



August 2023

Dear Parents,

A very warm welcome to all our students and families in Foundation Stage 1 Seaside!

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 Seaside Team

My name is Deirdre McCarthy and I have been teaching at DBIS for nineteen wonderful years. I am originally from Manchester UK with Irish culture being at the heart of my upbringing. I obtained a BA (Hons) Early Years teaching qualification in 1995 and before coming to Hong Kong I taught in the UK in a variety of Early Years settings. I have been living in Hong Kong since 2001; my children, Alban and Adilah, are now busy studying and working in London. I am very much looking forward to getting to know our Seaside families and having an exciting and memorable year of teaching and learning in Seaside Class.

My name is Roshini Ramalingam. I am from Sri Lanka. A mother of 2 daughters, who are 6 and 2 years old. Born in Abu Dhabi, lived most of my life in Sri Lanka, moved to India and now I'm settled in Hong Kong with my family since 2021. I've been working part-time at DBIS Early Years for a year. I've obtained my bachelor's degree in Business Management from the University of Coventry (UK) and a passed finalist of Chartered Institute of Management Accounts (CIMA- UK). I have also obtained a licentiate in PianoForte from Trinity College London. I started my career as a music teacher and taught in early years and primary for 3 years in Sri Lanka and gravitated towards the banking industry for almost a decade. I am a teacher at heart and banker by profession and I'm excited to get to know our Seaside students and look forward to a year full of fun and learning.

#### Communication:

It is extremely important to all the teachers that we establish positive relationships and communication between home and school. A key part of Early Childhood development is incorporating what the children learn at home, within their familiar environment and what they learn in school. If your child does something exceptional and you would like to share the proud moment please share these with us, we would love to hear about them. We have exciting plans for the year and we will let you know what they are through the DBIS Parent Hub and our classroom communication boards, so please keep checking all communications regularly. 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 when starting FS-1, (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 (FS-1 toilets found next to Farm class).

### 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, Learning Technology and Mandarin:**

On PE (Physical Education) day, 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         |
| Wednesday<br>Friday | Wednesday<br>Thursday | Monday         | Monday | Tuesday             |

**Rest Time:**

As stipulated by the Education Bureau (EdB), FS-1 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 20 cm 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 from 11:30am - 12pm 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 Seaside 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

Mrs Deirdre McCarthy and Ms Roshi