

Cambridge
International School
Dubai



Y4 - Handbook

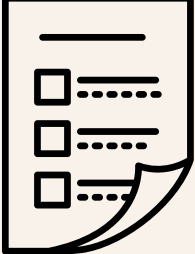
**Your guide to
Primary School**



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Content List



Content List	
Welcome Note	3 - 4
About CISD	5-6
The Curriculum	7
Curriculum Structure	8
School Timings	9
Teach Like a Gem	10
Read Like a Gem	11
Be A GEM	12
Curriculum for Life	13-14
Assessment	15
Family First	16
Reporting	17
Communication	17-18
School Policies	18

Welcome Note



Ms Lindsey Yarwood

Head of Primary



Ms Laura Dobbs

**Associate Head of
Primary**



Ms Jyothi Jose

**Deputy Head of
Primary**

At CIS, we aim to provide an exceptional level of care and education for every individual student. We firmly believe, all students can succeed. We work to inspire a determination within the school and every student to achieve their highest potential.

We aim to maximise student success by ensuring that all students are provided with rich, high quality educational opportunities, within our culture of high aspiration where achievement is recognised and celebrated. It is our determination to ensure that all students at CIS progress, achieve and are provided with the support and challenge to excel in a happy, supported environment.

We hope you take the opportunity to read this course guide and we look forward to welcoming you to GEMS CIS.

Ms Lindsey Yarwood, Ms Laura Dobbs and Ms Jyothi Jose

Welcome Note



Ms Sumera Kenneth
KS2 Phase Leader

Hello! I'm Sumera Kenneth, the KS2 Phase Leader. I have spent 13 wonderful years at GEMS Cambridge International School, and my journey continues to be as rewarding and inspiring as ever. Throughout my time at the school, I have had the privilege of serving in a range of leadership roles, including Learning Manager, Head of Year, and Primary Science Curriculum Leader. These experiences have shaped me as an educator and leader and strengthened my passion for supporting both students and colleagues. I believe in creating engaging, inclusive learning environments where every child feels valued, challenged, and inspired to achieve their full potential. I look forward to working in partnership with our students, families, and staff as we continue to learn, grow, and succeed together.



Ms Fatima . T
HOY - 4

My name is Fatima Tohfafarosh, and I hold a Master's Degree and a Bachelor of Education. I have over 15 years of teaching experience, including 12 wonderful years at CIS Dubai, where I have had the privilege of teaching and leading the Year 4 team as Head of Year. I am passionate about creating a positive, inclusive, and engaging learning environment where every child feels valued and inspired to achieve their best. I strongly believe that each child is unique and possesses individual strengths and talents. Supporting students in discovering and developing these strengths has always been at the heart of my teaching philosophy. I enjoy challenging and extending the learning of all students by encouraging curiosity, critical thinking, problem-solving, and a deep understanding of concepts. My goal is to nurture confident, independent learners who are well-prepared for future success, both academically and personally.

Welcome to Cambridge International School, Dubai

Introduction

Cambridge International School, Dubai (CISD) delivers the National Curriculum for England and prepares students for IGCSE, AS, and A Level examinations through the Universities of Cambridge and London. As an approved examination centre, the school consistently achieves results above the UK national average.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Students participate in weekly ECAs during the school day, choosing from a wide range of sports, languages, creative arts, STEM, debate, and leadership clubs. Additional after-school activities are also available. Our Primary students can also take part in the Junior Duke and Squirrel Awards programme, developing valuable life and financial literacy skills through engaging challenges.

Textbooks

In Primary, we use a hands-on, enquiry-based approach rather than relying on textbooks for most subjects, including English and Science. This encourages critical thinking, collaboration, and real-world problem-solving. Maths textbooks are provided, and lesson presentations are uploaded to Phoenix Classroom for home revision.

Online Platforms

At CIS, we use technology to enhance learning and develop students' digital skills. Students with the Tool Kit receive login details for the following platforms:

- **CENTURY (Maths, English & Science):** An AI-powered platform that personalises learning, identifies gaps, and provides targeted practice while giving teachers valuable progress data.
- **Times Tables Rock Stars (Maths):** An engaging programme that develops fluency in multiplication and division through interactive games and challenges.
- **Destiny Discover (Reading):** Our online library provides students with access to a wide range of digital books to support reading both at school and at home.
- **ReadingWise (English) :** This platform offers a diagnostic-based intervention programme designed to identify students' individual reading needs and provide targeted support. It helps children develop key reading skills, including fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and confidence, enabling them to become more independent readers and access learning across the curriculum more effectively



Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

Primary students bring a personal device to school each day to support learning activities such as research, quizzes, and interactive lessons. We recommend an iPad due to its versatility and ease of use, including QR code scanning. Please ensure all devices are clearly labelled and protected with a sturdy case.

School Bus Service

CIS Dubai partners with STS to provide safe and reliable transport. Students travel under the supervision of bus assistants and teachers, with CCTV monitoring on all buses. For enquiries, please contact the STS representative: madhurya.joe@sts-group.com.

Uniform

School uniform details and online ordering are available on the school website and through the official uniform supplier.

Homework

In Primary, homework is optional. While research suggests homework has limited impact on academic achievement, it supports independence, organisation, and self-management. Weekly homework is provided for families who wish to extend learning at home. Homework is strongly encouraged in Years 5 and 6 to prepare students for Secondary School.

Eating Arrangements

Students have two break times for eating: 9:30 am and 1:00 pm. Most students bring a packed lunch, while the school canteen is available during the morning break.

The Curriculum



The National Curriculum for England

CIS Dubai follows the National Curriculum for England (NCfE), where key knowledge and skills are revisited and built upon each year to deepen understanding. Parents receive Topic Webs at the start of each half-term outlining the learning objectives and key dates.

Thematic Curriculum

Our Primary curriculum uses a thematic approach, linking subjects through engaging topics while incorporating NCfE and Positive Education. Each topic begins with a Sensational Start and ends with a Fabulous Finish, helping students make meaningful connections across their learning.

Topic Webs & Knowledge Organisers

At the beginning of each half-term, parents receive Topic Webs and Knowledge Organisers. These resources outline curriculum objectives, important dates, key vocabulary, and essential concepts to support learning at home.

Trips & Theme Days

Educational visits and themed learning days enrich the curriculum by providing real-life learning experiences. Parents will be informed in advance of all trips, and any required consent and payment should be completed through the Parent Portal.

Curriculum Structure:

In Primary from Y3-Y6 the lesson allocations are as follows:

Arabic	250 minutes per week (5 Lessons)
Islamic / Philosophy for Children	150 minutes per week (3 Lessons)
Moral Social Cultural Studies	50 minutes per week (1 Lesson)
English	300 minutes per week (6 Lessons)
Mathematics	250 minutes per week (5 Lessons)
Science	150 minutes per week (3 Lessons)

In addition to these compulsory courses, students also to study National Curriculum courses in:

Art	50 minutes per lesson (1 Lesson)
Humanities/Topic	50 minutes per week (1 Lesson)
Music	50 minutes per week (1 lesson)
Physical Education	100 minutes per week (2 Lessons)
French	50 minutes per class (1 Lesson)

School Timings

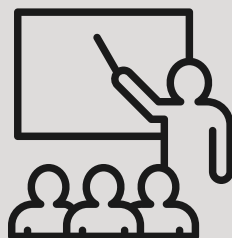
Our school timings are as follows:

Untis Line No.	Period/ Line No.	Yrs 1-6		Yrs 1-6	
		(Monday -Thursday)		(Friday)	
1	7:40am - 7:50am (10)	Registration	7:30am - 7:45am (15)	Registration	
2	7:50am - 8:40am (50)	Lesson 1	7:45am - 8:35 am (50)	Lesson 1	
3	8:40am - 9:30am (50)	Lesson 2	8:35am - 9:25am (50)	Lesson 2	
4	9:30am - 10:00am (30)	Break 1	9:25am - 9:40am (15)	Break	
5	10:00am - 10:30am (30)	Beyond 100/CLF	9:40am - 10:30am (50)	Lesson 3	
6	10:30am - 11:20am (50)	Lesson 3	10:30am - 11:20am (50)	Lesson 4	
7	11:20am - 12:10pm (50)	Lesson 4			
8	12:10pm - 1:00pm (50)	Lesson 5			
9	1:00pm - 01:20pm (20)	Break 2			
10	01:20pm - 02:10pm (50)	Lesson 6			
11	02:10pm - 3:00pm (50)	Lesson 7			



TEACH LIKE A GEM PLAYBOOK

Teaching is an art, learning is a science



Teach Like a GEM is our school's approach to high-quality teaching and learning. It ensures that every child experiences lessons that are purposeful, engaging, and carefully designed to meet their individual needs.

In every classroom, teachers follow a consistent teaching framework that includes:

- **Do Now** – Students begin lessons by retrieving prior knowledge and recalling previous learning. This helps strengthen memory, build connections, and prepare them for new learning.
- **Learning Outcomes and To Know Statements** – These provide clarity about the lesson's objectives and the key knowledge students need to acquire in order to be successful.
- **I Do, We Do, You Do** – Teachers first model new learning through clear explanations and step-by-step demonstrations (I Do). Students then practise alongside the teacher with guided support (We Do) before applying their learning independently (You Do), building confidence and mastery along the way.
- **Affirmative Checking** – Teachers regularly check for understanding throughout the lesson, allowing them to provide timely support, address misconceptions, and offer appropriate challenge.
- **Exit Ticket** – Students demonstrate what they have learned at the end of the lesson, enabling teachers to assess understanding, celebrate success, and plan next steps for learning.

Teach Like a GEM creates a structured, supportive, and engaging learning environment where all children are empowered to achieve their full potential.

Read like a GEM: Intent

Reading is the foundation for success and a key priority for every CIS student. Our goal is to ensure that every student becomes a confident and proficient reader, equipped with the skills needed to thrive academically and beyond. By cultivating a world-class reading culture throughout the school, we foster a love of reading, curiosity, and critical thinking. Through this commitment, we empower students with the knowledge, confidence, and lifelong learning habits that will support their success both now and in the future



Universal Offer: Embedding Reading Across the School

These initiatives ensure that reading is prioritised for all students through engaging and structured opportunities:

- **GEMS Readers Catalogue** – A carefully curated collection of books designed to engage, challenge, and inspire readers at every level.
- **GEMS Reading Challenge** – A school-wide initiative to promote reading for pleasure, encouraging students to read widely and develop independent reading habits.
- **Read Alouds** – Teachers model fluent reading, fostering a love of stories while developing students' comprehension, vocabulary, and cultural capital.
- **Vocabulary Programme (ReadingWise)** – Explicit teaching of Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary to help students access and understand subject-specific content.
- **GEMS Subject Readers** – Research-backed narratives that bring subject learning to life, helping students grasp complex concepts through engaging texts.

Targeted Offer: Closing Gaps in Reading

For students who require additional support, targeted interventions focus on closing gaps and ensuring all students can access the curriculum:

- **Early Readers and New to English: Phonics** – Systematic phonics instruction to help early readers and New to English build foundational decoding skills.
- **Developing Readers Decoding Support** – Explicit teaching of decoding strategies for students who struggle to read fluently, enabling them to access classroom materials with confidence.
- **Developing Readers Comprehension Support** – Structured interventions for students who can decode but struggle with comprehension, ensuring they can extract meaning, infer, and engage with texts deeply.
- **New to English: Pathway to Proficiency** – Bespoke pathways tailored to different levels of English language proficiency, designed to build students' confidence in communicating
- with peers and teachers, while supporting full access to the curriculum.

In addition to this intensive support, students will have access to the ReadingWise Zip Phonics Programme and Flashacademy to further accelerate their learning, as well as GEMS Universal Offer.



CIS champions Be A GEM (BAG), our whole-school character and behaviour framework that fosters a positive, respectful, and inclusive learning environment. Rooted in our core values and expectation upon student conduct, Be A GEM supports students in developing responsibility, resilience, and strong interpersonal skills through consistent routines, clear expectations, and positive reinforcement. Guided by the principles that everyone has the right to learn, be respected, and feel safe, students are encouraged to make positive choices, reflect on their actions, and grow from their experiences. These daily practices help build strong character and lifelong habits, complementing our wider wellbeing initiatives and ensuring every child thrives both academically and personally.



Be A GEM integrates our three fundamental rights into daily school life:

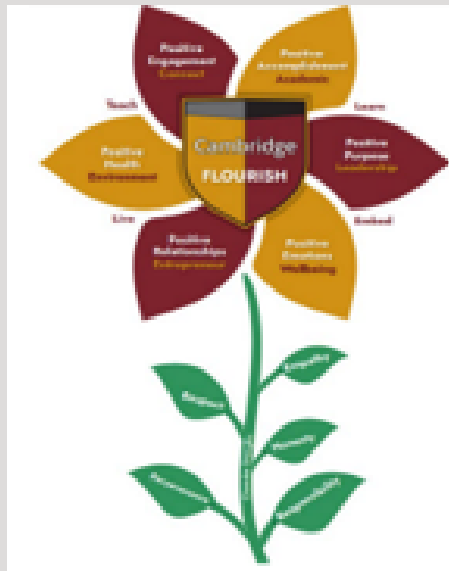
- The right to learn
- The right to be treated with respect
- The right to be in a safe environment

Through consistent routines, clear expectations, and positive reinforcement, students are encouraged to take ownership of their behaviour and to reflect on how their choices impact themselves and others. Teachers actively recognise and celebrate positive behaviours, while also guiding students through restorative conversations and reflection when needed.

OUR BEHAVIOUR ROUTINES	STRAPLINE (for staff and students)	
1. Travelling to and from school	When a GEM, Be a GEM	
2. Arriving at school	Another day to sparkle	
3. Moving around the school	Quickly and quietly	
4. During lessons	Ready to learn	
5. Leaving the classroom	Leave as you enter!	
6. Break and lunchtime (lining up for food or socialising)	Kind and courteous	
7. Ending the day positively	Tomorrow, we sparkle again	
8. Reflection (entry, during and end of the restorative conversation)	Pause, Reflect and Reset	

Curriculum For Life

We recognise the importance of Martin Seligman's Positive Psychology approach at CIS, which underpins our bespoke Curriculum For Life lessons. It is a proactive approach across the whole school to provide students with skills and knowledge for when difficulties arise. Lessons build coping skills, resilience, and awareness of emotions, aligned with MSCS guidance. We always strive to adopt a strength-based/accultuate the positive approach, the idea of having a language about what is right within our community and upholds the GEMS core values. Time allocation for wellbeing and CFL is reviewed annually, with age-appropriate approaches across EYFS and Primary. Programs within CFL include: Beyond 100, Leadership Gemstones, Squirrel and My Compass.



BEYOND100

CIS is proud to be part of Beyond100, a pioneering longevity programme; the world's first initiative to build daily lifelong habits for health, purpose, and resilience in schools. BEYOND100 is a daily longevity educational programme – from age 3 to 18 – embedding the science of longevity and the art of wellbeing.

BEYOND100 integrates five longevity pillars into daily school life:

- Move Beyond (physical activity and energy)
- Nourish Beyond (healthy nutrition and habits)
- Rest Beyond (sleep and recovery)
- Think Beyond (mindset and purpose)
- Align Beyond (reflection and growth)

These 10-minute daily habits help students develop resilience, focus, and healthy routines, supporting both immediate learning and long-term wellbeing. This initiative complements our Leadership Gemstones and Be a GEM ethos, ensuring that both character and wellbeing are strengthened every day.



At CIS, Leadership Gemstones builds upon the core GEMS values and is a year-long program that develops students as confident, values-driven leaders. The Leadership Gemstones programme, a year-long initiative that develops students as confident, values-driven leaders. Each month focuses on a key leadership value: Resilience, Respect, Diversity, Gratitude, Unity, Reflection, Compassion, Integrity, Vision, Adaptability, Service, and Empathy empowering students to “Stand up. Speak out.” and actively contribute to a culture of belonging, kindness, and inclusion. Throughout the year, students who consistently demonstrate these leadership values are recognised with our prestigious Excellence Leadership Award, celebrating their commitment to living our GEMS values and making a positive impact within the school community.



The Squirrel Financial Literacy Programme equips students with essential money management skills through engaging, age-appropriate activities and real-world learning experiences. Covering topics such as saving, budgeting, spending, and entrepreneurship, the programme helps children develop financial confidence, responsible decision-making, and lifelong habits that prepare them for success both in and beyond the classroom.

My Compass Today is an innovative career awareness and personal development programme that introduces students to a wide range of careers through engaging videos, interactive activities, and self-discovery experiences. Integrated with Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), the programme helps students identify their interests, strengths, and aspirations while developing essential life skills, empowering them to make informed choices about their future.



Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of learning at CIS Dubai. Students are regularly assessed through classroom activities, quizzes, baseline assessments, end-of-unit/term assessments, and GL Progress Tests to monitor progress and inform teaching.

Parents are notified in advance of formal assessments and provided with revision guidance. To ensure fair and accurate assessment, test papers are not shared before or after assessments.



ASSESSMENT



Assessment Calendar

At the end of each term, reviews of topic and concepts that have been taught and in class assessments take place to monitor and track each child's progress.

Standardised assessments take place at the following times of year, in school only:

Year Group	CAT4	NGRT	GL Progress Tests (Maths,
	October	October, January and May	June
Year 3		✓	✓
Year 4	✓	✓	✓
Year 5		✓	✓
Year 6	✓	✓	✓

The above assessments are international benchmark assessments and can only be sat in school.

- CAT4- Cognitive Abilities Test- Is similar to an IQ test and provides the school with information about your child's preferred learning styles to that we can provide stimulating lessons, catered to their specific, individual needs. For more information about CAT4 tests, click this [link](#)
- NGRT- New Group Reading Test- Provides the school with information relating to your child's reading ability.
- GL Progress Tests for Maths, English and Science- Provides the school with information relating to your child's levels of attainment linked to English National Curriculum Standards. For more information about GL Progress Tests click this [link](#).

All of the above formal, informal, formative and summative assessments, along with teacher judgement feeds into the formation of end of term reports.

Family First

At our school, we believe that strong partnerships between home and school are essential to every child's success. Through our Family First approach, we encourage meaningful family engagement in learning, celebrate shared experiences, and nurture values such as care, respect, kindness, and collaboration. By working together, we create a supportive environment where children feel safe, valued, and empowered to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Family involvement plays a vital role in a child's overall development and success. It strengthens children's confidence and well-being by providing a strong support system between home and school. Active family engagement supports academic progress and increases students' motivation and participation in learning. It also encourages positive relationships and effective communication, helping children feel valued and understood. Through shared learning experiences, families create lasting memories that enrich children's educational journeys. Furthermore, family involvement reinforces the values taught both at school and at home, encouraging consistency and supporting the development of responsible, respectful, and well-rounded individuals.

We promote our Family First approach by creating meaningful opportunities for families to engage in their children's learning and school experiences. Through family learning events and workshops, parents gain valuable insights into their child's development and education. Reading and learning activities at home encourage shared experiences that strengthen learning beyond the classroom. Celebrations, competitions, and community events bring families together, strengthening a strong sense of belonging and connection. Regular communication between families and teachers ensures that parents remain informed and involved in their child's progress, while opportunities to participate in school life help build strong partnerships that support student success and well-being.



Reporting



Reporting Overview

At CIS Dubai, formal reports to parents are sent at 3 times during the year. Parents are also invited to 3 formal Parent Teacher Meetings during which you can meet with your child's teachers, be informed about their levels of progress and attainment and learn more about how you can support your child with their next-steps linked to learning.

Parents are able to contact their child's class teacher at any time for a short informal overview of their child's progress but more detailed and formal reporting is saved for the reports and meetings so that teacher's time is best managed planning exciting and engaging lessons for your children.

In the 2022-2023 academic year, we changed our report templates to make the reports more concise and to ensure that all subjects are one document. Parents are also informed about their child's NGRT results and reading ages on these reports that can be downloaded from the parent portal.

Communication

At Cambridge International School Dubai, we pride ourselves on having outstanding working relationships with all of our stakeholders. We aim to provide open forms of communication with our parents and would like to advise you of the following people that you should direct any questions towards, should you require support for any queries you may have.

Learning Managers:

- Year 4-1: Ms. Shabina Parveen
- Year 4-2: Ms. Sukaina Hani
- Year 4-3: Ms. Farida Syed
- Year 4-4: Ms. Caroline Saigal
- Year 4-5: Ms. Fatima Mufaddal Tohfafarosh
- Year 4-6: Ms. Sajida

Head of Year: Ms. Fatima Mufaddal Tohfafarosh : f.tohfafarosh_cis@gemsedu.com

Communication Flow Chart:

For purposes of efficiency, please follow the following communication flow-chart so that and issues or queries that you have, can be addressed as soon as possible:

- Academic or Pastoral queries: Your child's class teacher
- If not satisfied with the outcome, please revert to your child's Year Group Leader
- If you are still not satisfied with the outcome, please revert to the Head of Primary: l.yarwood_cis@gemsedu.com
- If you are still not satisfied with the outcome, you are welcome to make an appointment with the Principal by contacting his PA: principal_cis@gemsedu.com
- Safeguarding queries: Our Vice Principal Miss Lourdina Franco: l.franco_cis@gemsedu.com or our Deputy Head of Primary Miss Jyothi: j.yesudasanjios_cis@gemsedu.com
- General queries: Our Parent Relations Executive, Miss Shemara s.anthony1_cis@gemsedu.com
- Financial queries: Our Finance Department: Prakash.v_cis@gemsedu.com

Newsletters:

You will receive weekly newsletters from your child's Head of Year informing you about what your child has been learning in school that week and what they will learn during the forthcoming week. In addition to this, a Primary newsletter is sent once a half-term to celebrate and recognise all of the achievements during that month and to disseminate important information.

Parent Coffee Mornings

Parent Coffee Mornings (see school calendar for dates) – Parents are invited to come into school to meet senior leaders and discuss any areas of learning regarding their child's progress.

School Policies

A number of important school policies and documents can be found on our website by clicking the following <https://www.gemscis-dubai.com/>



مدرسة كامبردج انترناشيونال
Cambridge International School, Dubai

