

## Parent Information Pack 2024-2025

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yasamericanacademy.ae

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## **Principal's Message**



Welcome to Yas American Academy!

Having been in education for the last 30 years I have witnessed many changes, however the one constant factor remains: An education is one of the most valuable things we can possess. It influences how we see the world and contribute to it.

I have been fortunate to be a part of Aldar Academies for the last 13 years, and fully endorse the vision that it is our purpose to empower the next generation to shape our future.

We achieve this effective by recognising the importance of a holistic approach to education, being fully inclusive and allowing children and young adults to develop their skills in which they can realise their dreams for their future.

Taking on the role as Principal of Yas American Academy in January 2024 has allowed me to continue my passion in developing a community approach to educating our children, where all stakeholders play a part in a child's development.

Sarah Griffiths Principal, Yas American Academy

## **Meet our Senior Leadership Team**



Mr. Nelson brings more than twelve years of educational and leadership experience, with over seven years within the United Arab Emirates. He maintains a Master of Arts qualification in Educational Leadership, accompanied by a plethora of pedagogical expertise, blended across pastoral and curriculum leadership positions. Furthermore, he has taught and led curriculums across the US and UK curricula, including Advanced Placement, GCSE, BTEC, and IB frameworks throughout his career to date.

Initially trained and qualified as a teacher in the United Kingdom, Mr. Nelson relocated to Dubai in 2015, where was appointed as Head of Boys' Physical Education at a large multi-cultural international school. During this time, his career progressed into pastoral roles, becoming a Head of House, and leading pastoral initiatives to heighten students' health, safety, and wellbeing within the school.

Thomas Nelson Principal of Secondary

In 2019, Mr. Nelson joined the team at West Yas Academy where he was appointed as the Dean of Students, leading structural and policy change to improve student wellbeing and behaviour for learning reforms. He is passionate about developing students holistically, equipping them with the skills required for students to flourish within a global society. As Head of the secondary school, he is passionate about driving improvements and students' achievements at Yas American Academy, in partnership with parents, staff, and the wider school community to ensure a high-quality education is made available to every child at Yas American Academy.



Melissa Patrick Principal of Elementary

Mrs. Melissa Patrick brings over 19 years of educational experience living and working in Abu Dhabi, UAE, including 12 years in leadership positions. She is a PYP qualified Educator and has experience in the US, International Baccalaureate, and Australian Curricula. Mrs. Patrick holds a Bachelor of Primary Education and a Master of Education Studies from Universities in Australia. Mrs. Patrick has been married for 20 years and has 2 sons once that has recently graduated from Secondary School.

This is Mrs. Patrick's sixth year at Yas American Academy. Since joining the Academy in 2018, Mrs. Patrick has held several roles including Head of Pastoral, Head of Department for grades 1-5, and Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead. As Elementary Principal, Mrs. Patrick has been integral in developing the YAA house system and believes it provides a sense of family across the school developing a sense of pride and belonging amongst the students. She advocates the Yas Way which holds Respect Yourself, Respect Others, and Respect the Environment as guiding principles for staff and students inside and outside of school.

Mrs. Patrick believes that leading change requires optimistic, flexible, and empathetic leadership. She is a firm believer in the empowerment of staff and uses a combination of distributive leadership and coaching to build strong relationships among the community; students, teachers, and parents.



Dr. Chrisdelin Traylor Secondary Assistant Principal

"Dr. Chrisdelin Traylor is a distinguished educator and mother, originally from Dallas, Texas. With over twenty years of experience in various roles within education, including teaching, counseling, curriculum development, and school leadership, she has established herself as an expert in the field.

Dr. Traylor's doctorate in Educational Leadership has provided her with the knowledge and skills to develop strategies that enable students and teachers to reach their full potential. She is particularly passionate about curriculum development, improving assessment scores, encouraging high achievement, and creating an impactful learning environment.

Dr. Traylor's unwavering commitment to making a positive difference in education has driven her career, and she currently serves as the secondary assistant principal at Yas American Academy. In this role, she is dedicated to fostering student success and supporting her colleagues' professional development."



"Welcome to Yas American Academy! As the Dean of Students, it is my pleasure and privilege to ensure that all students in the Academy are supported to fulfil their academic and social potential. With over 13 years of experience in the pastoral and educational setting in both UAE and UK systems, I am now proud to lead an outstanding pastoral team that includes Heads of Grade and Heads of House to guide our students from KG through to Grade 12. I love providing students with opportunities to enrich their lives and immerse them in their surroundings, which is why I have organised 5 international trips, and over 30 national trips for children in my care.

**Paul Bayston** Assistant Principal, Dean of Students

My passions include celebrating students who adhere to our values and principles on a daily basis. Collaboration, Integrity, Resilience and Determination are central characteristics to success here at the Academy and for contributing to communities outside of school. I am proud to have developed a 'Character Curriculum' that looks to foster well-rounded, employable young men and women, and I always promote the aspects of individuals that makes them stand out rather than just focusing on grades.



**Misaal Gill** Assistant Principal, Elementary

"Misaal Gill is excited to be joining the leadership team this year at Yas American Academy!

She is from the United Kingdom where she has completed her studies. As well as a BA in Human Rights with History, she also holds a Post Graduate Certificate in Education and a Masters in Leadership in Education.

She has worked in private schools in Abu Dhabi for over 11 years and is invested in the development of education in the region. She brings with her extensive knowledge about curriculum, assessment, and understanding of the local culture. Misaal is a firm believer that parents are our partners in education, and prides herself on building excellent relationships with them by building capacity for parents and educators to connect.

She is passionate about ensuring all students reach their full potential and that we use their interests to drive our curriculum and learning experiences at school. Student ownership is something that Misaal advocates for and implements ways students take responsibility for their own learning."



I am absolutely delighted to be joining Yas American Academy as Secondary Assistant Principal for Teaching, Learning and Assessment. I have extensive experience in high performing schools in both England and Dubai. I began my teaching career working in an outstanding school in London, where I became an Advanced Skills Teacher and was given responsibility for supporting teachers to improve their practice. I then moved to Dubai for five years where I worked in senior leadership roles in two fantastic schools. Across these schools, I held responsibility the quality of teaching, supporting student learning and pastoral care as well as overseeing secondary assessment. In 2019, I returned to England to take up a post working within a high performing trust of schools. In this role I have been able to utilise the latest educational research to support the development of the curriculum. Whilst I have enjoyed my time in the UK, my family and I missed the UAE enormously and cannot wait to return.

**Carl Smith** Secondary Assistant Principal for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

During my career I have come to realise that all children are capable of truly amazing things and that in order to make this a reality, it is our job as educators to expose them to the possibilities, encourage self-belief and expect hard work. My responsibilities at Yas American Academy focus primarily on ensuring that our students have the experiences and skills they need to reach their incredible potential. I will be responsible for supporting our staff to continue to develop and deliver high quality lessons as well as ensuring that students have the skills they need to engage with their learning successfully. In addition, I will work with students and staff to develop a shared understanding of the importance of data and assessment in both their teaching and learning. I am excited to get started...



## • Welcome from the Parents Committee

## **Parent Testimonials**

• I want to cheer the school administration for their tremendous hard work. As a parent, the school provides me and my son with pleasant and comfortable feelings due to the lovely environment. I can find it on my son whenever I enter the school every morning. Besides that, his academically improved. His personality changed positively. Furthermore, focusing on specific subjects, especially Arabic, Islamic, and the national identity, are essential subjects, giving a positive impression and fulfilling the parent's expectations. I have experienced courteous and helpful teachers. I got the response whenever I needed them. Above all, following an open-door policy by the principal facilitated me to follow up on my son's attitude and education development.

• Our experience at Yas American Academy has been exceptional. The teachers are truly invested in my children's education and their growth as learners. Adjustments are made as needed to meet their needs. • Ohoud Juma Aldhaheri

6 Choosing a school in a new country is always tough. The admissions team at Yas American Academy were extremely helpful during the transition. Having spent a few months at YAA, it is clear that the leadership team are progressive in their planning of career choices for our children. Education is evolving and being ahead of the curve is imperative. 9 -Nisreen Abrahams

• Two of my kids attend Yas American Academy, and we have been very happy with their educational progress. The teachers are all very good at what they do, the kids are motivated to go to school and are excited to tell me what they have learned each day. I have never felt let down by the staff at all. Great school! **99** -Niyas Zaher



## StudentLeadership

### **Students Testimonials**

• Being the Head Boy at Yas American Academy has been an immensely fulfilling experience for me. It has not only provided me with invaluable opportunities for personal growth but also allowed me to make significant contributions to the school community, like organizing events, hearing the student's interests and opinions, representing the school for a specific certain role as being the ambassador.

As a head boy I had a meeting to attend every week to discuss the things that's happening in school and what do the students require from the school. Moreover, I took responsibility for welcoming distinguished guests to our school and effectively communicating our school's vision. This role has reinforced my commitment to leadership and service, teaching me important lessons along the way.

I am sincerely grateful for the trust placed in me and will forever cherish the countless memories and lessons that this experience has bestowed upon me. -Rashed Almemari, Head Boy

66 I have loved growing up through Yas American Academy, I have been here since I was in Grade One and I am proud to represent Yas American Academy as Ruby House Captain. There are lots of great students and members of staff who help me and everyone in the school learn new things and enjoy our time at the Academy. I enjoy spending time and inspiring the students in the younger grades and helping them enjoy their time in our school. Fatima AlMenhali, Ruby House Captain As a new student at Yas American Academy, I was excited to start my journey here. I was delighted to be appointed Ruby House Captain and help and support all the students here. I particularly enjoy PE and Math lessons as they are very important, interesting and enjoyable. I have loved having students coming to me and recognizing me as House Captain and asking for advice.

• Here at Yas American Academy, I love how the teachers are very welcoming and kind. They always help me when I have any trouble doing work and supporting me in every lesson. My favorite things about the Academy are my friends and making new friends and representing Yas American Academy in Math Competitions.

As the Head Girl, I was given the chance to take on a leadership role within Yas American Academy. It was an honor to be selected for this position, and I was excited to have the opportunity to make a difference. Throughout my time as Head Girl, I worked closely with the administration, teachers, and my fellow student leaders to help create a positive and inclusive environment for all students. One of the most rewarding aspects of this role was the opportunity to work on initiatives and celebrate academic excellence, such as awards ceremonies. While the role of Head Girl was certainly challenging at times, it was an incredibly rewarding experience that allowed me to develop my leadership skills and make a positive impact on Yas American Academy.

## Parent Portal Information

### **Parent Portal**

A key part of communication at Yas American Academy occurs through the Parent Portal. Use the following website to access the portal: **https://ppwyas.aldaracademies.com** 

Through the portal you will be able to:

- View attendance information.
- Send and receive messages with subject teachers.
- View your child's assessment data.
- School calendar/events.
- Access your child's termly report.

#### SMS AND EMAIL

We regularly communicate with parents via SMS and email. Please ensure we always have your preferred mobile number and email updated, so that you do not miss any key information.

Homeroom/Classroom teachers, Heads of Department, Heads of House and Administrative staff will contact you via email to relay any important information regarding progress, concerns and general notices. Please ensure that you check your emails on a weekly basis.

All staff will respond to any email received from parents within a 24-hour window. (Monday to Friday Is the expectation that Teachers will reply to email over weekends and public holidays)



At Yas American Academy we offer a US Common Core, Massachusetts State Curriculum, which is the most highly regarded in the United States. The state of Massachusetts has long established links with prestigious higher education institutions such as Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Consequently, our curriculum places strong emphasis on science, technology and literacy across all subjects.

There is also heavy emphasis on co-curricular pursuits that also foster well rounded students. The Massachusetts Curriculum at Yas American Academy is clearly structured, challenging and effectively delivered by our wonderful team.

Students in the state Massachusetts have made the greatest gains in learning among all 50 states from 2000 onwards. As a result, we are placed here in the UAE to use this curriculum model in our context.

#### KG and Elementary Curriculum

Yas American Academy aspires to be a world-class school that challenges all of its students to achieve their highest potential and inspires them to be the critical thinkers, problem-solvers, artists, and innovators of the future who will make positive contributions to their communities, nations and the world.

Yas American Academy is an American Curriculum school located on Yas Island. The school is a part of Aldar Academies, one of the UAE's largest providers of leading private education, with schools in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain, rated outstanding by the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge.

Yas American Academy is our first Massachusetts State Curriculum school in Abu Dhabi, which is the most highly regarded and successful public-school curriculum in the United States. The Massachusetts Curriculum draws on a rich history of academic excellence and rigor and has historically benefited from proximity to and interaction with higher education institutions such as Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

In Pre-KG we use The Creative Curriculum for Preschool which reflects the latest thinking in the field of early childhood education. It incorporates a number of elements that are of particular importance in providing comprehensive support for the whole child and expands support for teachers who work with English-Language Learners, with examples of culturally and linguistically appropriate activities and materials and real-world strategies for engaging families from diverse backgrounds in their children's development and learning. The Creative Curriculum for Preschool is based on 38 objectives throughout the year for development and learning that focus on all the areas that are most important for school success: social-emotional, cognitive, math, literacy, physical, language, social studies, science and technology, and the arts. These objectives are built into every activity that happens in the classroom, enabling the Teacher to assist your child in building skills and knowledge in these important areas.

The US approach combines student-centered planning with interactive teaching methods to produce a broad and balanced education. At Yas American Academy, in addition to the MOE curriculum, our academic program is based on the Massachusetts Curriculum, which is a rigorous curriculum, based on common core standards. Yas American Academy delivers this curriculum through the Inquiry Approach to learning. Inquiry is an effective and dynamic process where students make connections across the subject groups of Physical Science, Social Science, History, Numeracy, Literacy, Arabic Dimension, The Arts and Physical Education, to know and understand the world. Inquiry allows the student to engage, think, create and be active in their learning and actions, providing opportunities for students to investigate, pose and solve problems, discover and test these discoveries.

The curriculum is supported by a robust emphasis on co-curricular and extra-curricular pursuits which helps foster well-rounded students. Yas American Academy offers AP (advanced placement) classes during the high school years, which are courses taught using university-level syllabi that can later be accredited to a degree program in US and Canadian universities (as per the liberal arts tradition). The curriculum will provide students with guidance and preparation for taking the SAT (the standardized examination required by US university admissions). Where appropriate, students can take our enhanced Arabic and Islamic Studies syllabi, preparing them for the unified Ministry of Education examinations.

#### Secondary Curriculum

Within our secondary school our curriculum combines student-centered planning with interactive teaching methods to produce a broad and balanced education. At Yas American Academy, in addition to the MOE curriculum, our academic program is based on the Massachusetts Curriculum, which is a rigorous curriculum, based on common core standards. The curriculum is supported by a robust emphasis on co-curricular and extra-curricular pursuits which helps foster well-rounded students. Yas American Academy offers AP (advanced placement) classes during the high school years, which are courses taught using university-level content that can later be accredited towards a degree program in US and other worldwide universities. In addition, our students are able to explore other interests outside of the core subjects including engineering, food technology, robotics, coding, performing arts, and many other amazing choices. Yas American Academy delivers this curriculum through the Inquiry Approach to Learning. Inquiry allows the student to engage, think, create and be active in their learning and actions, providing opportunities for students to investigate, pose and solve problems, discover, and test these discoveries.

The curriculum provides students with guidance and preparation for taking the SAT (the standardized examination required by US university admissions), EMSAT, IELTS and/ or TOEFL. Within our curriculum we also have a strong emphasis towards ensuring students are connected to the UAE vision through encouraging culture, citizenship, and values to all. When students move into Grade 12 they have all of the skills and knowledge to be successful on the unified Ministry of Education examinations for Arabic and Islamic. Our graduates complete their journey and move on to stary their university pathways in various countries around the world including some of the top ranked schools in the United Arab Emirates, United States of America, United Kingdom, Belgium, Canada, Australia, and many others. Overall, our secondary school has a focus of shaping our students to reach their full potential while allowing them the opportunity to learn and achieve in a holistic approach.



Children learn best when they feel safe and supported, and at Yas American Academy our House system helps to create a caring, welcoming environment where all students feel valued. Students are placed into one of four Houses representing the colours of the UAE flag: Emerald, Onyx, Diamond and Ruby. The accompanying Head of House and dedicated Homeroom teaches provide intensive daily support as they look to guide and nurture students through their academic and social experiences. The time and effort that is invested into each and every child promotes outstanding relationships between teachers and students, and helps further accelerate progress through a sense of family and belonging in the Academy.

Collaboration, Integrity, Resilience, Innovation, and Determination are central characteristics to success.

Students are given opportunities to demonstrate the 'Yas American Way' through our very own Loyalty Card where they receive teacher signatures for positive behaviour. This will be issued on a termly basis and provides students with tangible rewards leading from certificates and positive phone calls home, all the way up to reward trips, lunch with the Principal and a movie afternoon.

The accompanying Head of House, Head of Department, Head of Grade and dedicated Homeroom teachers provide intensive daily support as they look to guide and nurture students through their academic and social experiences.

#### https://www.yasamericanacademy.ae/school-policies/

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## Registration Forms/ Documents Checklist

In order to ensure the school has accurate and up to date information and to enable the school to meet the requirements for registration with the Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) it is essential that you provide the following documents:

- ► Acceptance letter
- ► Confirmation of payment slip
- Student's, father's, and mother's Emirates Identity Card (EID front & back Side)
- ▶ Student's, father's, and mother's passport copy
- Student's, father's, and mother's residence visa
- ( (not applicable to UAE & GCC Nationals and diplomatics)
- Student's birth certificate
- Student's immunization record
- ▶ Your address location proof-either ADDC (electricity) bill or Tawtheeq
- ► Passport size photograph of student
- ► Copy of 2 most recent school reports
- ▶ Graduation requirements undertaking
- Transfer certificate (applicable if current school is outside of Abu Dhabi)
- ► Essential registration forms:
  - Form 1: Parent security pass
  - Form 2: Student health record
  - Form 3: Consent medical issues
  - Form 4: Parental consent to administer emergency medication
  - Form 5: Learning support information
  - Form 6: Consent form for photography and images of children
  - Form 7: Consent form for use of photographic devices at school events by parents
  - Form 8: ICT parents acceptable use agreement

For more information, please email:

admissions@yasamericanacademy.ae

## Parents/ Guardian ID

Upon registering at Yas American Academy, each parent is required to fill out the "Adult Identification Form" which our team then processes in order to create the Adult ID card to allow you to safely access the school premises.

STUDENT NAME	YEAR GROUP	FORM
		Insert Photograph
Guardian 1		
Relationship to Child		
Mobile Number		
Guardian 2		Insert Photograph
Relationship to Child		
Mobile Number		
Guardian 3		Insert Photograph
Relationship to Child		
Mobile Number		





You can purchase items online at **https://uat.magrudy.com/uniforms/aldar-west-yas** Alternatively, you can visit Magrudy's store in Al Wahda Mall.



**Emirates Transport** The buses we use have been inspected by the Department of Transportation (DoT) and have been given approval to operate. As for the team they have been given first aid, child protection and safety training.

If you would like to make use of the bus transportation service for your child, please contact Emirates Transport at **westyas@et.ae** 

The operator will then respond to collect information on your location and payment preferences. You can also contact the bus coordinator on 050-7919356 for any more queries.

## **Darna** Rewards

Darna Rewards Program is a free application available to parents and enables them to earn points upon payment of tuition or for experiences and purchases across Aldar and participating brands." which can be redeemed for future payments.

- Parents need to register through the Darna Rewards application by using the same e-mail provided to the school
- ▶ The points accrued will be added to the parents account within 7 days.



**Pre-KG** Monday - Thursday : 7:30 AM - 2:00 PM Friday: 7:30 AM - 12:00 PM

#### KG1 - G12

Monday - Thursday : 7:30 AM - 2:50 PM Friday: 7:30 AM - 12:00 PM

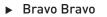
## Bring Your Own Device

We require that our students bring their own electronic device and charger (laptop or tablet). As a school, we will educate our students on how to use devices, software, and the internet securely, safely, and appropriately. This is our policy which students must adhere to. We have a blended approach within our lessons where teachers use books, journals, and online software's to engage and educate our students.

Please note that students bring their devices to school at their own risk and are the school is not liable for any loss or damage.

https://www.yasamericanacademy.ae/school-policies/















Food Nation LLC. was established in 2016 to and the aim was to provide nutritious, innovative food offerings bursting with flavor to schools across the UAE. Food Nation uses only quality raw products and all products are made from scratch, ingredients are non-processed, additive free and use healthy fats over trans-fats that are found in many processed foods.

Food Nations, 'Eat Bright' programme creates products with specifically targeted nutrients to improve academic performance; ensuring essential nutrients, vitamins, minerals, proteins and healthy fats are included in our meals. Use of clever food combining and alternative cooking techniques results in delicious foods, packed with "hidden goodness", which children love.

Food served in our cafeterias, and menus are rotated on a three weekly basis to ensure variety and a balanced nutritious programme. Payment can be made via payment cards or online.

https://www.yasamericanacademy.ae/school-policies/

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To pay tuition fees, you can either pay via a bank transfer or cheque.

Please note that when you make a direct deposit to our bank account, we do not necessarily recognise your payment unless you provide us the bank deposit slip. Kindly send a copy of the bank deposit receipt to the following email finance@yasamericanacademy.ae immediately, so we can allocate funds accordingly and send you a confirmation receipt.

For online transfer, please see the below bank details.

Bank Name: Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank Bank Branch: Abu Dhabi Main Branch, P.O Box 2934 Abu Dhabi Account Name: Aldar Academies- West Yas S.LLC-BR 6 Account Number: 10482902020007 IBAN: AE180030010482902020007 Swift Code: ADCBAEAA

https://www.yasamericanacademy.ae/school-policies/





## School Fees Cashless Payment Options

#### Dear Parents

We are writing to notify you about a change in the school's policy regarding tuition fee payments.

To help collect payments in an efficient and streamlined manner and provide convenience to both yourselves and our school teams, we will no longer be accepting any cash transactions for your child's school fees.

Below are the payment options now available to you:

- **Bank Transfer** Please include the Student Codes and Invoice References in the payment description fields and please send an email confirmation of the payment to the school's finance email address.
- Cheques Please put these in a sealed envelope with the Student Codes and Invoice References on the reverse of the cheque and submit it via the dedicated drop box placed at the school premises. Upon clearance of the cheque, a receipt will be issued to the registered email address within 3 working days.

The school will not be able to accept credit or debit card transactions.

We believe this change will benefit how our schools operate more efficiently to serve you and help reduce the need for handling or transporting cash.

For ease, invoices will be shared to your registered email address and will be available on the parent portal. We would kindly ask that fees are paid by the due date mentioned on the invoice.

We are here to help you however we can, so if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school's finance team.

Kind Regards

Aldar Education – Finance

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Each Grade level have thier gate, all the gates instructions are shared to parents with welcome pack.

Classes / Grade	Arrival Gate	Dismissal Gate	
Pre-KG	Е	Е	
KG1&KG2	A	А	
G1,G2	A	E	
G3-G5	В	В	
G6- G12	С	С	

## Key Contacts

Yas American Academy Reception: reception@yasamericanacademy.ae Parent Relations Officer: PRE@yasamericanacademy.ae Yas American Academy Finance: finance@westyasacademy.sch.ae Yas American Academy Admissions: admissions@yasamericanacademy.ae Yas American Academy Registrar: registrar@westyasacademy.sch.ae Admin Coordinator (Portal Related Issues): rhakim@westyasacademy.sch.ae Elementary clinic: nurse@westyasacademy.sch.ae, nurse3@westyasacademy.sch.ae Secondary clinic: nurse2@westyasacademy.sch.ae Transportation: westyas@et.ae Attendance Officer: nalomaira@westyasacademy.sch.ae

