



August 2023

Dear Parents,

A very warm welcome to all our students and families in Farm Class!

It is going to be an exciting year, filled with interesting and fun learning opportunities that will encourage your child to blossom, grow and make friends with children from around the world. Please ensure that you regularly visit the DBIS Hub & Parent Portal as important information will be posted here.

#### The Farm Team

My name is Laura Bell and I am looking forward to learning and exploring with Farm class. I am originally from the UK and after studying at King's College London and training with the West London Partnership, I taught in South London for three years before moving to Beijing and then Shanghai. My husband is an art teacher with DBIS and we have been living in Hong Kong for five years; our daughter, Daisy, is almost three years old.

My name is Janet Escueta and I am the Educational Assistant for Farm Class. I am originally from the Philippines and I have been living in Hong Kong for 29 years. My husband and I have two adult children. Prior to joining DBIS, I worked as an Educational Assistant at Christian Alliance International School. I am also a former Flight Attendant for a US carrier. I love children and I am passionate in supporting them as they explore and make new discoveries in their learning journey. I am looking forward to welcoming our Farm Class friends in August!

#### Communication:

When the bell rings at the start of the day, the children are our first priority and continuity is extremely important for a smooth transition into school each morning. With this in mind, Ms Escueta and I will be able to take quick messages at the door in the morning, however if you wish to discuss any aspect of your child's learning and development in greater detail, it is kindly asked that you make an appointment at a mutually convenient time so that we can focus on settling the children into their day. We ask that when waiting for the bell to ring, your child is encouraged to independently put their water bottle and lunch box into the appropriate boxes found on the outdoor deck outside the classroom and then waits with their carer to be greeted at the door when the bell rings.

Your child will be encouraged to independently come into the classroom and begin their morning challenges. We have exciting plans for the year ahead and we will keep you updated through the Parent Hub, Seesaw and the Communication boards on the door of the classroom. Please be sure to check these regularly, as key information will always be displayed here. If you wish to contact your child's classroom teacher or notify the school of absences please send all emails through Ms Angel at our Early Years office: [atang@dbis.edu.hk](mailto:atang@dbis.edu.hk)

#### Birthdays:

We like to celebrate each child's special day. When it is your child's birthday you are invited to bring in twenty small **individually wrapped items** such as a small cupcake or biscuit for your child to share with their friends. Your child will help to give these out at the end of the school day. We will inform you of any specific food allergies relating to our class. Please be reminded that our school is also a **nut aware** environment therefore treats must not contain nuts.

#### Party Invitations:

If there is an invitation for every child, we will be happy to hand them out at the end of the day. Class lists of names will also be available on request to help your child to write their invitations.

#### Hats & Water Bottles:

Due to the climate in Hong Kong, it is very important that children wear sun hats when exploring outside and drink lots of water throughout the day. Therefore, we ask that every child brings a clearly labelled school hat and water bottle to school every day. During the week we will keep hats in classroom baskets, these will be placed outside classroom doors on Fridays if you wish to take them home to wash.

#### Health & Self Care:

We expect all children to be toilet trained, (not wearing nappies or pull-ups) however we understand that accidents happen therefore please ensure spare clothes are labelled and kept in your child's school bag. If you feel your child may need additional support with toileting please contact your class teacher and an individual plan will be made for your child. We encourage you to take your child to the toilet before your child starts the school day.

#### Outdoor & Experiential Learning Experiences:

During a typical school day the children will have opportunities to engage in experiential learning experiences. Please keep an eye out on the DBIS Hub for parent coffee mornings where more information will be shared about experiential learning at DBIS. We encourage children to take off their shoes in the sensory outdoor provision (such as water & sand play) therefore please clearly label your child's footwear and practice putting socks on and taking them off. We encourage the children to engage with water play and sometimes this might mean they need a change of clothes, therefore please keep a spare set of clearly labelled uniform, underwear and socks in their school bag.

The children will frequently visit our forest, where they will often come into contact with mud and water. With this in mind, we kindly ask you to **provide a clearly labelled pair of wellington/gumboots and a light waterproof coat that will be kept in school** so that they are always available for any exploratory adventures outside.

The children have multiple opportunities to explore our outdoor learning areas. It is useful to apply sunscreen and insect repellent before school. We will reapply sunscreen and insect repellent as necessary, if you do not wish for your child to use the school sunscreen or insect repellent (RID) please speak to your child's class teacher.

### Specialist Lessons & Teachers: PE, Music, Library and Mandarin:

On PE (Physical Education) days, children should wear the DBIS PE kit, white socks and running shoes. Please label all items with your child's name. For library, children will need a library book bag/folder, e.g. an A3 clear zippy folder. These will need to be large enough to fit your child's chosen story books.

PE	Mandarin	Library	Music	Learning Technology
Ms Sally Cranston	Luo Laoshi	Mrs Thotawatte	Ms Lau	Mr McNerney
Monday Thursday	Monday Wednesday	Tuesday	Friday	Monday

### Rest Time:

As stipulated by the Education Bureau (EdB), for those of FS-1 age, students are required to have a thirty minute rest to prepare them for afternoon learning. We will provide your child with their own rest time pillow, which we ask you keep inside your DBIS rucksack throughout the school week. We kindly ask that rest time pillows are returned to school on your child's last day of each term. Your child may bring in a small soft toy (no bigger than 20cm in length) and a small blanket (no bigger than 50cmx100cm). Both items must be stored in your child's DBIS rucksack with their provided pillow. Again, please label all items with your child's name.

### Morning Tea & Lunch:

As part of our daily routine your child will have Morning Tea during our first outdoor experience. Morning Tea is provided by school, which includes fresh fruit & vegetables alongside a choice of a breadstick, cracker or rice cake. We often find the children are happy to explore new tastes and textures as they see their friends eat their snacks and try new things.

Lunch will take place in the dining hall. We kindly request that children bring in their own lunch at the start of the school day and place it in the boxes provided. It is extremely useful to label your child's lunch box and all containers with their name and class. It is also important that your child can open their own lunch box independently and portion sizes are appropriate for the designated eating time. In line with our healthy eating policy, we request that your child's lunch box does not contain sweets and chocolate. Please also be aware that we are a **Nut Aware** school and we kindly ask that **no products containing nuts or that may contain traces of nuts** are brought onto the school premises.

### Seesaw:

Teachers will be using Seesaw to document your child's learning journey. Observations will be added to your child's journal giving you a window into our learning environments. You will be sent an email with instructions on how to access Seesaw. You can download the Seesaw Family App and multiple family members can have access to your child's Learning Journey so if you have additional family members such as Grandparents, Aunties & Uncles they can also download the Family App.

**Home Time & Pick Up Cards:**

Please collect your child from our classroom door on the playground. When you collect your child, you will need to show your DBIS photo ID. We will check your ID against the list of named adults which you have provided us with. This process might take longer than normal in the initial weeks as class teachers get used to faces; thank you for your patience.

If your child is going on a playdate, please inform their teacher of the name of the adult collecting them before midday that day; this is best communicated through Ms Angel in our Early Years office or via Seesaw. Upon arrival, your child's class teacher will check the named adult's photo ID before releasing your child. If they do not have a DBIS photo ID card, they will need to sign your child out in the office with Ms Angel before collecting your child from the classroom.

The dismissal process is taken extremely seriously at DBIS and teachers will ask for the photo ID every time your child is dismissed. Any adult who cannot show the photo ID card will need to sign their child out at the office, even once faces are familiar to us. Strict adherence to these protocols are in the interests of your child's safety and we appreciate your support with this.

It is a very exciting time for all of us and we are really looking forward to getting to know all our Farm families. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. Thank you for your support and we look forward to working in partnership with you.

Kind regards,  
Ms Bell and Ms Escueta