

The Oxford Academy

Foundation Department Handbook 2015 – 2016



Important Information for Parents

Dear Parents,

This *Foundation Department Handbook* for the 2015 / 2016 academic school year is packed with useful information that will help you and your child/children make this academic year a very successful year. It is essential that you familiarise yourself, as well as comply with, the contents of this *Handbook*, in order to gain the maximum benefits from the services we as a School are proud and committed to offering you and your child/ren.

Our very competent and experienced staff look forward to working with you to make sure your child/children's time here at The Oxford Academy is an educational and life changing experience.

As always, we encourage contact between parent and teacher, so please do not hesitate to contact the school to make an appointment to meet with any member of staff at any stage you feel necessary.

If there is anything you feel we have omitted, we welcome your suggestions.

Thanking you in advance for your support and co-operation.

Ms Clare Howarth
Head of Foundation

Aims and Mission:

The Oxford Academy aims to educate young people to become successful contributors to a healthy, global society. We will enable students to develop self-confidence, caring attitudes and respect for others and to become discerning life-long learners.

We believe that students should be educated in a stimulating, safe and happy environment. Education should balance the intellectual, physical, social, moral and emotional in order to develop well-rounded, caring individuals who can make a positive contribution to society. We respect the diversity of languages, cultures and traditions within our school and wider world.

The Oxford Academy Foundation Department Handbook

2015 / 2016

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FOUNDATION LESSON TIMES

| KG LESSON TIMES | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | 07:30 – 08:00 |
| 2 | 08:00 – 08:30 |
| 08:30 | 1 st B R E A K |
| 3 | 09:30 – 10:00 |
| 4 | 10:00 – 10:30 |
| 5 | 10:30 – 11:00 |
| 6 | 11:00 – 11:30 |
| 7 | 11:30 – 12:00 |
| 12:00 | 2 nd B R E A K |
| 12:30 | Bus Students |
| 8 | 12:30 – 12:55 |

| Reception LESSON TIMES | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | 07:30 – 08:00 |
| 2 | 08:00 – 08:30 |
| 08:30 | 1 st B R E A K |
| 3 | 09:30 – 10:00 |
| 4 | 10:00 – 10:30 |
| 5 | 10:30 – 11:00 |
| 6 | 11:00 – 11:30 |
| 11:30 | 2 nd B R E A K |
| 7 | 12:00 – 12:30 |
| 12:30 | Bus Students |
| 8 | 12:30 – 12:55 |

School Uniform:

School Uniform is compulsory for all students at The Oxford Academy. We expect all students to take pride in their appearance and to look smart – in school and after school, as they still represent the school when in the street or in a shop / mall after school.

We do **not** allow **jewellery** or any **make-up / nail varnish** to be worn at any time.

The wearing of the correct school uniform is monitored closely by all members of staff on a **daily basis**. ***If a student arrives at school out of uniform, the school reserves the right to send them home and they will not be permitted to return until they have the correct uniform.***

Should your child be out of correct school uniform for any reason, please write a note to the school. The school uniform can be purchased from the school uniform shop. If the school shop is unable to supply the correct size/item for a short period of time, a similar alternative can be worn temporarily.

SUMMER UNIFORM

| | |
|---|--|
| Girls: Navy blue trousers (loose-fitting) | Boys: Navy Blue trousers |
| Light-blue Polo shirt (with school badge) | Light-blue Polo shirt (with school badge) |
| Black school shoes only (no trainers/slippers) | Black school shoes only (no trainers) |

WINTER UNIFORM

| | |
|---|--|
| Girls: Navy blue trousers (loose-fitting) | Boys: Navy Blue trousers |
| Light-blue Polo shirt (with school badge) | Light-blue Polo shirt (with school badge) |
| Black school shoes only (no trainers/slippers) | Black school shoes only (no trainers) |
| Navy blue Fleecy jacket with hood & badge | Navy blue Fleecy jacket (hood & badge) |

NOTE: *We do allow students to wear their own jackets under the following conditions:*

- *The jacket MUST be navy blue or black*
- *The jacket must be a PLAIN jacket, with NO other logo anywhere (Fitch, GAP, etc)*

PE UNIFORM

| | |
|--|---|
| Girls: Navy blue PE bottoms | Boys: Navy blue PE bottoms |
| White Polo shirt (with school badge) | White Polo shirt (with school badge) |
| Black/White Trainers only (no other colour) | Black/White Trainers (no other colour) |

HAIR

Girls: Long hair over shoulder length must be tied back at all times. No colouring allowed

Boys: No patterns may be cut into any boy's hair. We reserve the right to send any boy home to have his hair fixed (usually involves shaving completely!) Boys' hair should be neat, clean and cut at collar length or shorter, with ears open.

Lost Property:

While every effort is made to collect and store items left behind / lost by students (jackets and lunch bags being the most popular), we cannot possibly return these items to their rightful owners if we do not know who they belong to.

Please therefore ensure that all your child's belongings are clearly labelled in a visible and clear manner, in order for us (or you) to return these costly items to your child/ren.

We also ask that our parents support us at home by reinforcing with your child/ren the importance of collecting all their belongings before going home, as we do on a daily basis in the classroom.

Medical:

The School employs two fully qualified, full-time nurses. If a child is unwell or has been injured in any way, they will be sent from class or the playground to the nurse's office.

The nurse will assess the child and inform staff and parents on a medical slip of any action that was taken. Should medication have been given, parents will be contacted by phone. ***Please make sure the school has contact numbers that you can be reached at any time of the school day.***

Should an accident occur that involves a serious injury, the parents will be contacted immediately and asked to take their child to hospital. If parents cannot be contacted, we shall act immediately in the best interests of the child.

If your child gets an infectious disease or illness, please **keep them at home** so the disease **does not spread** to other children, and follow your doctor's advice. ***It is of utmost importance to inform the school and your child's class teacher,*** in order for work to be sent home for your child.

Medication:

If your child needs to take any medication during the school day, please send the medication with a note and the correct dosage to the nurse/s. They will be expected to administer the medicine as instructed.

Medical Conditions:

If your child suffers from any reoccurring medical condition (asthma, kidney problems, allergies, etc), ***It is also of utmost importance to inform the school and the nurse/s.*** The nurse/s will then inform your child's teachers to avoid any serious repercussions.

Absences from School:

Children learn best when they have excellent attendance at school. We do realise that children (as do we all), get ill from time-to-time and may need to stay at home.

We consider absences from school under the following four categories:

1. Late Arrival: (*serious*)

The school day for students starts promptly at **07:30** with Circle Time and is an important time for the children. Lesson 1 starts at **08:00**, and any student arriving at school after this time, **is considered to be late.**

Students arriving after **07:45** must report to the administration office, where they will be issued with a **late slip**. This late arrival is then recorded by the secretary on duty, as well as the class teacher.

Students arriving late to class not only miss out on important work, but also disturb the learning of others, as the lesson must be paused to allow a late student to enter.

2. Unauthorised Absence: (*serious*)

This is when a student is absent from school without any form of letter or communication to the school / class teacher at all – e.g. Extended weekends, absent after exams in December and June, extended travel before / after a calendared holiday, etc.

Unauthorised absences are regarded as **serious**

3. Authorised Absence:

Absence from school for a valid reason (illness, emergency travel, etc), where the school has been informed either before, or after the absence, and **supporting documents** have been issued to the school (medical report, doctor's note, letter from parents, etc)

4. Leaving School Early: (*serious*)

Permission for a student to leave school early **is only granted by the Head of Foundation, and only for real emergencies.** Again, students leaving class early not only miss out on important work/assessments, but also disturb the learning of others, as the lesson must be paused to allow a student to pack away and leave.

We urge our parents not to make any medical appointments for any child during any part of the school day. The school would still require official proof of any appointment to be submitted **before any student will be allowed to leave school early.**

Attendance is monitored **very closely** in the Foundation Department. If attendance as mentioned in situations **1, 2,** and **4** above are not satisfactory as deemed by the school, you will be issued with a warning letter.

Continued low attendance thereafter, will result in parents being called in to sign an official final warning.

Any further poor attendance may then result in your child being refused enrolment in the school for the next academic year.

Collecting Your Child:

The school day officially ends at:

12:55 for KG and Reception children

All students will be looked after **for 30 minutes**, in their own classroom and then will be taken to the classroom that is on Nursery Duty that day. Foundation Nursery runs until 2:15pm, after which the children will be taken to the Primary Late Room.

No Foundation student will be allowed to exit the school gate alone, and must be accompanied by a parent, maid or driver.

Enrolment Policy:

The Oxford Academy believes that all children are entitled to educational opportunities. We focus on providing education to students who have demonstrated a desire to learn. As outlined in our prospectus we foster the intellectual, moral, physical and social development of all our students.

Students wanting to enrol in KG and Reception must do an entrance test which assists us in assessing the student's ability and whether they are ready to cope with the academic and social demands of KG and Reception. Students are not refused entry on race, religion or physical characteristics, but can be refused should their alphabet, shape, number knowledge and fine motor skills not be at the level required to successfully complete the curriculum that awaits them the following year at The Oxford Academy.

The decision of the school is final, and no correspondence shall be entered into for reversing any decision on the results of any candidate.

The actual enrolment of the school is limited by available classroom and playground space.

All applicants must establish their age and their eligibility to register in a foreign school. Before any student can be enrolled, all official documentation required by the Ministry of Education must be completed (please refer to our Registration package).

In order to manage the administration of enrolment, a non-refundable fee for service is required at registration.

Transport:

The Oxford Academy provides a Bus Transport Service for its students. If you wish to avail this service then you should complete and return the **Information for School Transport** form (form and costs available from the front desk in the Administration Office) with regards to your children using the bus transport service provided by the school.

Parent requests for the Transport service submitted late will be accepted, but parents will have to allow the Transport Manager two full working days to prepare the route and driver, before the service can be used.

In order to assist the smooth functioning of school transport service, we need accurate details of your address with a detailed map in English. ***(Returning parents should submit updated records)***

Safety on the buses is extremely important. All students will be expected to:

- remove their backpacks from their backs on to their laps
- wear a seatbelt (if available)
- remain seated for the entire journey
- keep all body parts inside the bus
- respect the contents and furnishings of the bus (feet off seats, no vandalism / graffiti, etc)
- respect other students using the bus (no bullying, fighting, swearing, etc)
- and to keep the buses neat and litter-free

Each and every bus has a School Assistant that travels with the students. These assistants are instructed to report any misconduct by any child to the relevant Head Teacher.

Due to the high importance we place on the safety of all students on the bus, ***any student violating any of the above will be issued with a final warning letter to the parents.***

Should a second infringement occur, that student will be immediately removed from utilising the bus service, and parents will have to make alternative travel arrangements for their child/ren to and from school.

Partnership with parents:

We believe that a close relationship between home and school benefits our students. We maintain regular contact with parents through Curriculum Fortnightly Newsletters, quarterly Progress Reports, three Parents' Days (directly after issuing the first three Progress Reports), parent phone calls, Parent Information Days, regular newsletters, the School Website, and parent-teacher meetings after school.

Parents are encouraged to make an appointment to meet with their child/children's Class Teachers, and/or Head of Foundation to discuss any matters that concern them. By making an appointment, the staff member concerned can have any relevant information available.

Parent's Meetings:

Regular and open communication between teachers and parents is vital to a student's academic success. Three official Parents' Days are scheduled throughout the school year directly after issuing the first, three Progress Reports.

These meetings are only 10 minutes for each parent to accommodate a fair chance for all parents within a class to meet with any teacher on a specific Parents' Day.

Should you wish to discuss your child/children's progress in more detail with the teachers, please note the following:

- **All class teachers are available at 13:15 and at 13:30 (Sunday – Thursday) to meet with parents after school.** All we ask is that an appointment is made with the relevant member of staff through the School office, **at least 24 hours in advance**, on 2 298-0598.
Please do not expect a teacher to meet with you without an appointment.

Due to the volume of parents within the Foundation Department, we urge our parents to follow the following lines of communication when faced with any concern or query:

- 1st **Appointment with class teacher**
- 2nd **Appointment with Head of Foundation**

Communication Between the School and Parents:

Once our Academic School Calendar has been approved by the Ministry of Private Education, we make the calendar available to our parents. Our aim is not to change any of the dates, but at times this is unavoidable.

While every effort is made by the School to keep our parents informed, it is at the end of the day our parents' responsibility to **stay informed**. This can be accomplished in the following ways:

- Check your child's folder and bag **on a daily basis**
- Ask your child **daily** if they were given any notices or newsletters
- Visit the School Website **regularly** at www.oxford.edu.kw All the latest news, newsletters (in case you missed any), curriculum information, events, activities, results, etc are updated regularly
- Make time to attend our Parent Information Days, Events, and Parents' Days. Here you will have every opportunity to meet the people who have your child's best interest at heart.

Progress Reports:

Report cards are an indication of your child/children's progress throughout the school year. Parents must remember that each child develops at his/her own pace and should be encouraging and supportive towards their children. Report cards are distributed to parents in the following months:

- First Interim Report: October
- Mid-Year Report: January
- Second Interim Report: April
- Final Report: June

Field Trips:

Field trips are an essential part of the educational programme. They provide children with hands-on experience and these trips help to reinforce topics taught in the classroom. Field trips are scheduled

throughout the school year. Permission slips are sent in advance to inform parents about the trips. The permission slips must be signed and returned to the child's teacher the following day. If a permission slip is not returned or signed, your child/children will not be allowed to attend the field trip.

If your child is sick, please do not send him/her to school. It is difficult to give students the extra attention needed if they do not feel well on these field trips. *Your co-operation on this matter is essential.*

No student representing The Oxford Academy on any field trip will be allowed to attend such a trip if not dressed in **full school uniform**, unless otherwise instructed by the School Management.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures:

In the event of an emergency where all students need to evacuate the building and / or the school premises, the school has a solid evacuation policy and procedure in place.

Sufficient practice emergency and off-site safety drills are held across the various year levels of the school over the course of the academic year as part of our commitment to school safety.

Drills prepare pupils for unlikely serious events, such as fires to an unwanted campus intrusion to unsafe situations in our surrounding neighbourhood. We do not wish to frighten students with thoughts of possible emergencies. On the contrary, research tells us that students and teachers who think about potential situations, prepare for them, and practice how they would respond are more able to remain calm, act confidently, and stay safe in the unlikely event of a true emergency.

The School Administration and Staff have the highest regard for your child's safety, which is why every precaution is taken regarding traffic hazards and individual student supervision.

School safety is everyone's responsibility - teachers, support staff, students, and parents. Students are reminded that their primary responsibility during a safety drill is to move quickly and quietly, following the directions of their teacher and school administration. We hope you will help us reinforce these expectations at home with your child and support us in our efforts to build a culture of safety and preparedness.

Parties:

The school has a policy regarding the celebration of birthdays in school. Celebrations are part of our education but they are only a small part of our class routine. Birthdays are celebrated only on Thursdays and during break time.

No big cakes are allowed to be brought / delivered to school. We shall however allow **cupcakes** and **party packs**.

No parent will unfortunately be allowed into the classroom or to bring a camera of any kind.

Class Placement:

The Oxford Academy does not stream its students into classes according to ability, and adopts the mixed-ability approach to placing students into classes. As in every school, we have students leaving the school at the end of every academic year, and new students enrolling each year.

When doing class placements at the beginning of a new academic year, classes are mostly kept as they were in the previous year, simply replacing those students who have left, with newly-enrolled students.

- *At the end of every academic year, teachers of every Year Group get together and decide on whether or not certain students should be placed in the same class again for the following year, based on evidence of any conflicts etc.*

It is extremely important to note the following:

- **Once a student has been placed in a class, the student will not be moved to another class.** (unless there is evidence of concern for that students' safety by another student).
- Students will not be moved at any parents' request for a different teacher.
- Classes are named by year level, then by a letter of the alphabet. (e.g. KG A) This is purely for identification purposes, **and the letter of the alphabet holds no reference to class ability.** Therefore, KG A is not regarded as the "A" class.

Stationery:

Foundation students are provided with the stationery they need, if there is any further requirements from parents you will be contacted via a newsletter.

Curriculum:

At The Oxford Academy we follow the National Curriculum for England and Wales and build upon the solid foundations laid in each school section, viz. Key Stage 1* builds on the Foundation Phase*, Key Stage 2* builds on Key Stage 1, etc.

The subjects we teach are Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening), Numeracy (Mathematics), I.C.T. (naming basic computer parts), Art, P.E. and Theme Work.

Since we are an English-speaking School, students must speak in English at all times (except in Arabic, Islamic Studies, and Quran lessons). We encourage our parents to extend this communication in English to your homes, as this can only benefit your child's academic progress.

With the new National Curriculum for 2014, we are planning a more **inquiry-based** and **hands-on** learning environment across the two levels in the Foundation Department.

Reference:

- Foundation Phase: (Kindergarten and Reception)
- Key Stage 1: (Year 1 + 2)
- Key Stage 2: (Year 3 – 6)

Continuity and Progression:

The curriculum is continuous across Key Stages and is monitored to ensure progress. As pupils transfer across Key Stages, there are increases in expectations in terms of **student organisation** and **independence**. This means that more and more is expected from each student with every year they progress.

At The Oxford Academy we have cross-departmental plans in place to allow for a smooth transition from one year level to the next.

Differentiation:

Lessons are planned for according to the learning needs of the students, which **allows** for all students to make the best progress they can. Whether or not each student **actually makes that progress**, depends on each individual student's **attitude to learning**.

Physical Education:

Physical Education promotes an understanding in students of their bodies in action. It involves thinking, selecting and applying skills and promotes positive attitudes towards a healthy lifestyle. Skills such as co-ordination, ball skills, developing gross motor skills, sportsmanship, leadership, hand-eye co-ordination and teamwork are developed. These skills lay the foundations, allowing them to participate in games throughout the Foundation School, Primary school, later on in the Secondary school and finally, in life.

Arabic and Islamic Studies:

Specialist teachers present the Arabic and Islamic lessons and students follow the curriculum set by the Ministry of Education.

Non-Muslim students are withdrawn from the Islamic lessons and go to another classroom at their same year level.

Speaking and Listening:

Speaking and Listening skills are a vital part of student development at The Oxford Academy. Many opportunities are given for students to develop these skills in class through small group and paired activities. Students who are also given support to develop their English spoken language at home will have more confidence in activities and learning at school.

School Events:

In order to provide our students with a balanced curriculum and diverse learning experience, the Foundation Department hosts a number of events throughout the year. Parents are notified of these events via newsletters and the school website, and it is important that our parents encourage their children to participate in these events, that include the following:

Dress up Days, Health Days, Foundation Graduation, International Day, Sports Day, National Day and Class Trips.

Assessment:

The aim of assessment is to support teaching and learning, as well as to monitor and support student progress.

It is extremely important for our parents to understand that our assessment process in the Foundation Department consists entirely of **continuous assessment**. This means that teachers are regularly assessing progress both formally and informally and records are kept of their progress throughout the year.

Homework:

Parents and other family members can make a real difference to a child's education. When parents and schools work together, students will perform better academically. Children learn a great deal at school and you as parent, can add to that learning by supporting them at home. For example, showing an interest in their homework and talking to them about what they have learned about that day truly helps them to learn more. With support and encouragement, children find it easier to get into that essential habit of doing homework.

Behaviour Management

Parental advice:

When dealing with children's repeated inappropriate behaviour, whether in school or outside of school, it is important that the child understands that it is the behaviour which is disapproved of, and not the child themselves. Repeated inappropriate behaviour is also usually a cry for help or attention, and it is then that we as teachers and parents need to show understanding and support.

Positive reinforcement when a child is displaying good behaviour will always work better and faster than a negative approach. If parents were to also reinforce this practice at home, it would be greatly appreciated.

Always try to ensure that there is a "united front", a working together, between home and school, in order for the child not to get confused between different approaches to discipline by the school, and by you, the parent.

The students' responsibilities in maintaining self-discipline is as follows:

- To be proud of their school and represent it positively.
- To maintain the highest standards of behaviour possible, both in and out of school.
- To learn to make independent, correct choices, while not blaming others for their indiscretion and to learn from their mistakes.

We value and encourage the following:

- Respect for other students, teachers, administrators, and support staff, whatever their nationality, beliefs, and status.
- Children to find solutions to their problems and to take responsibility for their actions.
- Effort and participation in class.
- Willingness to learn and to allow others to learn.
- Class work and homework to be completed on time.
- 100% attendance and being on time for school.
- Using polite and appropriate language in class and around the school.
- Respect for the property of others, as well as for the property of the school.
- Pride in our appearance and school uniform.
- Honesty.
- A safe, clean and productive school environment.

We do not expect the following:

- Incorrect uniform.
- Damage to student or school property.
- Bad language (English or Arabic).
- Disruptive behaviour which stops others from learning.
- Fighting (including play-fighting) or aggressive behaviour.
- Bullying (verbal or physical).
- Disrespect towards any fellow student or adult.
- Any behaviour which damages the reputations of individuals or the school.

Summary

Thank you for taking the time to read this important document as it is crucial to have a strong school-home partnership.

All Foundation Staff look forward to the New Academic Year 2015-2016 and working closely with you to provide the best possible education for your child.

