



DUBAI INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY  
AL BARSHA

## Dubai International Academy - Al Barsha

### Reading Policy

Our overarching aim for English and Arabic at Dubai International Academy Al Barsha is to promote high standards of literacy by equipping students with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. We recognize the responsibility to send every student to secondary school having mastered at least the basic elements of reading and with the ability to participate confidently in society.

The recent PISA and TIMSS results highlight the importance of reading literacy on student performance in international assessments, including science and mathematics, in which there is a clear link to the National Agenda. DIA AB therefore provides opportunities to ensure our students have high levels of reading literacy to be able to successfully read across the curriculum.

To support the UAE National Agenda in its vision to produce a reading generation and establish the UAE as the capital of cultural and knowledge content. To meet the UAE National Agenda target and DIA AB targets to ensure that the students in the UAE rank amongst the best in the world in reading as per PISA and TIMSS results and ensure our students have strong knowledge of the Arabic language. DIA AB will ensure that all students have equal access to the curriculum, regardless of gender, religion, race or ability. Students with specific reading, speech and language or hearing difficulties will be identified and supported through support programmes in school and external help will be sought where necessary.

#### **To promote high standards of literacy, we aim to ensure that all students:**

- Will read every day, in English, Arabic lessons and in subjects across the curriculum
- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information through regular Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) time
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- Appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences modelled in their reading
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas, supported with evidence from the text
- Are competent in the skills of speaking and listening, asking and responding to questions and participating in discussions, demonstrating understanding of what they have read.

Reading feeds student imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds. It is our aim that, by the end of their primary school, all students at DIA AB are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject.



## The Teaching of Reading

Reading, at DIA AB takes place throughout the curriculum where children are encouraged to apply the skills they have been taught in focused reading lessons using Letters and Sounds in Phase 1 and Guided Reading lessons in Phase 2.

Teaching in Guided Reading sessions, across the school, focusses on developing student competence in both word reading and comprehension skills as outlined in our scope and sequence English and Arabic Reading section. Skilled word reading involves both the speedy decoding of unfamiliar printed words and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why, in the primary, there is an emphasis on phonics in the early teaching of reading to secure independent decoding and we use the Letters and Sound, together with Bug Club to achieve this.

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through student experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of engaging stories, poems and non-fiction. RAZ KIDS online texts, EPIC and 'I Start Arabic and I Read Arabic' are used on the iPads when teachers read with their guided reading groups. Children work in groups using the reading roles independently with differing texts.

Each classroom has stimulating and inviting book corners (preCovid), where children are expected to explore and organise their books. Students visit the school library regularly, taking books from the school library weekly (Covid protocols in place). DIA AB Library also provide quality texts for each grade, chosen to match the programme of inquiry as well as levelled readers.

### Phase 1

In phase 1, reading is an important feature inside and outside the classroom. We have a range of ways in which we promote reading in the early years:

- Book corners that are stimulating and accessible, owned and loved by children, indoors and outdoors. (Covid approach)
- Using unit related literature and books to plan for children's interests and unit topics
- Children have the opportunity to read to an adult using levelled reading books once a week
- Children are assigned books through Bug Club and RAZ kids online reading programme, they can choose their own books.
- Having enthusiastic staff who share their excitement of books with children through celebrating World Book Day, Author's day, reading aloud, guest readers etc.
- Having a range of quality books available in classrooms and the school library
- Having opportunities for independent writing in all areas of the classroom
- Using story props, story sacks, role play areas and displays to enhance unit books



DUBAI INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY  
AL BARSHA

- Having well planned, shared reading sessions that all practitioners are confident to take part in
- Opportunities for children to learn from clearly modelled 'reading behaviours', for example, the recognition that print conveys meaning, the left to right directionality of English text, the purpose of punctuation
- Listening to and joining in a variety of genres, for example, non-fiction, poems, taped stories, rhymes etc
- Opportunities to retell and to act out stories using props and story maps.

Children in Kindergarten have reading at the heart of their English lessons to develop happy, healthy and curious learners who read confidently and independently.

## **Phase 2**

Children in Grade 1-5 take part in Guided Reading sessions. A different focus group is taught by the teacher, where the children will be taught new skills in order to progress with their reading. These skills are based on teachers' assessment and the children's next steps. Further to the focus group, the other pupils take on a range of "Reading roles" within their group, giving a clear purpose to their reading and discussions and enabling them to work independently on fluency, comprehension, reasoning and inferencing activities. The activities are linked to the texts the children are reading and promote the independent application of skills previously taught.

We aim to expand the skills gained earlier in the school by keeping a teaching focus on reading, drawing attention to the structure of a variety of texts, helping pupils to adapt their style of reading to suit the purpose (skim, scan, read critically). The higher order reading skills must be taught and should not be confined to the Literacy lesson alone. The opportunity to read texts from different media, to research, investigate, to sift, select and take notes from text, to question, challenge and look for bias in texts, to scan and skim for project information and use this purposefully can be found in many different subject areas. As soon as children can read, we aim to support them in their need to become independent, helping them to develop fluency, expressiveness and critical awareness. It is important that older children still share books and sets for books during guided reading sessions. A range of high-quality texts are used to deliver this having full texts in addition to the use of extracts.

## **Phase 3 & 4**

Children in G6-12 will have access to physical and online books. Subject teachers and Home Room Teachers are aware they are all teachers of literacy and will provide opportunities for reading from a variety of mediums in their subject and set high expectations for reading skills. Children in Grade 6-9 will take NGRTs each Term and those identified as reading below their age will be supported with various interventions to achieve a suitable reading age.



DUBAI INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY  
AL BARSHA

## **Home Reading**

We work in partnership with parents, so students develop a love of books and reading. Daily reading at home and at school ensures children make good progress in developing reading skills, whatever their age. “Accelerated Reader & MyOn online reading programme” is used, through which children access a range of texts to read at home. Encouraging children to read widely, in and out of school, across both fiction and non-fiction, helps to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases student vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Children can choose a new book to read at home twice a week as well as taking a story book home at the weekend (Covid protocols). Reading progress can be seen by parents via online programme. Teachers also give feedback on Toddle.

## **Planning**

Planning is centred around growing the love for reading, and is evaluated and adjusted in response to assessment for learning. The English Subject Leader and Primary Leadership team monitor the planning and delivery of the Reading curriculum. Teachers use the strands in the English scope and sequence as guidance and targets to ensure teaching addresses the gaps in children’s learning. Appropriate pitch and challenge are planned to enable all pupils to achieve and make good progress.

## **Assessment**

Assessment for learning is ongoing. The staff assess attainment in reading every semester to update targets, using evaluations made on their planning and guided reading sessions, written assessments of comprehension and independent learning the children have produced – either written or verbal. Phonics progress is assessed on a unit basis. For formal testing within school see the assessment policy. The use of summative assessments allows teachers to clearly identify students’ levels during the year. Teachers use RAZ Running Records to secure students reading levels. Students in G1-5 also take the National Group Reading Test (NGRT) that allows schools to drill down into student’s reading and comprehension skills (including phonics where necessary), helping us to reveal exactly where support is required. The NGRT allows teachers to assess reading and comprehension skills benchmarked against the national average, and monitor progress.

## **Visible Learning and feedback**

Through our visible learning approach our pupils have a clear understanding about the next steps in their learning and how they can achieve their targets. They are fully engaged in their learning journey and take responsibility for their progress.

## **Arabic Reading Literacy**

The Arabic Reading Literacy programme is driven by the Heads of Arabic A and B, the teachers and the SLMT. All lessons are divided into 4 parts (Speaking, listening, Reading and Writing) Students will have at least 10



minutes of reading session included where students will read independently, read to an adult or read to their peers. Each Arabic A classroom will have a small library with levelled readers. Home learning tasks include students recording their reading for teachers to provide feedback. Teachers are required to model writing and correct usage of grammar for students to enrich their understanding of genre, tone and writing skills. A structured online reading programme 'I read Arabic' is used from KG2- G8 in Arabic A and B. Progression through levels is monitored by teachers. Rewards are given in assemblies to further encourage students to participate in reading.

### **Mathematics Literacy**

In order to promote reading across the curriculum and maths literacy, all classrooms in the primary are expected to have a maths vocabulary wall for students and teachers to refer to. Math literacy lessons are structured into three parts- Fluency, Reasoning and Problem solving. Students are given opportunities to work with their peers to explain their reasoning and problem-solving using mathematical language. They make predictions and connections when solving problem by doing so students understand the "language" of math (for example "sum" means an answer to addition, "difference" means the answer to a subtraction).

### **Inclusion (SEN, TAG and EAL)**

Students with difficulties in learning to read or with Special Educational Needs have their needs identified promptly and interventions provided that will accelerate their progress. Progress is measured and tracked to ensure they are catching up with their peers. Additional teaching and support is provided through 1:1 reading with an adult, extra guided reading in small groups and daily Phonics sessions (booster sessions).

In Phase 2 additional teaching is provided through regular 1:1 reading with an adult, pre-teaching of key vocabulary to support children's understanding.

### **EAL – English as an Additional Language**

"Booster" Phonics sessions are provided straight away for new EAL arrivals and our inclusion team assesses their reading skills promptly and ensures new students join the local library. Staff liaise with parents to encourage them to enjoy bilingual books with their children, asking questions and discussing the book in their home language or in English, supporting their enjoyment of books and their acquisition of English.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

It is the role of everyone to promote a love for reading.

**Governance** – To provide support for reading initiatives

**Senior Leadership Team** - To promote and resource the needs of all children in reading and celebrate reading by rewarding students who are caught reading beyond the school hours.

**Teachers** - It will be the responsibility of all teachers to keep track of the progress of each student's reading level. The head of English and the English subject leader must keep track of student's progress in reading.



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AL BARSHA

**All staff:** are teachers of literacy and will foster a love for reading.

**Parents:** We sincerely hope parents will support their children by reading with their children in early phase and encouraging a love for reading. we encourage parents to work with the school in developing a 'love of reading' in our children, doing things such as family 'Drop Everything and Read' times (all family members read at the same time) and having discussions at the dinner table about what books each family member has read lately.

*Policy Review*

*This policy will be reviewed annually.*