

Mesaieed International School



KS4

Handbook for Students and Parents 2018-2019

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MISSION

To inspire and empower our students for a great future, through an innovative and globally relevant education.

VISION

- Every student achieving their highest potential;
- Every teacher an expert manager of learning;
- Every learning programme inspirational and innovative;
- Internationally recognised for cutting-edge practice.

MOTTO

Innovation leads to **E**xcellence

Diversity is our **S**trength

Education for **A**ll

Aspiration ensures **S**uccess

Leadership develops **R**esponsibility

Academic Statement

Mesaieed International School is committed in policy and practice to the delivery of the National Curriculum of England and Wales whilst fulfilling the requirements set out by the Qatar Ministry of Education.

It is recognised that for a school such as ours the National Curriculum does not represent the whole of the curriculum, and that our setting within the international community of Qatar and beyond allows for and enriched curriculum.

We aim to develop students' knowledge, skills and talents by supporting them to become curious, enquiring, reflective, problem-solving and independent learners. Mesaieed International School adds an international dimension to the pupils' learning and experiences which will increase opportunities for them in later life.

MIS students therefore experience a balance and range of subjects which prepares them for higher education, lifelong learning and successful employment.

Welcome to Key Stage Four!

The Aims of this Handbook.

The aim of this handbook is to provide information and guidance for parents and students who are part of the Mesaieed International School community at Key Stage 4. The responsibility that is now placed on Year 10 and 11 students is greater than in previous years. Almost everything Pastoral in nature applies across all year groups, but in addition we expect the very best standards from our Key Stage 4 students. The example they set is of paramount importance for our school. It is essential that you read this document carefully as there are many new issues that arise as a child enters the Secondary environment.

Academic Studies at KS4.

The Key Stage Four age range, 14-16 years, involves the start of external academic assessment and the beginning of formal academic study. This two year period ends in the GCSE and IGCSE examinations which are internationally recognised qualifications and the gateway to further advanced academic studies. This change is a challenge for many students and requires a major development in their personal organisational and study skills.

The Role of the School at KS4 is:

- To develop skills and knowledge for lifelong learning
- To develop knowledge in a range of subjects and studies
- To create independent, self-disciplined and self-aware students
- To provide for success at IGCSE
- To prepare students for advanced level studies

At MIS we believe that every child should be able to reach their full academic potential through high quality teaching, a disciplined and positive learning environment, and a strong system of Academic and Pastoral Support.

Academic support is provided by Subject Teachers, Heads of Subjects, the Head of Year, Progress Leader, Assistant Headteacher and the Head of Secondary (see staff list) and all work closely with form tutors to ensure that students are given the opportunity to achieve academically, to the best of their ability.

Subjects taught in Key Stage Four include:

Core subjects of English, Mathematics, Science, Sport and PSHEE which every student studies.

Option subjects:

- Art
- Arabic
- Business Studies
- Computer Science
- Design Technology (Graphics, Food Technology and Resistant Materials)
- Economics
- French
- Geography
- History
- Information Technology
- Islamic Studies
- Music
- Physical Education
- Travel and Tourism

What are IGCSE qualifications?

The International GCSE (IGCSE) is an international form of the GCSE examinations taken in the UK. It is specifically designed for students living in a range of countries. IGCSE courses last two years and are taken at the end of year 11, when most students are aged 15-16. However, there is no age limit to when these qualifications can be taken.

The IGCSE is an internationally recognised qualification and prepares students for further academic work, including progression to [AS Level](#) and [A Level](#) study, [Cambridge Pre-U](#) and the [IB Diploma Programme](#). It is recognised by academic institutions and employers around the world.

Traditionally IGCSE/ GCSEs have been reported using grading System of A* - G. Cambridge IGCSEs will continue to use this grading system. However as a result of changes in the UK, AQA and Edexcel have reformed their IGCSE/GCSE to a new grading system. The new reforms are known as GCSE 9-1. Instead of using the grading system of A*-G the reformed IGCSE/GCSEs are graded with a new scale from 9 to 1, with 9 being the highest grade. This new scale is aligned to key grades on the current A* to G scale.

The introduction of Grade 9 in the new GCSEs aims to allow greater differentiation between the most able candidates. Fewer grade 9s will be awarded than A*s. In The UK, the Department for Education (DfE) has confirmed that Grade 4 will be considered a 'standard pass' and Grade 5 a 'strong pass' for the purposes of performance tables in the UK.

The Key Stage Four Strategy.

Our strategy at MIS is designed to ensure that we make the most of the time between the start of IGCSE and the point at which students take up their advanced level courses. Its aims and objectives are to make sure that all students:

- experience exciting and interesting lessons
- are actively involved in the lesson, developing critical thinking
- are able to become independent learners
- make rapid progress and achieve higher standards
- are included, stimulated and make progress
- have extra support if they are not reaching their academic potential
- succeed at KS4 to the best of their ability

We aim to keep families informed of their children's academic progress and involved in the school as much as possible.

The Timetable.

The timetable is composed of 34 lessons per week (6 on Sunday and 7 Monday -Thursday); Lesson 7 is mostly allocated to extra-curricular activities that encompass Communication, Collaboration, Creativity and Critical Thinking. There are two, fifteen-minute breaks and one thirty minute break in the day.

In Key Stage Four, the core subjects of English and Mathematics are allocated five lessons each per week and Science has six. Option subjects receive three each. Sport has two lessons and PSHEE has one.

At MIS we aim to personalise the KS4 timetable for every child in line with their academic ability. We do not believe in "setting students up to fail" so teachers are available to advise parents on the most suitable curriculum choices for their children at IGCSE/GCSE level.

Homework Timetables

Homework is set online through DODDLE. www.doddlelearn.co.uk. Homework will be set at the start of the week for the following week. Students have one week to complete their homework. This allows for students to plan their time in order to complete their homework over the week. At KS4 students are expected to take more responsibility when planning their own homework schedule, tutors will help where necessary. Homework will usually be preparation/ research for a task or lesson in the following week and it is important students complete these homework tasks if they are to make maximum progress in their lesson. It is expected that students undertake 10 hours per week in order to be successful on their respective courses.

The Academic Reporting System.

There are two main ways in which we report academic progress, through:

1. **Progress Checks:**

Issued every six weeks, this is a 1 page report detailing the student's current progress and their attendance. Additionally, a Red, Amber, Green or Purple box will indicate if the student is making good progress.

2. Full Reports:

Issued at the end of the Academic year. Each subject will report on:

- Attainment level (A* - G) *This is in line with I/GCSE grades*
- A comment on overall progress and performance

At MIS we will continue to report using A* - G scale. We already use a Fine Grade Scale which allows us to indicate if a student is secure or not on a grade. See table below, for how to convert to the new 9-1 Edexcel grading system.

| GCSE 9-1 | MIS Fine grade |
|----------|----------------|
| 9 | A*1 |
| 8 | A*2, A*3 |
| 7 | A1-A3 |
| 6 | B1-B3 |
| 5 | C1 |
| 4 | C2, C3 |
| 3 | D1-D3, E1 |
| 2 | E2, E3, F1, F2 |
| 1 | F3, G1-3 |

All students will have at three academic reviews during the year (Student Target and Review-STAR) with their Tutor. This will involve setting personal academic targets, identifying barriers to learning and reviewing their progress. It is important that Parents attend these reviews with their child to be fully informed about their child's progress and targets.

In addition, where a child's progress is a concern meetings will be arranged for that parent to meet with the teacher.

What you can do to help your child succeed academically at Key Stage 4:

In order to help your child succeed academically it is important that the school establishes a strong working partnership with parents. Below are some ideas of what you can do to help your child succeed academically at Key Stage 4:

- Communicate any ideas or concerns with us
- Help pupils to organise their time and paperwork
- Provide a quiet place for your child to study
- Help them to revise and plan for revision when exams are scheduled.

- Praise all achievements and progress no matter how small they appear
- Ensure your children get enough sleep and are carefully supervised at home
- Monitor IT usage (websites, time spent on PC etc.)
- Take an interest in your children's learning

Pastoral Care.

The foremost thought that any child or parent has when school is mentioned is usually something to do with the subjects that are taught. School is a place where pupils attend lessons, do homework and sit tests and exams. This is all crucial for any school that wishes to produce academically successful learners but it isn't the whole story.

At MIS we have a Pastoral system in place that aims to help students to become well-rounded and successful young men and women who are full of confidence. We wish to develop the kind of character that will allow them to achieve beyond school and allow them to offer other useful skills in addition to their qualifications. Generally speaking, anything that happens in a normal school day outside the classroom is a pastoral issue although there may be occasions where issues will involve both Pastoral and Academic Sectors. All teaching staff have a responsibility for pastoral development of students; they will support all the requirements for the development of good citizenship within the delivery of their subjects.

The Tutor Group.

Every child who attends MIS is allocated to a Tutor Group. The role of the tutor is a very responsible one as it is they who will be the focal point for so many aspects of the student's life.

The tutor will:

- Create a friendly, caring and open environment in which pupils feel comfortable and safe.
- Take an interest in the tutees as individuals and to get to know them well.
- Be responsible for the class register. They will monitor absence, lateness and sickness.
- Check the students' diaries are used correctly and for notes from parents.
- Monitor and keep a summary record of the pupil's academic progress, behaviour and attendance.
- Review achievement points and other forms of commendation.
- Be pro-active in taking action to improve work and behaviour.
- Support class teachers and to be the first point of contact for teachers in case of difficulties or problems.
- Check appearance and uniform and take appropriate steps in case of student failure to respect the rules.
- Work closely with the relevant Head of Year and Progress Leader to keep them informed of the whole class and individuals work and behaviour.
- Be a constant source of advice and guidance for the tutees.
- Communicate with students regularly to identify any possible problems.

Tutor groups meet every day except Sunday, between 1.10-1.30pm. During this time the tutors must mark the register, brief the students with any relevant news, check diaries, issue letters and directions for forthcoming events and make appointments to meet students as required. It is essential for all students to be punctual so that they do not miss any important information or interrupt the tutorial session by arriving late.

Attendance.

Time spent in school is very valuable so we ask that, unless it is unavoidable, students are not absent during term time. If a student is ill and cannot attend school they need to present the school with a medical certificate/letter explaining the absence on their return. The school will contact the parent on the morning that the student is absent.

We ask that routine medical appointments take place outside school hours wherever possible. If this is not possible (for example you may have to attend a specialist clinic in Doha) you should provide a note, in advance, with details of the appointment that includes the date and time that your child will be collected. Should there be a need for a student to leave during the day it is essential for the purposes of health and safety that they sign out. They should be collected by a parent and on returning to school they should inform the office staff who will amend the register.

Families should avoid, as far as possible, taking holidays during term time. Note, no additional work will be set for students who miss school for a family vacation and it will be the responsibility of the child to catch up any work missed. Any request for absence due to a family vacation must be put in writing to the Principal in advance. Please refer to our attendance policy for further information available at www.mis.qp.qa

Students who arrive late should proceed to the school office directly so that their presence in school can be recorded.

Please note the student's attendance and punctuality will be reported on the school reports and poor attendance/punctuality may result in the student not completing the Year and having to repeat.

Students may walk, cycle or travel by bus or car, to school. If they travel home by car you must ensure that they are collected on time at the end of the school day (14:30) except on Sunday (13.10) from the back school gate, unless they attend an after-school club. Please note there are no clubs on Sunday.

There is no transport provided by companies after 14.30, so if your child attends an optional school club you must make your own transport arrangements from the school.

Expectations of behaviour.

We expect our students to behave well such that they are a credit to themselves, the school and their parents. We expect students to respect the authority of the teaching staff and other adults employed by the school and as such cooperate to foster the most productive learning environment possible. We expect tolerance, acceptance and understanding amongst peers and will not accept destructive behaviour. Behaviour expectations also extend to travel on buses and occasions where our students are off school premises. We wish all of our students without exception to have the best possible experience at Mesaieed International School and we strive to develop our students as polite and respectful individuals.

Use of English.

English is the language of instruction throughout the school and should be used at all times in school (except when learning Arabic, French or other languages). Wherever possible, students should be encouraged to practise English by conversation outside school, and by reading English texts.

The Student planner.

On entry to the school each student is issued with a planner. This planner has many purposes but primarily it allows the student to develop good organisational habits which will prove invaluable during their time in school and beyond.

- Students must have their planner for every lesson and they take it home each evening.
- Students may record details of due dates and dates of tests and other important information.
- Students are to maintain their planners neatly. There should be no graffiti or damage beyond that which may be expected through fair wear and tear.
- Teachers may use the planner to communicate with parents.
- Parents may use the planner to reply to teacher comments or communicate other information. Students should show any parental comments to their tutor on arrival at tutor time.
- Parents are to check the planner each week and they may respond to issues communicated within it. They should sign the planner each week to acknowledge that they have checked it and have signed notes from the teacher.
- Tutors are to check the planner each week, to ensure that it is being used correctly, contains set homework for each subject, is in good condition and has been signed by a parent.

Personal Equipment.

Students should bring the following personal equipment to school:

A pencil case containing pencils, black, red and blue pens, a sharpener, a rubber, a ruler, highlighter, a set of colouring pencils, a glue stick, (other gel pens, felt pens and wax or other crayons may be used as directed by specific teachers – but these items are not compulsory).

A full geometry set including a compass (and pencil to fit), set squares and a protractor.
A scientific calculator (not required for Mathematics until year 8 but may be used by pupils prior to that time to familiarise themselves with the device. NB this should NOT be a graphics calculator).

Any other equipment brought to school by pupils should be clearly named and stored in their allotted locker/pupil's bag until required. Items not pertinent to school or school clubs/activities should not be brought to school.

Security of Personal Equipment.

It is essential that pupils are made aware of the necessity of looking after their property in school. **Students are allocated a locker which should be secured with a combination padlock.** These locks have to be removed, and lockers cleared out at the end of the school year.

All clothing and property should be identified by name tape or engraving.

Students should have a school bag in which to bring books to and from school. Their bag (and coat, during cold weather) should be appropriately stored as directed by school staff. Books and belongings are not to be left out in rooms and should be taken home at the end of the school day. Students should not bring items of value to school including mobile phones, MP3 players, electronic games, cameras and video cameras etc. It must be noted that these items are prohibited, and that the school takes no responsibility for their damage or loss should a student decide to bring in these items. If a student is found using any of these items without permission they will be removed from them and parents will then have to collect the items from the school.

Chewing gum is NOT permitted in school
Helmets must be worn when riding a bicycle and seat belts must be worn in cars and buses as per Qatari law.

Uniform.

All uniform should be clean, well maintained and worn with pride. We are judged by our appearance in the wider community and therefore we aim to set high standards.
All items should be clearly labelled, clean and changed frequently. Wrist bands are not permitted.

Girls.

Plain white shirt or blouse, tucked in, with a collar and either wrist or elbow length sleeves.
Plain navy blue skirt - below knee length and loose fitting. Plain navy blue tailored trousers may be worn.
Plain navy blue v-necked jumper or cardigan (essential for the winter) – NO Collars, round or square necks, Logos or Zips.
Plain black shoes with a maximum 3cm heel and closed toes (no boots, training shoes, sandals or similar).
Navy blue tights (optional).
Plain white socks - ankle or knee length.
Head scarves will be either completely navy blue or white, with no patterning.
Girls with shoulder length hair or longer must have it tied back with a plain blue or white hair band.
Make-up is not allowed.

Boys.

Plain white shirt, tucked in, with collar and either wrist or elbow length sleeves.
Plain navy blue below knee length shorts or tailored ankle length trousers.
Plain navy blue v-necked jumper or cardigan – NO Collars, round or square necks, Logos or Zips.
Plain navy blue or black socks.
Black shoes (no training shoes, sandals or similar).
Hair should be kept tidy and clean. It should be conservatively styled, without wedges, lines or artificial, vibrant or contrasting colours.

Jewellery.

A single wristwatch may be worn.
Additionally girls may wear a single pair of plain studs for pierced ears.

PE Kit for both genders – to be brought to school in a separate bag.

Plain white polo type shirt with a collar (not a t-shirt or singlet).
Plain navy blue shorts or plain navy blue tracksuit (logos or similar kept to a minimum).
Training shoes (or football boots and knee length socks for sports field activities).
White ankle socks.
Navy blue or white baseball cap.
Water bottle clearly marked with the student's name.

Swimming kit must include a one-piece costume, towel and hairbrush/comb, all in a waterproof bag.

For House events students should possess a plain T-Shirt of the correct colour that displays no logos, emblems or messages.

If appearance is deemed inappropriate by the school management, parents will be contacted.

In the case of any required arbitration, the final decision of what is acceptable rests with the school.

Rewards and Sanctions.

All teachers appreciate good work, good behaviour and a positive attitude and as such are always willing to offer praise and encouragement to the students in their charge. We have a positive reinforcement policy in our school that actively encourages an atmosphere where learning is both productive and enjoyable for all.

Students can be rewarded with achievement points. These are collated by the tutor and lead to the award of certificates:

- Tutor Certificate
- Head of Year Certificate
- Progress Leader Certificate
- Assistant Headteacher Certificate
- Headteacher Certificate
- Principal Certificate

Achievement points are also collated by the House Leaders and the House Cup is awarded every term.

Other Awards students may receive are for Outstanding Achievement, Progress and Outstanding Effort. Each year there are Subject Awards issued and major whole school prizes that are awarded during the End of Year Prize Giving Ceremony.

Although our expectations are high regarding behaviour, commitment and personal standards we have in place sanctions that we can apply should eventualities warrant this. Sanctions will be appropriately scaled and will be used for contravention of school rules, poor behaviour or any actions that may compromise the good order and positive environment we wish to maintain. Above all, no student should interfere with the opportunity to learn or personal wellbeing of any other person or persons.

PSHEE.

Students will receive Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) during PHSEE lessons and during tutor time. This gives us the opportunity to look at a range of topics that may fall outside the expected academic curriculum. It allows us to start developing broader awareness of issues with students and explore life skills that will be useful later and that will support other studies. Students will gain confidence through debate and will start to develop the skills to communicate and present their opinions and ideas.

The House System.

Mesaieed International School has four houses. Students belong to one of the following:

- Oryx House who compete in **green** shirts.
- Falcon House who compete in **blue** shirts.
- Dhow House who compete in **red** shirts.
- Pearl House who compete in **yellow** shirts.

We have a calendar of events planned which calls for active participation. Again, this broadens the educational experiences of our students. Houses have a mixture of year groups which allows students to integrate with others outside their usual circle and promotes teamwork and the skills of cooperation and communication.

All students require a plain t-shirt in their allocated house team colour.

Other issues.

Food.

Please ensure your child has a good breakfast as this has been proven to improve concentration and learning in schools.

There are adequate breaks in the day for students to eat and drink so that they can function at their best. Parents are requested to ensure that their children bring healthy and nutritious food to school rather than crisps, sweets and canned or fizzy drinks. Recommended food items would be fresh fruit and vegetables, nuts and raisins, fresh juice drinks, sandwiches (such as cheese, chicken, egg or salad) or a portion of a rice based meal. Pupils may bring a clear, plastic, named water bottle to school, which they may take into lessons as directed by their teachers. Any other items of food or drink should not be consumed in classrooms.

Gum is **not** allowed in school.

Toilets.

Secondary school students should not require toilet breaks while in lessons and should organise themselves such that they go in break time. Visiting the toilet as a reason for being late to a lesson is not a valid excuse. Individual medical conditions will, however, be taken into account.

Mobile Phones and Electronic devices.

Students are encouraged not to bring in personal media devices to school and should not use such devices, except where they have been given express permission to do so by the School Leadership.

The school recognises that parents may wish students to have a personal mobile phone. The student is entirely responsible for the mobile phone. If a mobile phone goes missing, the school will follow its normal incident procedure but cannot take any responsibility for the loss of the phone. The parent makes the decision as to whether they feel their child is able to take such responsibility.

Mobile phones must be switched off and out of sight in school. If a student needs to call their parents urgently then they must go to reception to make a call. Parents should call the school office if they wish to contact their child.

Mobile phones, with the express permission of the teacher, may be used within a lesson when their use would support and enhance the learning but not in a way, that disadvantages any other students.

Videos and DVDs.

Students should not bring these items into school unless specifically requested to do so by a teacher. No student may bring any movie material that is not suitable for their own age group.

Fire and emergency procedures.

The school has an emergency fire evacuation procedure, and there are regular fire practices to carry out safe evacuation of our building, and to ensure that the students are fully aware of the escape routes, and what we require them to do in an emergency.

Medical issues.

Please ensure that all relevant information regarding the health of your child has been forwarded to the school so that we can respond appropriately should any emergency arise. Please let us know of any new conditions we need to be aware of, or that may have an adverse influence on them in school.

If a child falls ill at school the School Nurse will see them.

If a student is too ill to remain at school a parent will be called to take them home or to the Medical Centre as appropriate.

Should any medical emergency arise an ambulance will be called and the student will be taken to the Medical Centre in Mesaieed. In such a case, parents will be contacted immediately.

Who to talk to.

Parent consultations take place during the year where you are able to receive feedback on your child's progress from their Tutor. (Parent-Tutor Meetings). And where there is concern about the progress your child is making-from the teacher.

There may be occasions where an additional meeting is required. If there are concerns that you wish to raise then you are welcome to telephone the school and make an appointment with the relevant head of Faculty, Teacher, Head of Year or Tutor.

If your concerns are not addressed to your satisfaction then please feel free to make an appointment to see a senior member of staff. As follows:

For most issues you will need to contact the Head of Lower/Middle School (Miss Pounsett) or Head of Sixth Form (Mr. Gibson).

Where the matter is a subject concern and you have met with the Head of Faculty, then please contact the Assistant Headteacher Curriculum, Mr. Jobber.

Where the matter is a student welfare or behavioural concern then please contact the Assistant Headteacher Pastoral, Mrs. Gordon.

Otherwise, please contact the Headteacher, Mr. Spence.

Should we identify any issues that require further discussion then we will contact you to arrange a meeting at the school.

Summary for Parents.

Thank you for taking the time to read this document. We understand that you expect the best from your children and the best from the school. The education of a child involves three partners working together, the child themselves, the school and the parents. We all have considerable responsibility for the end product, a happy and successful young adult with the enthusiasm, energy and capability to achieve their goals.

How you can help.

- Firstly, you can read through, and discuss, the information that has been outlined in this document.
- Ensure your children are prepared for school; that they are smart, correctly dressed and properly equipped.
- Ensure regular attendance, avoid absences wherever possible and make sure they are on time in the morning.

- Check planners, ensure that they are using it to plan ahead and get homework done. Read and respond to messages from teachers. Sign them every week.
- Communicate with us and let us know when problems may affect your child in school.
- Attend parent- tutor meetings.
- Support the school's positive ethos and help wherever possible to maintain the high standards we wish to maintain.

We enjoy teaching your children at Mesaieed International School, and are very pleased to do so. Thank you very much for your continued support.

Ms. K. John
Head of Year 10

Ms. S. Chereni
Head of Year 11

Miss K. Pounsett
Head of Lower/Middle School

Mrs. C Gordon
Assistant Head Teacher

Mr. T. Spence
Head of Secondary

Secondary Campus Telephone: 40145735