MFL:</b>	Modern Foreign Languages. We currently offer Arabic, French and Spanish as part of this programme.
<b>PTA:</b>	Parent Teacher Association.
<b>SEND:</b>	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
<b>TA:</b>	Teaching Assistant
<b>Topics:</b>	Our curriculum is topic-based, which is an approach where learning is linked through various themes.
<b>Year:</b>	The equivalent of Grade in the US or IB system, but the numbering is different as the UK system begins with Year 1 at age 5 (equivalent to US KG or IB KG2), and continues to Year 13 (US 12th Grade)

## Assemblies

There is one assembly per week for Secondary and Primary students in which various themes are presented by different teachers or students. The Assembly is also devoted to distributing various certificates to students and classes for their academic, behavioural or social achievements during that week.

Whatever the content, the intention is to provide a thought for the day, a reflection on a recent event, a discussion about a matter of common interest or concern, or stimulus for personal reflection. This is often tied into the school's Vision, Mission and Values, the Topic Personal Goals or a common theme.

## Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are announced during Primary assemblies each week. Should parents wish for their child to celebrate their special day with their classmates (e.g. provide a treat, birthday cake etc.) during a primary break, they should communicate any plans to the Class Teacher a few days in advance.

Parents need to be mindful of the school's no nuts policy and be aware of any allergies when bringing in treats from home to share.

Secondary Students will be asked to enjoy the celebration of their birthdays at home with their friends and families.

To celebrate birthdays in Early Years children are invited to wear what they want to school on that day. We do not allow cakes to be brought in. Children are welcome to bring in a gift for the classroom or something small for the children to take home at the end of the day. A reminder to our Early Years families that we always want to promote healthy eating.

## Reporting

On each school report, students will have an Academic grade and an 'Attitude to Learning' grade. Educational research highlights, that a student's attitude and intrinsic motivation is often reflected in their grades. At USI, we believe that confident and motivated students who have excellent organisation and study skills will thrive. This is employed within our curriculum, preparing students for independence and self-directed learning, encouraging them to be responsible and autonomous in their educational journey.

### Attitudes to Learning

Level	Descriptor
<b>1. Outstanding</b>	The student is consistently working to the best of their ability and making a targeted effort to extend themselves.
<b>2. Very Good</b>	The student is working to the best of their ability and putting a great deal of effort into all that they do.
<b>3. Good</b>	This grade tells the student that their teacher is happy with the progress that they are making while also highlighting that there is room for development in some areas.
<b>4. Unsatisfactory</b>	The teacher is not wholly happy with the current efforts made by a student and is looking for a notable improvement in the weeks ahead.

## **Early Years Reporting**

Early Years Reporting: At the start of term our teachers produce a 'Settling in Report' that reports on your child's transition to their new class and their levels of wellbeing and involvement. We then offer a face-to-face parent meeting at the end of term 1 to discuss the learning journey so far. You will then receive an end of year report that details attainment across all areas of the EYFS curriculum. There will be an opportunity to discuss this report with the class teacher. Throughout the year our teaching teams are always happy to meet and discuss your child with you - teachers will share successes verbally, using documentation and class dojo and they will also ensure they communicate any concerns. It is always important that we work together. We focus on progress and stage of development; each child is unique, and the teaching teams get to know them well to ensure the learning is personalised.

## **Primary and Secondary School Reporting**

We produce four reports through the academic year. The first report will go home 6 weeks into term and is a 'Pastoral Report' from your child's class teacher discussing how your child has transitioned into their new class, how they are organising their study, attending to activities as well as friendship groups. For some students who may be struggling in this PSED area, we will invite parents in for some steps on how to support transition.

Term 1 & Term 2 end reports will review Academic data and progress. At the end of Term 3 the report will consist of a subject review and an evaluation of the individual student's progress with a closing comment from the Class Teacher.

We do not give aggregated grades and we do not administer the UK government's SAT testing system. In line with internationally established best practice, we place more emphasis on formative (on-going) assessment and involve the students in assessing their own progress.

If at any stage throughout the year, should you wish to speak to your child's class teacher, please feel free to arrange a meeting with them by sending an email to arrange a suitable time.

## **Parent/Teacher Meetings**

Parent Teacher meetings are a specific time to discuss your child's report, however as our learning takes place all year round, we believe that parents should be able to speak to their child's teacher whenever they need to. If this is the case, please contact your child's Class Teacher to arrange a time that suits.

## **Illness and First Aid**

If a student is unwell, please do not bring them to school. In general terms, students on a course of antibiotics should not come to school; we will not normally administer prescription medication.

Please note that our policy is that students should stay at home if they are at all unwell, to minimise the risk of infection and because their ability to concentrate on their learning is impaired. Generally, if a student is unable to go outside to play, they are too unwell to come to school.

If your child vomits or suffers from diarrhoea while at school, parents will be called, and the student will be sent home. We ask that parents keep their child at home until they are fully recovered – usually 24/48hours.

If your child is unwell and will not be coming to school, or if you are going to be late dropping off or picking up, we ask that any last minute/same day notifications regarding student absence, lateness or change in pick-up arrangements are sent via email to [reception@unitedschool.qa](mailto:reception@unitedschool.qa) or [eyfsreception@unitedschool.qa](mailto:eyfsreception@unitedschool.qa)

Teachers may not be able to access emails until after the school day has finished. Our receptionist will then pass on the information directly to the teacher/relevant staff member.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the Nurse will contact the parents (or, if we cannot reach one of the parents, the emergency contact listed on the Application Form) by phone to explain the situation, request that the student is collected, and indicate where the student should be collected from.

We have a school Nurse and several qualified First Aiders on our staff team. Should it be deemed necessary by the Nurse or First Aider, we will contact the parents and/or an ambulance to administer professional care in case of an emergency.

Parents will be informed as soon as possible and if we cannot reach them by phone, we will contact the emergency contact listed on the Application Form.

## **Head Lice**

Head lice are, and have always been, a common problem in schools. Students suspected of having head lice should be treated with utmost discretion. If a parent discovers that their child has head lice, the class teacher must be informed promptly. If lice are discovered in school, parents will be informed, and the student will be sent home. Parents are responsible for following the guidelines and administering effective treatment at home before their child returns to school.

General guidelines and helpful information can be found on the following links:  
[kidshealth.org](http://kidshealth.org) and [headlice.org](http://headlice.org)

### **Infectious Diseases**

Parents must inform the school immediately if their child is suffering from any contagious disease. Parents will be asked to provide a doctor's certificate which states that their child is fit to return to school.

The school Nurse will attend to all on-site first aid as required.

### **Medical History & Regular Checks**

Upon enrolment, parents must complete an information sheet and notify the school of any allergies or medical conditions.

Please note that, as a private school, we do not have regular school medical checks. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child is registered at a local health centre and that the necessary appointments and immunisations are complete and have appropriate health insurance.

### **Visitors**

All non-parent visitors will be issued with a Visitor's badge at Reception and accompanied to the meeting room if appropriate. Any requests for visitors should be made in writing to the Head of the School in advance.

### **Homework**

Although research on homework is inconclusive, at United School International, we believe that it is an important part of educating our students to take ownership and responsibility of their learning whilst embedding strong structures for lifelong learners.

- It encourages students to develop investigative skills, to use their initiative and to be more independent in their learning.
- It enables students to consolidate and extend what they have learned in the classroom.
- It gives students an opportunity to talk about their schoolwork with their families.
- It enables students to check their own progress.

In Early Years we don't have specific homework tasks. For home learning we suggest that you spend time with your child completing a range of activities from sharing a book, completing a puzzle, talking, drawing or going on a walk together. Once children are at the right stage of

learning we will send home a reading book, more information on how to use the book will be communicated by the class teacher.

In **Primary School** we endeavour to make homework meaningful, emphasise thinking skills rather than quantity and time spent, make sure the homework is accessible to all learners and has a positive impact on student motivation. Teachers will set students homework every week. Parents and carers should treat statements from their children such as "I don't have any homework" with extreme scepticism, as even if we do not send home a written task, each night students will have reading and spellings to practice.

The length of time on the tasks will develop, from 20 minutes in Year 1, developing to Year 6 when it should take almost 40 minutes in preparation for Secondary education.

	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	Phonics Task Reading 15 mins Spellings	Math task Reading 15 mins Spellings	Topic task Reading 15 mins Spellings	Phonics task Reading 15 mins Spellings	Reading 15 mins Math task
<b>Year 2</b>	Literacy Task Reading Spellings	Math Task Reading Spellings	MFL Task Reading Spellings	Topic Task Reading Spelling	Literacy task Math task Reading
<b>Year 3</b>	Literacy Task Reading Spellings	Math Task Reading Spellings	MFL Task Reading Spellings	Topic Task Reading Spelling	Literacy task Math task Reading
<b>Year 4</b>	Literacy Task Reading Spellings	Math Task Reading Spellings	MFL Task Reading Spellings	Topic Task Reading Spelling	Literacy task Math task Reading
<b>Year 5</b>	Literacy Task Reading Spellings	Math Task Reading Spellings	Science Task Reading Spellings	MFL Task Reading Spellings	Grammar Task Reading Spellings
<b>Year 6</b>	Literacy Task Reading Spellings	Math Task Reading Spellings	Science Task Reading Spellings	MFL Task Reading Spellings	Grammar Task Reading Spellings

Students will have a homework diary and all homework should be sent in each day. Should there be a reason why your child missed homework, please add a note to their homework diary.

## **Secondary**

Homework will be set that supports the learning in the classroom. All subjects will regularly set homework which will quite often support enquiry-based learning and involve research needed for the next lesson.

## Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)

The language of all instruction and general school communication is English. Modern Foreign Language (MFL) classes are an exception, where teachers will encourage the use of the language being studied. Our students are from an international community, and we understand the importance of building students' language skills as an integral part of their development and sense of self. All lessons will be taught in English, and we will follow all Ministry guidelines for our Arabic students.

With students joining our school from all corners of the globe, our English as an Additional Language (**EAL**) team takes on the exciting challenge of ensuring that all students are equipped with the necessary language tools to enable them to make the most of their time here at USI.

We will offer French and Spanish to all students from Year 1, and our After School Programme will have many opportunities for further developing language skills, cultural clubs and cookery classes.

## Library

We have three libraries in the campus; one for our younger students in Early Years, one for Lower Primary, and another for Upper Primary and Secondary - as well as Learning Hubs for break-out learning zones for messy play and project construction.

Our libraries benefit both students and staff alike, with a bank of wonderful library books, and space for quiet study. Any school library books should be returned to the library as appropriate.

## Parent Society

Any successful school requires involvement and engagement from its parent community. USI is no different, and invite parents to join our Parent Society each school year. The Society helps to organise school events such as International Fairs, Family Fun Days and plays a vital role in ensuring close links between parents and teachers and the school administration.

Details about how to join the Parent Society can be found at <https://unitedschool.ga/parent-zone/parent-society>

## Physical Education

PE lessons and sports activities take place in our school campus using our specialized facilities and taught by UK qualified teachers and external, vetted specialist staff.

Early Years (FS1 & 2) and Primary School (Years 1-6) students should come to school in their PE uniform on the days when they have PE in their timetable – this is to maximise lesson time and ensure that time is not wasted whilst students change in and out of their uniform. They will remain in their PE uniform for the whole school day.

Secondary School students should come to school in their regular uniform on PE days, and will change into the PE uniform for PE lessons. They will change back to their regular uniform once the PE lesson is over, unless it is the end of the school day.

If a student is attending a sports-based After School Activity, they should bring in their PE uniform to change into during the break between the end of the school day and the start of the ASA.

All specialist Early Years PE activities take place on the school premises.

### **PE Kit:**

For all lessons, as part of the USI PE policy, appropriate PE kit should be worn.

### **Practical PE Kit:**

The USI PE kit consists of the following items:

- USI PE t-shirt / house t-shirt
- USI PE shorts
- USI PE skort (females)
- USI PE tracksuit bottoms
- Trainers that provide support around the ankle (no pumps/flat soled pumps such as vans, converse)
- Socks
- Hat (if outside in the hotter months)
- Water bottle
- Hair bobble (hair tie) for those with medium/long hair.
- No jewellery – *if ears have recently been pierced, tape must be worn over the piercings.*



### Swimming kit:

- Appropriate swim attire:
  - Boys: shorts/ trunks/ *swim top*.
  - Girls: swimming costume (not a two piece), swim top, swimming leggings.
  - Students who wish to wear additional clothing to further cover up such as swim leggings/ top should ensure these are not of a cotton material.
- Swimming hat:
  - Silicone swimming hats are preferred to keep hair dry and maintain hygiene of the pool. Hairdryers are limited in school and in an A/C building, we need to prevent illness.
- Goggles: not ones that cover the nose.
- Towel
- Flip flops/ swim shoes. In the event of an emergency, students will need to exit the building as quickly as possible.
- No jewellery - if ears have recently been pierced, tape must be worn over the piercings.

### Exemptions from PE Lessons:

At times, if a student finds that they are unable to partake in a lesson physically due to illness or injury, they are required to take the steps below:

- A medical note must be provided stating the reason for the absence and confirming the length of time this will be applied to.
- If the reason does not require medical attention, a note stating the reason why, from the parent, must be brought to the lesson or emailed via the school's PE email address: [usipe@unitedschool.qa](mailto:usipe@unitedschool.qa)
- If a pupil cannot physically take part within the PE lesson, practical PE kit must still be brought as students can adopt a variety of roles and continue with their learning; these will include being a coach, manager, official and scorer.

Adhering to the above will fully enable participation levels to be at the maximum within lessons. Please do not hesitate to contact the PE department should you have any questions about any of the above information.

### Expectations in PE Lessons:

Below, you will see the school's PE expectations within all PE lessons. These are located around the PE department and in the sports facilities for students to view.

# Expectations in PE



مدرسة المتحدة الدولية  
United School International  
The Pearl Island جزيرة اللؤلؤة  
an Orbital Education School

1. Arrive **on time** to every lesson and ready to learn.
2. **6 minutes changing time**, from the final person entering the changing rooms, after the register has been taken.
3. If excused, **a medical note** must be included in a **parent email** stating the reasons why.  
**PE kit** must still be brought to adopt another role within the lesson.
4. No items of jewellery are permitted. Any earrings that cannot be removed must be taped.
5. Aim for excellence and always demonstrate your best efforts.

**All students should strive to demonstrate the core values of our school.**

RESPECT

INTEGRITY

EXCELLENCE

RESPONSIBILITY

COMPASSION

## Policies

All of our school policies can be found on our website at  
[unitedschool.qa/school-life/school-policies](https://unitedschool.qa/school-life/school-policies)

## Stationery, Textbooks & Other Essential School Supplies

School provides exercise books and learning resources for all students. Stationery lists are shared with parents at the start of each term. Please refer to your Welcome Pack for more information.

## BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)

Secondary School students are required to bring their own laptop to school. Full details regarding the BYOD policy and laptop requirements can be found on our website at  
<https://unitedschool.qa/school-life/bring-your-own-device>

## **Student Council**

The aim of the Student Council is to work in partnership with the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), staff and students for the benefit of the whole school community, representing the views of the student body on matters of concern to them. The students elect a class representative and a deputy at the beginning of the academic year.

The Student Council is led by a chairperson that is elected through a democratic whole-school election process. In making sure the Council is led efficiently, there are two officers, a secretary, and a treasurer, who assist the Chairperson in sustaining transparency of the topics discussed and decision made.

The Student Council addresses any questions to appropriate members of the school community such as the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) or the PTA and makes sure feedback is regularly given to the student body itself. School Prefects in Year 6 are given various roles and responsibilities to represent the student body and assist in the smooth running of the school.

## **Teaching & Learning**

We are passionately committed to an interdisciplinary approach to learning. We believe this enriches the curriculum and allows our learners to make connections between their work. By drawing on connections from the real world and real-life experiences, the curriculum becomes more relevant for our learners and enabling the transference of knowledge, skills, and understanding. This is also an approach which better allows the school to fulfil its commitment to meet the individual needs of all learners and empowers teachers to be imaginative and innovative in their daily practice.

### **Early Years**

The focus is on learning through play. Young learners are invited to discover the world around them at carefully planned learning stations which focus on different areas of the curriculum which aid their physical and social development. In Early Years and Lower Primary school, our students follow the Read, Write Inc Phonics scheme of work, developing their Reading and Writing skills from FS2.

### **Primary School**

Curricular areas are integrated meaningfully into a widely embracing theme, which change during every block. Themes tend to focus on an area of the Curriculum such as Humanities or Science, but English skills are at the heart of every theme. Skills are practiced across the entire curriculum and thematic links are made in Mathematics and specialist subject such as French, Physical Education, Music, and Dance but these subjects tend to be more stand-alone in their nature.

## Secondary School

All children are unique and learn in different ways. Our teachers understand this and will use a range of pedagogy that will not only challenge your child's comfort zones but introduce new methods of learning that will help tackle the most complex of problems. They will use audio, kinesthetic and visual learning techniques when different teaching pedagogies are employed by the teacher. They will explore how enquiry-based learning, critical thinking, analysing and evaluating problems will help them prepare for the future.

## Trips Off-Site

Visits are incorporated into the curriculum to enhance student learning. When students are off-site, behaviour expectations are particularly high. An email is sent to parents in advance of the trip indicating what materials or clothing may be required. Generally, a little pocket money for a drink or snack may be appropriate.

All trips must be approved by the Ministry of Education with detailed reasons why the trip enhances classroom learning and the benefits for the students.

Information about the trip will also indicate the expected timings, arrangements for transportation and dress code (normally uniform, but other clothing may be more appropriate depending on the activity). A trip leader will be identified, and their contact details shared with parents for each trip.

We organise Residential Trips for Upper Primary & Secondary students ranging from 2-5 days, once during the academic year. These trips are in addition to the regular topic-related outings and are an extremely valuable part of the curriculum. Residential trips are optional, as they are not included in the school fees, but we aim to keep costs to a minimum to encourage all students to participate.

Please ensure that your child's passport & ID is up to date and that they have appropriate medical insurance prior to a residential trip. A full risk assessment is carried out for all trips in advance.

## School Uniform

School uniform encourages a sense of unity and common purpose and provides a sense of belonging. Our uniform providers are **Zaks Uniforms**.

All items brought into school (including clothing, lunch boxes, water bottles and laptops) should be clearly marked with the student's name. Different family circumstances will mean different quantities, but please ensure you have a sufficient amount for daily wear.

“My uniform is in the wash” is not an acceptable excuse, all students must come to school in their uniform every day.

Details of the school uniform, including the catalogue, price list and information about how to purchase uniform items are on our website at <https://unitedschool.qa/school-life/school-uniform>

The pop-up uniform shop will be open on the school campus a few days before the start of each term, and items can also be purchased online, or in-person at the Zaks store. Details are on the website.

All students must wear plain black shoes (not trainers) whilst at school, unless taking part in PE or sporting after school activities.

All girls’ skirts must be below the knee.

USI backpacks are available to purchase, but are not mandatory. Students may use other bags.

PE trainers must not have black or dark soles which may mark the sports hall floor. Soles should be white, or made from non-marking material.

On days students have Swimming, the following items are required, swimming cap, Flip-flops. Girls: one piece swimming suit and long sleeved t-shirt for walking from the changing rooms to the swimming pool. Boys: swimming shorts/trunks and long sleeved t-shirt for walking from the changing rooms to the swimming pool. Girls that usually wear tights must wear leggings and socks (in school uniform colours). This is much safer and more hygienic. Jewellery should not be worn on PE or swimming days. This is due to health and safety.

## Secondary School Uniform Expectations



- Hair is neat and tidy
- Hair colour should be natural, extreme trends are not permitted
- Tie is the correct length (see the example in the picture) and is covering the top button
- Shirt is tucked in all the way around
- Navy trousers or tartan skirt (must be below the knee)
- Plain black shoes (no trainers)
- No jewellery or makeup (including painted nails)
- Girls wearing earrings are allowed 1 stud earring per ear only
- Mobile phones should be switched off or silent mode and in bags for the duration of the school day

## Secondary School Footwear Expectations

All students must wear plain black shoes (not trainers) whilst at school, unless taking part in PE or sporting after school activities.

### Acceptable Footwear



### Unacceptable Footwear

- All black only, no visible branding
- Girls' shoes must be flat – no heels



- No trainers, pumps, plimsols, Velcro or sports trainer type shoes
- No branded trainers e.g. Nike, Adidas, Converse, Skechers
- No boots

## **Hair, Make Up & Jewellery**

Students who have long hair are required to have it tied back neatly for school. This prevents potential safety problems during physical activities, painting and play, as well as hygiene issues while they are eating and the prevention of spreading head lice.

Hair colour should be natural and no mohawks, shaven text or extreme trends are permitted during term time.

Make up is not permitted on students unless we have a school performance and the correct stage make up will be used. Jewellery is also not to be worn in school as it has the potential of causing injury during sport and during outdoor playtime. Any student who wears jewellery will be asked to remove it and it will be placed in their school bags.

To avoid loss of expensive or sentimental pieces please do not send your child to school with jewellery.

## **Lost & Found**

Items left in the school unattended will be placed in the lost and found box, located in the relevant Reception areas.