

2026 -2027

We are delighted to welcome both new and returning families to Ranches Nursery for the upcoming academic year 2026/2027.

To help you prepare for the year ahead, we have put together this comprehensive handbook containing key information, procedures, and helpful guidance for all families. Please take some time to read through it carefully, as it is designed to support a smooth, positive, and well-prepared start to the school year.



Meet our Principal

Dear Parents and Families,

A very warm welcome to Ranches Primary School and Nursery; a school unique in its care, wellbeing, and unwavering focus on building strong educational foundations.

Within the pages of this handbook, you'll find all the practical information you need to support your child's journey at Ranches. But beyond that, I hope you begin to experience what truly sets us apart: our identity as a stand-alone primary school, wholly dedicated to laying the essential foundations for a lifetime of success, fulfilment, and meaning.

At the heart of our approach is a deep understanding of what young learners need most. Embedding curiosity, creativity, and rich early language experiences are proven to shape not just academic achievement, but confident, capable, and joyful learners. These principles guide everything we do.
Alongside academic excellence is our unwavering commitment to wellbeing. Ranches is a place of joy. A safe, nurturing, and inspiring environment where children feel happy, valued, and motivated to thrive. We protect that joy fiercely and celebrate it enthusiastically every day.

We can't wait to begin this journey with you and your child. We deeply value the partnership between home and school and are committed to ensuring our communication, care, and collaboration are second to none.

Thank you for placing your trust in us.

Steve Arnold
Principal



Senior Leadership Team

Vice Principal



Hayley Lamb

Mrs Hayley Lamb is a dedicated educational leader who believes children's best interests should guide every decision.
She champions a well-rounded education that supports academic, personal, emotional, and social development—encouraging each child to reach their potential.

Hayley has served as a school governor, mental health charity trustee, lecturer, and international speaker. She is also an ICF Professional Coach focused on performance and wellbeing, and a certified Mental Health First Aider.

hayley.lamb@rpsdubai.com

Admissions and Parent Experience Manager



Kate Gutteridge

As Parent Experience Manager, Ms Kate is responsible for ensuring every family feels welcomed, informed, and supported throughout their journey with the school. She plays a key role in building strong relationships with parents and fostering positive partnerships between home and school, recognising the vital role families play in a child's education.

From initial enquiries and admissions through to ongoing parent engagement and community events, Ms Kate works closely with families to provide guidance, support, and clear communication at every stage. She is passionate about creating meaningful opportunities for parents to connect with the school, engage in their child's learning, and build lasting relationships within the school community.
By championing family engagement and promoting a culture of inclusivity and belonging, Ms Kate helps ensure every family feels valued, heard, and connected, contributing to the warm, welcoming environment that is at the heart of our school.

kate.gutteridge@rpsdubai.com



Senior Leadership Team

Assistant Principals

Our Assistant Principals each lead clearly defined areas of responsibility across the school, ensuring strong leadership, clear lines of communication, and effective day-to-day management. Working closely with staff and families, they provide focused expertise in their individual areas while contributing to a cohesive whole-school approach. This structure enables us to maintain high standards, consistency, and a strong culture of collaboration across the school community.



Amy Hughes

Area of Expertise
Nursery – Year 1 teaching, learning and curriculum development

amy.hughes@rpsdubai.com



Charlotte Rose

Area of Expertise
Year 2 - Year 6 teaching, learning and curriculum development

charlotte.rose@rpsdubai.com



Will Barratt

Area of Expertise
Data, Assessment & Curriculum

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Emma Synnott

Area of Expertise
Inclusion, student support and safeguarding

emma.synnott@rpsdubai.com



Important Contact Details



Emelyn Magnaye

Admissions Executive
registrar@rpsdubai.com



Ana Scalamandre

Principal's PA
ana.scalamandre@rpsdubai.com



Chané De Beer

Parent Experience Executive
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Alice Reynoso

Nursery Receptionist
registrar@rpsdubai.com



Katreena David

Primary School Receptionist
reception@rpsdubai.com

Finance

finance@rpsdubai.com

School Clinic

rpsclinic@rpsdubai.com

Enrich ME

RPS@enrichme.ae

School Lunch

To be confirmed



Academic Calendar

Term 1 - Autumn Term	
Staff Induction	Monday 24th - Friday 28th August 2026
Term 1 begins Induction Day for new students in Years 2 - 6 only as well as 1 to 1 meet your teacher session for all Nursery to Year 1 students.	Monday 31st August 2026
All Students return Children in Nursery and FS1 as well as new joiners in FS2 and Year 1 will follow a soft start schedule.	Tuesday 1st September 2026
Half Term Break	Monday 19th - Friday 23rd October 2026
UAE National Day *	Wednesday 2nd - Friday 4th December 2026 *
Last day of Term 1	Friday 11th December 2026

Term 2 - Spring Term	
First day of Term 2	Monday 4th January 2027
Ramadan begins *	Monday 8th February 2027 *
Eid Al Fitr *	Monday 8th March - Friday 12th March 2027 *
Last day of Term 2	Friday 2nd April 2027

Term 3 - Summer Term	
First day of Term 3	Monday 12th April 2027
Eid Al Adha *	Monday 17th & Tuesday 18th May 2027 *
Last day of Term 3	Friday 2nd July 2027

This calendar is subject to change in line with School and Government requirements. *Islamic holidays are subject to the lunar calendar and may change (school closure). Please do not book any holidays until dates are confirmed by the KHDA and school.

Approved by KHDA



Onboarding Documents

To ensure a smooth and successful start for your child, all required enrolment documents must be submitted no later than 7 days prior to your child's first day at school.
Timely submission allows our team to complete registration requirements, prepare your child's profile, and ensure all systems and safeguarding procedures are in place before they begin.

Please note that delays in submitting documentation may impact your child's start date. All documents should be sent to **rpsdocuments@rpsdubai.com**

If you require support obtaining or uploading any documents, our Admissions Team will be happy to assist you.

Mandatory Documentation

- Terms and Conditions form
- Student DHA Medical form
- Kings College Hospital / RPS Medical Form
- Request for child's safeguarding records
- Birth Certificate in English or Arabic
- Copy of child's passport
- Passport photo of child
- Copy of child's Emirates ID - Front and Back

(To be submitted within 14 days of starting school)

- Most recent school report
- Additional specialist reports

i.e.; occupational therapy/speech and language/diagnosis

- Child's vaccination records in English
- Transfer certificate - Please see attached information on Transfer Certificate requirements
- Child's health insurance card - Front and Back
- Copy of Father's passport
- Passport photo of Father
- Copy of Father's Emirates ID - Front and Back

(To be submitted within 14 days of starting school)

- Copy of Mother's passport
- Passport photo of Mother
- Copy of Mother's Emirates ID - Front and Back

(To be submitted within 14 days of starting school)



School Lanyards

At Ranches Primary School, the safety and wellbeing of our students is our highest priority. As part of our safeguarding procedures, we kindly ask that all adults entering the school premises wear their designated, colour-coded lanyards at all times. This includes any adult who is authorised to collect your child.

Parents and nominated guardians will be issued ID cards once the required documentation has been submitted. Visitors are asked to exchange a valid ID at the security desk in return for a temporary visitor lanyard before being allowed onto the school grounds.

To request a Parent or Guardian ID card, please email rpsid@rpsdubai.com with the following:

- Your child(ren)'s full name(s)
- A scanned photo of each parent

Please include the following information in your email:

- Child's Full Name
- Year Group
- Parents Full Name (Mum/Dad)

Parent ID cards are free of charge upon enrolment, a 50 AED fee applies for any replacements.

If you would like to request ID cards for family staff (such as nannies or drivers) who assist with school drop-offs or pick-ups, please send the request from the parent or sponsor's email address.
There is a one-time 50 AED fee for each staff ID. These remain valid while your child is enrolled at the school or until the staff member is changed.



What to bring

Nursery	
• Refillable water bottle • Easy-to-use snack and lunch box - Please pack snack and lunch in separate containers • Three sets of spare clothes. Please label and store in a large zip-lock • One week's supply of nappies - If applicable • One pack of wet wipes • Diaper cream (if applicable)	• Bedding - If your child will be napping at Nursery please send: • Cot sized bed sheet • Blanket or quilt • Your child's comforter or favourite teddy

Healthy Snacks and Lunches

To support children's health, wellbeing, and ability to focus throughout the day, we encourage families to provide nutritious snacks and lunches. We kindly ask that items high in sugar, artificial additives, and unhealthy fats are avoided. Examples include:

- Sweets and chocolate
- Crisps and other salty snacks
- Sugary drinks and juices

Please ensure that any food provided is appropriate for your child's dietary requirements and allergies. If your child has specific dietary needs, we encourage you to contact the school so that we can work together to support them effectively.
Please note that refrigeration facilities are not available for packed lunches. We therefore recommend using an insulated lunch bag and ice packs to keep food fresh throughout the day.

Nut-Free and Pork-Free School

As part of our commitment to maintaining a safe, healthy, and inclusive environment for all members of our community we are a nut-free and pork-free school. We kindly ask that parents do not include nuts (including peanuts and tree nuts) or any pork-based products in their child's snack or lunch.
Your support in helping us maintain a safe environment for all children is greatly appreciated.



Snack and Lunch

Mealtimes are an important part of the day in our Nursery and provide valuable opportunities for children to develop independence, social skills, and healthy eating habits.

Children are encouraged to sit together in a calm and nurturing environment, where they can enjoy their food while engaging in conversations with their peers and teachers. Our staff support children in developing self-help skills, such as feeding themselves, drinking from cups, and learning appropriate table manners, whilst recognising that each child will be at a different stage of development.

For our youngest learners, mealtimes are approached with patience, care, and flexibility. Teachers work closely with families to understand each child's individual routines, preferences, and dietary requirements, ensuring that every child feels comfortable and supported.

Each child is provided with an individual placemat at mealtimes. For children with allergies or specific dietary requirements, coloured placemats are used to provide a clear visual reminder to all staff. These placemats display key medical and dietary information, ensuring that allergies and dietary needs are immediately visible and can be consistently managed by all members of the team. This forms part of our robust approach to safeguarding and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of every child in our care.

We view mealtimes as an extension of the learning environment, helping children to build confidence, independence, and positive relationships while enjoying a healthy and balanced diet.



Click here to find out more about healthy eating



Parent App Support

To ensure you stay informed and connected throughout your child's school journey, we are using several important apps that will play a key role in supporting communication, academic progress, and school activities. Here's a quick overview of the apps you will need:

iSAMs Parent Portal

This portal gives you direct access to your child's academic reports, allows you to monitor progress and keeps you up to date with the school calendar.
This can be accessed via the following link **https://rpsdubai.isamshosting.cloud/**
This portal also provides access to SOCS, which is used to share information on sports fixtures and extracurricular activities.
App Support: pre@rpsdubai.com

Seesaw

Through Seesaw, you can view your child's learning activities, projects, and classwork. Teachers can share photos, videos, and assignments, while students can upload their work, giving you a direct insight into their daily learning. This will also be your primary method of communication with your child's class teacher.
App Support: pre@rpsdubai.com

Zenda

This app allows parents to pay term fees and school trip costs, set up instalment plans, track past and upcoming payments, order shcool lunch and view all their children in one convenient place.
App Support: help@zenda.com



My Child's Day

Drop off and Collection

Drop Off: Children may be dropped off directly to their classroom from 7.30am.
Our "Kiss and Go" lane will be in operation after the October half term, ensuring children are settled in their new environment and routine. Timings will run from 7.30am - 7.55am, allowing parents to simply pull up outside the Nursery and hand their child over to a member of the Nursery team.

To support a smooth start to the school day, families arriving after 8.00am will be welcomed by a member of staff, who will assist in ensuring children reach their classroom safely.

Collection: Children should be collected from their classroom at 1.00pm. Pupils who have an older sibling in the primary school may benefit from an extended finish time of 2.15 pm to support family collection arrangements.
Please note that on Fridays, all children finish at 11.10am.

Updates

Our daily care sheet will be shared via Seesaw, providing an overview of your child's day, including their eating, toileting, and sleep routines.

In addition, your child's class teacher will share three updates each week, giving you a snapshot of their learning, play, and key moments of development.

We believe in the mindful use of technology within the classroom. While we understand how special it is to receive updates and photographs, our priority is ensuring that staff are fully engaged with the children and present in their learning experiences. Rather than capturing every moment, we carefully select meaningful observations and memories to share, allowing our team to focus on nurturing, supporting, and interacting with the children throughout the day.

A weekly newsletter will be shared by Ms Kerry, ensuring you are kept up to date with all the exciting news from that week and any key upcoming dates.



After School Programmes

The RPS Hubb - Wraparound Care

The RPS Hubb offers wraparound care for parents needing to extend their child's day either before or after school. Children will engage in creative play, games and art activities.

Primary School Hubb

Time	Price
Morning Hubb 6.50am - 7.30am	30AED per day
Afternoon Hubb End of day - 3.40pm	40AED per day

Nursery Hubb

Time	Price
Morning Hubb 6.50am - 7.30am	30AED per day
Sibling Club 1.00pm - 2.00pm	No additional charge
Sibling Club Extension 2.00pm - 3.40pm	65AED per day
Nursery Hubb 1.00pm - 2.00pm	40AED per day
Nursery Hubb 1.00pm - 3.40pm	85AED per day



Important Information

Birthday Celebrations

We love celebrating our students' birthdays and making them feel special on their big day! However, to ensure the safety and well-being of all our students — especially those with allergies and specific dietary requirements — we kindly ask that birthday cakes and other food items not be brought into school.

If you'd still like to mark the occasion, we welcome a "Birthday Book" donation to your child's class. This book will be shared with their friends on the day and kept in class as a special reminder that we can revisit throughout the year.

Fun Fact: On your child's birthday, they are invited to wear their own clothes to school! We look forward to celebrating with you and your child on this special day.

Thank you for your understanding and support in creating an inclusive and safe environment for everyone.

Late Arrivals

Please note that the final classroom drop-off time is 8:00am. After this time, children should be brought to Reception, where a member of the Nursery team will collect them and accompany them to class.

This procedure helps to ensure a calm and settled start to the day for all children. Late arrivals entering the classroom with parents after the morning transition can sometimes cause distress for children who have already settled, making it more difficult for them to engage in their learning and routines.

We appreciate your support in helping us create a positive and consistent start to each Nursery day.

Absence

If your child will be absent from school, please notify the nursery by emailing **attendance@rpsdubai.com** or by calling reception on 04 442 9765.



FAQs

Can my child sleep at Nursery?

Yes. We recognise that every child has different sleep needs, particularly when they are settling into a new environment. During the initial transition period, we will work closely with families to follow each child's individual sleep routine and schedule wherever possible.

As children become more settled, we gradually support them in adapting to the Nursery routine, moving towards our class sleep times:

- 11:30am – Children under 2 years old
- 12:00pm – Children aged 2 years and over

Our team will always take a responsive approach, ensuring that children's wellbeing and individual needs remain at the heart of our practice.

What happens if my child has an accident or is feeling unwell?

Your child's health, safety, and wellbeing are our highest priorities. We are fortunate to have our dedicated school nurse, Nurse Smitha, who spends regular time within the Nursery classrooms. By being a familiar and reassuring presence, she builds positive relationships with the children, helping them to feel comfortable and secure should they ever need her support.

In the event of an accident, injury, or if your child becomes unwell during the day, a member of the Nursery team or Nurse Smitha will contact you directly to discuss the situation and any next steps. If your child is too unwell to remain in Nursery, we will ask you to arrange collection as soon as possible.

All accidents, incidents, and medical visits are recorded on our online platform, Evolve. You will receive an email notification when a record has been logged, allowing you to review the details and stay fully informed about any care or treatment your child has received whilst at Nursery.



FAQs

My child has a bump or scratch from home – do I need to let you know?
Yes, please. If your child arrives at Nursery with a bump, scratch, bruise, or any other minor injury sustained at home, we kindly ask that you inform a member of the teaching team at drop-off. A simple pre-existing injury form will be completed with the class teacher to ensure we have an accurate record and can continue to monitor your child's wellbeing throughout the day.

If your child is being dropped off by a nanny or another family member, please send a message via Seesaw to inform the class team of the injury and provide any relevant details. This helps us maintain clear communication and ensures that all injuries are appropriately documented.

My child is still drinking milk from a bottle, how will this be managed at Nursery?
We understand that some children still require a bottle for milk, particularly during rest time, and we will support this as part of their individual routine.

Milk will be given before sleep time to help support a calm and settled rest period. We kindly ask that all bottles are clean and sterilised each day before being brought into Nursery.

If your child brings fresh milk, this should be stored in a thermos flask to ensure it remains at a safe temperature throughout the morning.
If your child uses powdered formula, this should be sent in a sterilised, formula-approved container with the powder already correctly measured out, and the water prepared and placed in the bottle separately, ready for use.

Do Nursery children have Arabic?
Yes, Nursery children have Arabic once per week.

Our Arabic sessions are play-based and designed to introduce children to the language in a natural and engaging way. The Arabic team visits the classroom and provides rich exposure through songs, stories, games, and interactive play, helping children to develop early familiarity and enjoyment of the language within a fun and supportive environment.



FAQs

Do children in Nursery have outdoor play?

We offer a rich outdoor learning experience for all Nursery children through free-flow provision, allowing children to move between indoor and outdoor spaces throughout the day. Each class has access to a small garden area directly connected to their classroom, supporting continuous provision and child-led exploration.
In addition, the Nursery benefits from two large outdoor play areas located at either end of the setting, providing a variety of spaces for physical development, imaginative play, and social interaction.

During the cooler months, children enjoy full use of these outdoor areas as part of their daily routine. However, during the hottest months, all play is moved indoors to ensure the safety and comfort of the children. Temperature and humidity levels are closely monitored by the school clinic, and outdoor access is adjusted accordingly if conditions are deemed too hot or humid.

Can my child potty train at Nursery?

Yes, we fully support children who are beginning their potty training journey.
We kindly ask that some initial foundations are established at home before we begin supporting potty training at Nursery. This helps ensure your child has a level of familiarity and confidence with the process before it is extended into the school environment.

Please let us know in advance when you begin potty training at home so that we can work in partnership with you. Our team will then follow your child's routine consistently at Nursery to ensure continuity between home and school.

We will support your child with encouragement, patience, and positive reinforcement, helping them to develop confidence and independence at their own pace.



Community Spirit

Friends of Ranches Primary School

We are excited to invite you to become a part of the Friends of Ranches (FOR) Primary School Committee. This committee plays an essential role in supporting our school community by organising events, fundraising, and fostering collaboration between parents, teachers, and students.

To ensure every year group is represented, we are seeking a minimum of one committee member per year group.
Each year group will have a dedicated representative who will share ideas, provide feedback, help coordinate school activities and initiatives and meet regularly with the Senior Leadership Team.

If you are interested in joining please email our Admissions and Parent Experience Manager Kate at **kate.gutteridge@rpsdubai.com**

UAE Heritage Committee

As we continue to celebrate the rich and diverse culture of the UAE, we are excited to invite parents to join our UAE Heritage Committee. This committee plays a vital role in preserving and sharing the country's unique traditions, values, and history with our students.

We would love to have your voice and perspective as part of this special group.
Whether you are Emirati or have a deep connection to the UAE's heritage, your insights will be incredibly valuable in fostering an inclusive environment where students learn and appreciate the cultural diversity that makes our country unique.

If you are interested in joining please email our Admissions and Parent Experience Manager Kate at **kate.gutteridge@rpsdubai.com**