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# Kindergarten Parent Handbook 2023-2024

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## Welcome

The Kindergarten (KG) team welcomes your child and family into our vibrant learning community.

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

This handbook contains important information about the school year.

Warm regards,

Tiffany Hill  
Kindergarten Principal

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# Organization

## Contacting the Kindergarten

Position	Name	Phone	Email
Principal	Tiffany Hill	808 6365	<a href="mailto:kg.principal@thekaustschool.org">kg.principal@thekaustschool.org</a>
Associate Principal	Susannah Wilcox	808 6403	<a href="mailto:susannah.wilcox@thekaustschool.org">susannah.wilcox@thekaustschool.org</a>
Office Coordinator	Vaishnavi Upadhyaya	808 6320	<a href="mailto:TKS.Kindergarten@thekaustschool.org">TKS.Kindergarten@thekaustschool.org</a>
East Reception	Janine Engelbrecht	808 6408	<a href="mailto:TKS.Kindergarten@thekaustschool.org">TKS.Kindergarten@thekaustschool.org</a>
West Reception	Tracy Rahmer	808 6267	<a href="mailto:TKS.Kindergarten@thekaustschool.org">TKS.Kindergarten@thekaustschool.org</a>
KG Nurse West	Rachel A Ambas	808 6312	<a href="mailto:kg.nurse1@thekaustschool.org">kg.nurse1@thekaustschool.org</a>
KG Nurse East	Nina C Cuales	808 6212	<a href="mailto:kg.nurse2@thekaustschool.org">kg.nurse2@thekaustschool.org</a>

## Contacting Your Child's Teacher

Please understand that during the hours that children are in school, teachers may not be free to check emails. Teachers check parent communications before and after school. If you need to contact your child's teacher urgently, please call reception, and we will do our best to get a message to the teacher.

## Kindergarten Faculty

**Curriculum Coordinator:** Natasha Cowdy

**Pedagogical Coordinators:** Hannele Al Uariachi, Aricia Cox

**Director of Learning & Innovation:** Julian Edwards

**Director of Learning Support:** Zachary Berezowski

**Learning Support Teachers:** Inna Polianska, Angelle Thibodeaux, Che'te Bey, Stephanie Huestis

**Educational Psychologist:** Fatima Rehman

**Counselors:** LaTanya Weaver, Lujain Alafif

**Information Digital Literacy Coaches:** Candace Taylor-Weber, Elaine Manalastas

K1	K2	K3
<b>Grade Level Teachers</b> Amnah AbuShaheen Gitta Bakonyi Kate Couling Rosalie van Mierlo Samantha Wilson Hamad Moussa Sarah Sharp Smita Vaidya Sara Alaslani	<b>Grade Level Teachers</b> Annemiek Havinga Chelle Jones Dawn Verdoni Jerae Gamble Joshua Doyle Katarina Sladakovic Sezin Bozkurt Mutlu Susan Bryceland Sanne Pfefferkorn Lama Khalofa	<b>Grade Level Teachers</b> Ana Ferrufino Kate Adaci Charis Fack Fabiana Queiroz Glenda Forgie Kunimi Bermudez Nicola Antoniuk Gayani Newns
<b>Single Subject Teachers</b>		
<b>Islamic Studies:</b> Dina Akeel <b>Arabic:</b> Afnan Abdu, Wid AlSulaimani <b>PE:</b> Zack Smith, Te Haurawhiti Teddy <b>Creative Arts:</b> Katie Hoffman, Olga Pacheco <b>Visual Arts:</b> Lisa Barrington		

## School Calendar

[2023-2024 School Calendar](#)

## School Hours

Students may arrive between 7:45 and 8:10. School hours are as follows:

### First Day of School

All children's first day of school is Monday, August 21st. Children will be released early from August 23rd -September 15th. Student drop-off begins at 7:45. Class instruction begins promptly at 8:15 each morning. Students are counted as tardy from 8:15. Dismissal times are as follows:

### August 21st - September 7

K1 11:15 AM

K2 12:00 PM

K3 2:00 PM

### **September 10th onwards**

K1 12:15 PM

K2 1:00 PM

K3: 8:15 - 14:00 (Tuesday Early Release time 13:00)

## **Absent Students**

### **Sickness day 1 and 2**

For the first two days of sickness, parents must notify the teacher, copying in the school receptionist by email before the school day begins.

### **All Other Absences**

If your child will be out of school for any other reason, including the following, you must inform the teacher and complete the [Student Absence Notification Form](#).

- Illness greater than two days
- Hospital visit - (appointment letter required)
- Compassionate leave
- Birth of sibling

### **Leaving School Early/Arriving at school late**

If students need to leave before the end of the school day, the parent must contact the school at the beginning of the day to explain the reason and make arrangements with the teacher. A student cannot leave early unless notification has been received from the parent. When you collect your child please advise the receptionist that they are leaving the building. It is expected that students are dropped off and picked up on time.

### **Late Attendance (Tardy)**

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

### **Procedure for Addressing Attendance**

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

- After 8 absences, the parents will be contacted by email to remind them of the Attendance Policy/Guidelines in addition to the impact on learning of inconsistent attendance.

- After 13 absences a meeting will be arranged between the school and the parents to address the student’s attendance, reiterate the impact of attendance on learning and ensure parents are aware of the Attendance Policy and Procedures/Guidelines.
- At 16 absences, a final written warning will be issued to the parents and a copy of the written warning will be shared with KAUST HR.
- If a student exceeds 18 absences (accumulating 19 or more absences for the year): the student will receive a modified report card noting that there is not enough learning evidence to report progress.
  - Grade promotion will be reviewed with the Principal and Director of Student Services given the learning time missed during the year.
  - A meeting will take place with a representative from KAUST HR and the division principal to discuss the continuation of enrollment at TKS. Violation of the school attendance policy may result in the discontinuation of enrollment.

## Arrival and Dismissal

### Parent drop off / pick up

Parents or guardians who drive their child to school must park in a designated parking space and walk their child to the main entrance or to the classroom. Dropping children in the parking lot is not permitted. Children must be supervised by parents or school staff at all times. Parents should collect their child(ren) from reception in each building at dismissal time.

If children will be walking or biking to/from school, they must be accompanied door-to-door by their parents.

### Bus

Bus services are available before and after school, based on registration and availability. Buses and bus stops are organized and operated by SAPTCO, and a KG staff member supervises the children on each bus. Parents or caregivers must supervise children at their bus stops; KG children may not walk to and from home alone. Only children may ride school buses. Please note the following expectations for children riding the bus:

- Follow the bus supervisor’s instructions
- Stay seated with seatbelt on
- Use indoor voices
- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- No eating on the bus

If there is no one at the afternoon stop to collect your child, they will be brought back to school, and you will be contacted to collect them. Please note that the bus supervisors can only release your child to their parents or regular caregivers. Any changes should be advised to the relevant Building Receptionist.

To register your child for the school bus service or to make any changes, please fill the bus forms- [Morning bus form](#), [Afternoon Bus form](#). Your bus details will be forwarded to the next grade level at the end of the year. There is no need to re-register each school year. If you



have more than one child in school you must complete a link for each child. Note a child must be registered for the bus in order to ride it.

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

### **Daycare**

Daycare services are available after school on a paid basis and provided by a separate organization, Building Blocks, which is located near to TKS Kindergarten. Staff from Building Blocks will collect registered children from the Kindergarten. Parents should confirm with Kindergarten reception and the teacher if their child will be going directly to Building Blocks to ensure a smooth transition at the end of the day.

For daycare registration, please reach out to the [Building Blocks Registrar](#).

\*It is the responsibility of parents to communicate changes in transportation to or from the school to the homeroom teacher and reception.

## **Items Children Need for School**

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

- backpack (small and lightweight)
- lunch/snack box
- a reusable water bottle (labeled clearly with your child's name) filled with drinking water
- extra masks

Items that may be stored at school (clearly labeled):

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

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

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

## **Dress for Students**

Clothing should be comfortable, keeping in mind that children will be involved in play, which may be messy. Shoulders and mid-sections should be covered. We recommend that students

wear suitable footwear and clothing that does not restrict or obstruct movement for active play, such as sneakers/trainers/runners.

## **Snacks and Lunch**

Within the daily schedule, two breaks are set aside for eating. Please make sure your child comes to school each day with enough food and drink to cover the time (s)he is at school, as food is not provided by the school.

Children should bring refillable bottles to school with names marked clearly on them. Water fountains in the hallways dispense filtered drinking water and chilled water is available. Students are encouraged to stay hydrated and can drink water whenever they need to.

There is no availability of microwaves to heat food or refrigerators to keep food cold.

We place an emphasis on nutritious food and drink. General eating habits are formed in the first few years of life. Sweets and processed foods are not a balanced nutritional snack and should not be packed. Children are encouraged to drink water whenever they need to. Drinking water is readily available for children to refill their own bottles.

Please speak to your child's teacher should you have any questions or concerns about your child's eating habits at school.

## **Lost and Found**

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

## **Birthdays**

Children's birthdays are recognized and celebrated within each class, as part of our focus on building strong class communities and developing a sense of belonging. Each class will have its own routine for celebrating. Contact your child's teacher in advance if you would like to bring small, individualized food treats to share with the class during snack time. Please do not bring presents or party bags for children; these should be reserved for private birthday parties. Birthday party invitations may only be distributed at school if the entire class is being invited.

# Learning and Teaching

## Kindergarten Philosophy Statements

As an IB World School, we use the PYP Early Years framework to guide our curriculum. We provide a standards-aligned, concept-based, inquiry-driven program where children are empowered to be active participants in their own learning. Through play, children inquire, question, wonder, and theorize about themselves, others, and the world around them.

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

We believe that our youngest students come to us as unique individuals with a wealth of prior knowledge, skills, and experiences. They are curious and capable learners with a sense of agency, bringing valid skills, preferences, and understandings to the educational process. They have an innate desire to learn and make sense of the world around them.

### **Children’s play is an inquiry into the world around them.**

Through play, children learn who they are and how they connect to those around them; they learn how the world works by constructing, testing, confirming, and revising their early perceptions and ideas. Play enables children to develop a sense of autonomy and identity, as well as an ability to make informed decisions, express their ideas and demonstrate their understanding in multiple ways.

### **Children learn through relationships with other people.**

Children construct their knowledge and understanding of the world by interacting with other people. They learn through engaging socially and participating in collaborative learning activities. Our learning community is committed to building partnerships between parents, teachers, and children in order to optimize children’s learning and well-being.

### **The learning environment actively supports physical, social, intellectual, and emotional development.**

Environments are intentionally designed to include all children and to meet their diverse needs. Provocations are created to invite exploration, provoke curiosity, engage the senses and celebrate the children’s learning journeys. Children are encouraged to be active and take thoughtful risks, recognize their own accomplishments, take responsibility for their actions, and develop resilience and positive self-esteem. Spaces are flexible and can be transformed in multiple ways to respond to learners’ interests.

### **Teachers are facilitators of learning, researchers, collaborators, and co-learners.**

Teachers support and encourage children on their learning journeys, taking into account the diverse needs of our learners. They recognize the reciprocal relationship of teaching and

learning and provoke and challenge the children’s ideas through the use of open-ended questions and provocations. By observing children closely and listening carefully to their theories, teachers come to understand the children’s thinking and make informed decisions about how to guide children in their learning.

## Curriculum Framework

The Kindergarten is part of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) at TKS and therefore our program is based on this philosophy and curriculum framework ([www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)). Four units of inquiry are planned collaboratively in each grade level each year based on the PYP transdisciplinary themes. The units of inquiry are developed around a central idea for the children to explore, while also developing knowledge, understanding, skills, and personal attributes through the inquiry process. Units take into account the children’s natural interests, with room left for emergent projects to develop. All subject areas: Language, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, the Arts, and Physical, Social, and Personal Education (PSPE), are integrated in the units of inquiry wherever possible. The IB provides information for parents about the Primary Years Programme [here](#).

[KG1 Curriculum Overview](#)

[KG2 Curriculum Overview](#)

[KG3 Curriculum Overview](#)

## Kindergarten Programme of Inquiry

	<b>Who We Are</b> <i>An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.</i>	<b>Sharing the Planet</b> <i>An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.</i>	<b>How we express ourselves</b> <i>An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.</i>	<b>How the world works</b> <i>An inquiry into the natural world and its laws; the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.</i>
<b>K1</b>	<b>Building relationships develops a sense of belonging and sense of self.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How we develop a sense of self</li> <li>• How we develop relationships</li> <li>• How we develop a sense of belonging for ourselves and others</li> </ul>	<b>Exploring and connecting to environments leads to new discoveries and understandings.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How we explore our environments</li> <li>• How we connect to our environments</li> <li>• Discoveries made through exploring our environments</li> </ul>	<b>Engaging with different media allows people to extend their creativity and express themselves in unique ways.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ways we engage in different media</li> <li>• How we extend our creativity</li> <li>• Our unique ways of self expression</li> </ul>	<b>Through exploring materials people develop theories and come to new discoveries.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How exploring materials builds an understanding of their properties.</li> <li>• New discoveries and theories we have from exploring materials</li> </ul>

<b>K2</b>	<p><b>Developing personal strategies help us learn and build relationships.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recognizing Feelings</li> <li>● Our Rights &amp; Responsibilities</li> <li>● How our actions affect others</li> </ul>	<p><b>Through connecting with the natural world we can make discoveries and be inspired.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How we connect to the natural world</li> <li>● What discoveries we can make about the natural world</li> <li>● How the natural world inspires us</li> </ul>	<p><b>Through the process of investigation, we develop theories and come to new understandings.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The role of investigation</li> <li>● How we develop investigations to test theories</li> <li>● Discoveries made through our investigations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Stories are created, expressed and live in our world.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Where stories live and what they express</li> <li>● How we connect to storytelling</li> <li>● How we are inspired to create and express stories</li> </ul>
<b>K3</b>	<p><b>Experiencing, observing and recording changes helps people understand themselves and their world.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Changes in our world</li> <li>● Changes that we experience</li> <li>● Observing and recording changes</li> </ul>	<p><b>People create and interpret signs and symbols to communicate ideas and information.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Signs and symbols in our daily lives</li> <li>● How people use signs and symbols to communicate</li> <li>● How we create and understand signs and symbols</li> </ul>	<p><b>Investigating living things builds understanding of how we share the natural world.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How we understand living things</li> <li>● The relationship between living things and their environment</li> <li>● Our responsibility towards living things</li> </ul>	<p><b>Constructing and deconstructing helps people develop their understanding of the world.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Constructing and deconstructing in the world around us</li> <li>● Effective construction and deconstruction techniques</li> <li>● How (scientific) understanding helps us to construct and deconstruct</li> </ul>

## Social Competence

In the KG, the joy of learning and respect for others are considered a primary focus. Communication with families is key. We work together to resolve discipline problems and to plan for guidance. The efforts of staff, parents, and administrators are all important in the creation of an optimal learning environment. Teachers work with parents as partners in their child's development of social competence. Parents will be contacted when a pattern of challenging behavior emerges or an incident occurs involving the safety of their child and/or others (another child or staff member). Please see our [Parent Guide to Social Competence](#) for further information about our approach.

## Assessment

Assessment is a natural, ongoing, and important part of daily learning. Teachers observe children in a wide range of contexts, using a variety of observational tools to:

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

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

## Single Subject Classes

In addition to homeroom teachers, we also have specialist teachers who support teaching and learning in the subject areas below:

### Host Country Culture and Language

In Kindergarten, one of the ways we promote diversity and inclusion is by embedding Host Country Culture and Language into our curriculum. Our aim is to promote multilingualism, engage families and help all children understand and experience linguistic diversity. By linking children's various linguistic and cultural worlds to our host country, we open the door to all languages and cultures and bring cultural and linguistic diversity to life.

The transference nature of multi-language learning means that all children, irrespective of their home language, benefit from exposure to both English and Arabic. As children listen to stories, sing songs, and interact meaningfully in English and Arabic, they notice what is the same and different between the two languages and make connections to other languages they speak. Teachers help children draw on their linguistic repertoire, their known languages, naturally and flexibly, using language skills from one language to support another. Children have opportunities to inquire into the similarities and differences between writing systems in Arabic and English (and their home languages) as they compare their name labels and other classroom writing in Arabic and English and experiment with mark-making in both scripts.

### Islamic Studies

Islamic Studies in the KG is an optional class, opted into at the time of joining TKS. Parents may inform the school should they wish to opt their child into or out of the class at any time. The KG Islamic Studies program aims to develop knowledgeable and caring students. It is integrated across time, place, and culture and built upon a variety of resources. The curriculum is arranged into four strands: Quran, Islamic beliefs, stories and lessons, and Islamic practices. These strands are linked to each other. They also provide links to other subject areas of the PYP. The Islamic Studies program is taught through units of inquiry using a play-based approach.

## Arts

Arts are an integral part of our Kindergarten curriculum. The Arts (dance, drama, music, and visual arts) provide opportunities for learning, communication, and expression. Through the Arts, children are stimulated to think and to articulate their thoughts in new ways through a variety of media and technologies. Learning about and through arts is fundamental to the development of the whole child, promoting creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and social interactions.

Our Visual Arts and Performing Arts studios offer a wide variety of open-ended, natural, and man-made materials that support inquiry into symbolic and creative expression through sound, movement, and visual art. Learning experiences are carefully planned to encourage experimentation, creativity, imagination, and problem-solving. We offer novel and familiar materials, inviting children to uncover the extraordinary within the ordinary. Through objects in their daily environment and through loose parts such as beads, bottle tops, shells, and leaves, children explore possibilities of sight, sound, and movement, representing familiar ideas in new ways and deepening their appreciation of the Arts.

## Physical Health Education (PHE)

Our mission is for children to develop the confidence, positive attitude, and joy of movement necessary to live healthy, active lifestyles. We provide a wide range of carefully designed spaces, including gyms, perceptual motor spaces, conceptual play worlds and outdoor climbing, swinging and balancing areas. Children participate in a variety of physical experiences, such as locomotor and non-locomotor movement exploration, creative movement, individual and team games, and more. Students gain a greater sense of agency in relation to their surroundings, their own capabilities, and their responsibilities as part of a team. This develops children's foundation skills and promotes a lifetime of physical literacy.

## Swimming

Swimming lessons are taught to all KG grades by our dedicated swim program staff, including our PHE teachers. Our PAL (Preschool Aquatic Levels) program is a progressive sequence of skills, based upon the internationally-recognized American Red Crescent Swimming and Water Safety Aquatics Preschool program. This program focuses on stroke techniques in addition to teaching children to be safe around water. Swimmers are placed into small groups of 5:1 swimmer to certified instructor ratio and stay with the same instructor for the duration. On swimming days, children will need a one-piece swimsuit, towel, and cap. More information about the swimming program will be shared in advance of the lessons start.

## Information and Digital Literacy

Children are introduced to a variety of technologies, which in Kindergarten is defined as "digital and non-digital tools and resources that facilitate and expand learning opportunities." All such experiences allow children to develop a balanced range of literacies. Included here is the [Information and Digital Literacy Philosophy](#).

Each of the Kindergarten buildings offers various spaces such as libraries and tinker spaces where children can interact with technology and resources through facilitated programming

as well as individual exploration. Children borrow library books for home use at least once per week. Parents of children attending KG may also check out up to ten books under the parent's name from the Kindergarten school library to support home reading.

The privilege of borrowing resources from TKS libraries is available to those with accounts in good standing, and students and families are responsible for the loss or damage of borrowed resources. For items lost, overdue for two months, or damaged beyond reasonable use or repair, the responsible family will be charged 100% of the item cost, plus 50% to cover shipping and processing fees. To avoid any disruption in borrowing privileges for the whole family, timely payments must be made upon notification by the TKS Business Office.

Please see the [KG library website](#) for more information.

## Student Support Services at TKS

Student learning experiences at The KAUST School are designed to support all learners so they can “thrive in and contribute to” a complex world. We embrace learner diversity through the delivery of an inclusive learning program that celebrates and supports the unique learning strengths and the unique learning needs of our students. Central to this inclusive learning approach is to understand how our collective contributions can support student wellbeing.

Student Support Services are the responsibility of **ALL** educators at TKS. The expertise of the roles within the Student Support Department allow for a specialized approach to work with identified students as well as build capacity within the greater faculty. Our shared identity and goals within the learning community promote interdependence and require meaningful participation to ensure a truly inclusive learning environment. This commitment begins with drawing on our TKS core values of Adaptability, Innovation, Diversity, Inclusivity and Responsibility.



## TKS Collaborative Model of Inclusion

Inclusion is to create an environment that respects intentionally, celebrates and incorporates the values of each individual's similarities and differences in order to provide a mutually beneficial learning experience. It is the act of intentionally cultivating a culture of belonging and appreciation for the inherent diversity each person contributes to the learning environment. Inclusion requires equity in access and the recognition that each person deserves the right to an appropriately challenging, supportive and quality education. TKS recognizes that this is the responsibility and the privilege held by its educators, administrators and the wider KAUST community.



Our student support procedures incorporate the three important IB principles of inclusion:

- It is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers.
- It is a continual process of increasing learning and participation for all students. It addresses learning support requirements and questions the broader objectives of education, the nature of pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment.
- Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support, and problem-solving.

## Learning Support in Kindergarten

Learning Support Services (LSS) are available to students who may benefit from additional support in one or more developmental areas. These services can be accessed by a referral process which incorporates collecting data, meeting with a multidisciplinary team and identifying a plan for a cycle of observation, intervention and reflection. Students will be assigned a case manager to oversee their learning plan and work in collaboration with parents, teachers, and students. LSS works in partnership with parents and teachers to develop a range of teaching and learning strategies to assist students with being successful within an inclusive context.

## Counseling Program

In Kindergarten, we believe students learn best when they have the skills and resources to communicate and interact effectively in a social setting. The focus of the counseling program is to foster a positive school environment for all students. In collaboration with all stakeholders, i.e., students, families, teachers, and administration, the school counselors provide:

- Transition support
- Social skills development via in-class lessons, including friendship and conflict resolution
- Family support
- Teacher support
- An effective referral and follow-up process
- Effective consultation and collaboration with the entire educational team, as well as any other relevant external resources regarding students with identified concerns and needs

## School-Home Communication

School news and program updates are shared via The Focus, by TKS Communications each Thursday. In addition, The WAVE, a quarterly TKS magazine, is published featuring articles and photos from across TKS. A KindergartenWhatsApp group is available just in time information.

## **Parent-Teacher Communication**

As parents, you are considered partners in the education of your children. We value your input and strive to maintain open communication on a regular basis and in a variety of ways. Should you ever have any questions or concerns, let's arrange a time to discuss these with the teacher.

Please be sure to inform your child's teacher if both parents will be away from home overnight or longer or regarding any other changes in your child's routine.

## **Toddle**

The primary form of communication with parents about the classroom via Toddle. Your child's teacher will email you with information about how to set up and subscribe to Toddle.

### *Announcements*

You will receive frequent updates about what is happening in class and in the Kindergarten through one-way announcements in Toddle; it is important that parents read these announcements as this will help to keep you informed about learning, events being organized, and materials that you may need to send in.

### *Journal*

A digital portfolio (journal) will be developed for each child in Kindergarten through Toddle. A portfolio is a celebration of a child's growth and development over the course of the year. It highlights each child as a unique, capable, and competent individual in all areas. The construction of the portfolio reflects the KG philosophy and curriculum.

## **Email**

Email is used for individual communication about your child between the teacher and parents. Please feel welcome to contact the teacher by email with any information, questions, or concerns related to your child. Email is also used for occasional whole Kindergarten communications, such as letters from the Principal or Director.

## **Written reports**

You will receive a written report twice per year for your child at the end of each semester. The reports reflect what your child has learned, the progress made, and which areas require further development. This will be emailed to the address we have on file and is also available in the Parent Portal in PowerSchool for as long as your child remains enrolled.

## Kindergarten Events

### Meet the Teacher

We host a parent/child drop-in session before school starts. This is an opportunity for you and your child to meet their teacher and to find out where their classroom is before the first day of school. Details will be communicated by email.

### Back to School Night

Early in the academic year, you are invited to meet with your child's teachers to receive an overview of the school year and your child's day-to-day life at school. Dates and times for this event will be communicated through The Focus.

### Parent-Teacher Check-ins

These take place twice a year. In August before the first day of school, your classroom teacher connects with you to discuss your hopes and concerns for your child for the new school year. The second Parent Teacher Check-in occurs in May and serves as an opportunity to bring closure to your year in KG.

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

These take place twice a year. Early in the year, these conferences are an opportunity to connect teachers and parents individually and discuss the year ahead, focusing on how your child is settling into Kindergarten, progress to date, and next steps. This conference is key in establishing an effective partnership. The second Parent-Teacher Conference serves as a follow-up to the first semester written report, focusing on your child's progress and providing the opportunity to discuss next steps. In each conference, teachers will share insights about your child's development, as well as seek your insights and perspectives about your child. Conferences will be scheduled closer to the date.

### Celebrations of Learning

You are invited twice during the school year to a Celebration of Learning. Your child will show you his/her learning and engage you in learning experiences around the learning spaces. Details will be communicated via Toddle.

### Parent Education Sessions

Each month Kindergarten will host parent education sessions. These sessions help build our home-school partnership and will focus on curriculum, counseling/wellbeing, and whole child development.

### Special Events

The Kindergarten celebrates various divisional and school-wide events throughout the year. Information about these events will be shared closer to the date in The Focus, with reminders sent to the grade-level WhatsApp groups that you have the option of subscribing to.

## Parent Ambassador Committee (PAC)

We believe that education is enhanced by a strong partnership between home and school. The PAC members are parents of TKS students who serve as ambassadors to the school, drive school spirit through community building events and represent the parent voice by serving as a liaison. There are opportunities for involvement in the PAC as part of the PAC Leadership Team, the Division Ambassadors, or the Spirit Committee, as well as volunteer opportunities throughout the year. While parents are always encouraged to dialogue directly with their child's teachers, counselors, or principals regarding individual concerns, the PAC structure provides a vehicle for two-way communication of a more general nature. If you'd like to learn more about how to get involved, please reachout to [TKSPAC.Chair@thekaustschool.org](mailto:TKSPAC.Chair@thekaustschool.org)

## Health and Safety

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

### Nurse Information

Nina C Cuales  
KG EAST School Nurse  
[kg.nurse2@thekaustschool.org](mailto:kg.nurse2@thekaustschool.org)  
Tel: 808-6212

Rachel A Ambas  
KG WEST School Nurse  
[kg.nurse1@thekaustschool.org](mailto:kg.nurse1@thekaustschool.org)  
Tel: 808-6312

### When children should stay home from school

Children must stay home if they have symptoms of possibly contagious or serious illnesses that they might spread to other children, including and not limited to:

- Fever
- New onset of persistent cough with fever (more details below)
- Congestion / runny nose with fever or feeling unwell
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Sore throat (Kindly Read the Common Childhood Illnesses for more information)
- Vomiting

- Diarrhea

Please review the guidelines for [Common Childhood Illnesses](#) for more details.

## When children will be sent home from school

Our school staff serves as the link between parents and children. When a child complains of illness, it is the responsibility of the school nurse to note and communicate common symptoms, such as fever, vomiting, and diarrhea to parents. School nurses are not allowed by law to diagnose specific illnesses, and we are not equipped to care for an ill or injured student for an indefinite amount of time. Parents are responsible for picking up their child in a timely manner once notified by the school. If the parents are unable to come when notified, they must inform the nurse who they are allowing to act on their behalf to pick up their child. If parents are unable to answer the nurses calls after a period of time, the emergency contact number will be used.

### Colds

A runny nose is not necessarily the cause to keep your child home unless they have a cold with fever, bad cough, or if the child is too tired or too uncomfortable to function at school.

### Cough

A child needs to remain home if he/she has a new onset of dry/productive persistent cough with fever/ and or difficulty in breathing (follow COVID-19 protocol). The same also applies if your child has a cough/sneezing and is unable to practice respiratory etiquette (turning away from others, proper hand washing, and unable to wear a mask when required).

### Covid19 Safety

The school adheres to KAUST HSE Covid19 safety guidelines. For information on this please see the [Keeping KAUST Safe website](#).

### Fever

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

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

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

### Head lice

Parents are responsible for monitoring their children for head lice. Please notify the school nurse and grade-level teacher if your child has head lice.

If signs of lice or nits are observed at school (itchy scalp, frequent scratching, redness behind the neck or ears), the school nurse will perform a private examination. If the nurse confirms head lice is present, she will contact the child's parents to collect him/her. The nurse will also

check the siblings of the student. Parents will be taught how to spot lice/nits and how to remove them manually and a brochure will be given for further information. Children must visit the Health Office for clearance before being allowed back in the class.

The nurse will check all children in the class when there is a case of head lice identified. The nurse will also inform the parents of all children in the class on how to check for lice/nits and how to treat them.

### **Conjunctivitis**

Children with red / pink eyes with eye pain and white or yellow eye discharge or eyelids matted after sleep, may have Purulent Conjunctivitis. They should not be in school until they have been examined and treated. Children with pink eyes who have clear drainage and no fever, no eye pain, and no eyelid redness do not need to be kept home.

## **Returning to School After Sickness**

If the child has been sick at home for any of the above-mentioned illnesses, they must be free from sickness for at least **24 hours without the aid of medication** (please review the [guidelines for Common Childhood Illnesses](#)). In the case of diarrhea, the child should stay home until it is settled for at least 48 hours. If your child is absent for three days or more, ensure that you visit the school nurse prior to returning to class. A Doctor's note is required following any prolonged illness (5 days or more) or specific health concern.

## **Administration of Medication at School**

Where possible, medication should be given at home. If necessary, only prescribed medication (provided with the pharmacist's label attached in English with the name of the student) may be administered at school by the school nurse, with written permission from the parents. Please refer to the school's [Administration of Medication at School – A Guide for Parents](#). Doctor notes must be translated into English if special treatment is needed and for attendance records.

## **Care Plans**

Please contact the school nurse at your child's designated area if your child requires a Care Plan such as a care plan for asthma, allergies, seizure, diabetes and etc. The Care Plan is a means of communication and organizing an action plan for staff members involved in your child's care during school days. This is to ensure that the school is aware of the management of actual and potential medical care needs, recognizing signs and symptoms and administering medication in medical events. The care plan will be provided to key school staff members who have a need to know bases.

For your child's safety, all care plans must be completed and submitted to the School Health Office with the prescribed medication before your child starts school and to be updated when changes arise.

## Immunization

All students must be up to date with TKS required immunizations. The school nurse will reach out to parents when a student requires further vaccines. Parents will be required to provide the updated immunization record before the cutoff date to the school nurse with the completed immunizations to avoid any issues with attending school..

## School Health Screening

The KAUST School Health Office together with KAUST Health (KH) conducts dental, vision, hearing and growth screening for all K2 students. The health screening program is designed to identify and address preventable health issues with the potential to hinder students' learning ability. Health screening does not substitute regular medical checkups and will not screen for all medical conditions. Students whose measurements fall outside the expected range will be referred to KAUST Health for further assessment.

The screening takes place at TKS Health Office, students are screened individually and confidentiality is maintained. Only students with consent granted through the PowerSchool Portal will be screened.

## Toileting

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

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

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

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

## Guidelines Regarding Biting

Although biting may be part of normal development for toddlers, when children reach the age of three, it is not regarded as acceptable behavior.

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

### First biting incident

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm reminder, such as "No Biting. Biting hurts."
- The injured child will be comforted and attended to. Any injury shall be assessed and addressed.
- Staff will work with both children to understand what led to the incident. The rule will be restated, an example being "Biting is not allowed." Staff will discuss how the child can respond to similar situations in the future while maintaining eye contact, using a calm, firm voice and language the child can understand.
- The parents of both children will be notified of the incident.
- Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.

### Second biting incident

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

### Third biting incident

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

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