Casablanca American School
Pre-School Handbook
2016-2017

Helping Your Child Grow
Content

Contacts .............................................. 3
The CAS Approach to Preschool Education ........ 4
Teaching and Learning in Preschool ................. 5-6
Dispositions in the Preschool ....................... 7-8
Positive Discipline .................................. 9
Typical Daily Routine ................................ 10-11
Things for Parents to Know in Preparation for School 12
Supply List ............................................. 13
Snack List .............................................. 14
Parent Communication and Involvement .......... 15
Helping Your Child .................................. 16
Building a Good Self-Concept ...................... 17-18
Ten Commitments for Parents ...................... 19
Contacts

Lower School Principal
Ms. Amanda Scott  ascott@cas.ac.ma  Ext. 174

Early Childhood Specialist
Ms. Heather Nord  hnord@cas.ac.ma  Ext. 154

Nursery Teachers
Ms. Ilham Filali  ifilali@cas.ac.ma  Ext. 190
Ms. Nadia Amir  namir@cas.ac.ma  Ext. 190
Ms. Karima Bencheikh  kbencheikh@cas.ac.ma  Ext. 191
Ms. Ibtissam Jadiri  ijadiri@cas.ac.ma  Ext. 191

Kinder Teachers
Ms. Eileen Achaoui  eachaoui@cas.ac.ma  Ext. 193
Ms. Meryem Safy  msafy@cas.ac.ma  Ext. 193
Ms. Katrina Jalal  kjalal@cas.ac.ma  Ext. 192
Ms. Lourdes Rivera Garcia  lrgarcia@cas.ac.ma  Ext. 192
The CAS Approach to Preschool Education

In the CAS preschool, adults and children share control. We recognize that the power to learn resides in the child, hence the focus on active learning practices. When we accept that learning comes from within, we achieve a critical balance in educating young children. The adult’s role is to support and guide young children through their active learning adventures and experiences.

We believe that learning takes place within the classroom and beyond. We value outdoor play and provide many opportunities a day for children to go outdoors and play. Outdoor play benefits children’s physical, language, and social-emotional development.

Play is the highest form of research

Albert Einstein
Teaching and Learning in Preschool

The CAS preschool uses the Early Years Foundation Stage framework to inform our teaching. This framework specifies what students should know and be able to do. They indicate the knowledge and skills that must be taught and assessed throughout preschool. The framework is based on the characteristics of effective learning:

1. Playing and exploring (engagement)
2. Active learning (motivation)
3. Creating and thinking critically (thinking)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Learning and Development</th>
<th>Aspect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prime Areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal, Social, and Emotional Development</td>
<td>Making relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-confidence and self-awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managing feelings and behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Development</td>
<td>Moving and handling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health and self-care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications and Language</td>
<td>Listening and attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shape, space, and measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the World</td>
<td>People and communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Expressive Arts and Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exploring and using media and materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being imaginative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On-going formative assessment is at the heart of the CAS preschool program. The teachers observe, assess, and plan for the needs of each individual child.

Planning
What next?
Experiences and opportunities, learning environment, resources, routines, practitioner's role.

Start Here
Observation
Look, listen and note.
Describing

Assessment
Analysing observations and deciding what they tell us about children.

A full list of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework can be found on Schoology.
Dispositions in the Preschool

Dispositions are taught and reinforced throughout the day. As we believe we teach and nurture the whole child, helping the children learn proper behavior is a major part of our daily routine in the preschool.

Through interactions with the environment, their peers, adults in the program, and through trial and error, the preschoolers come to realize what kind of behavior is appropriate and encouraged.

This seems to be a good foundation to prepare the children to the dispositions we choose to teach school wide.

The preschool child who is:

RESPECTFUL
- Uses polite words (i.e. please, thank you, sorry)
- Listens to peers and adults
- Takes turns
- Follows directions and rules
- Respects property (i.e. does not tear books or breaks furniture)

COMMUNITY-MINDED
- Performs within a group (plays and works)
- Shares
- Gets along with peers and adults
- Helps others
CREATIVE
Role-plays
Plays with blocks
Draws and explains drawings
Makes things with play dough
Finds different ways in playing with one toy
Problem solves

RESPONSIBLE
Cleans up
Take care of his/her own snack
Learns to understand and accept consequences

ETHICAL
Learns to report what happens
Tells the truth

REFLECTIVE
Takes pride in what he/she does
Thinks
Answers questions

ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT LEARNING
Has a positive attitude
Asks questions
Is curious to find out answers
Explores
Shows motivation
Positive Discipline

“Young children need teaching, guidance, and love (which is a good definition of Positive Discipline).”

- Positive Discipline for Preschoolers

Preschool and the Lower School teachers are using the Positive Discipline approach to teach children how to be responsible, respectful, and resourceful using kind and firm methods.

The building blocks of Positive Discipline include:

- Mutual respect
- Understanding the belief behind behavior (the why)
- Effective communication
- Understanding a child’s world
- Discipline that teaches
- Focusing on solutions instead of punishment
- Encouragement
- Children do better when they feel better

The foundation for Positive Discipline is understanding the basic needs of all children are:

1. A sense of belonging and significance
2. Perceptions of capability
3. Personal power and autonomy
4. Social and life skills
Typical Daily Routine
Nursery

8:00-10:00 Free Exploration

*8:30-9:00 P.E. with Ms. Hala and Ms. Fatiha
(Monday/Wednesday)

10:00-11:30 Class Time

11:30-12:15 Lunch

12:15-1:30 Rest/Nap

1:30-2:30 Free Exploration

2:30-2:45 Clean Up/Dismissal

Children are dismissed at 12:00 on Wednesdays.

Free Exploration – snack, outside play and learning, small group instruction, inside play and learning

Class Time – morning meeting, story time, large group activities, theme work, music and movement, math activities
Typical Daily Routine
Kinder

8:00-10:00 Free Exploration

*8:30-9:00 P.E. with Ms. Hala and Ms. Fatiha (Tuesday/Friday)

10:00-12:15 Class Time

12:15-12:45 Lunch

12:45-1:45 Rest/Nap

1:45-2:30 Free Exploration

2:30-2:45 Clean Up/Dismissal

Children are dismissed at 12:00 on Wednesdays.

Free Exploration – snack, outside play and learning, small group instruction, inside play and learning

Class Time – morning meeting, story time, large group activities, theme work, music and movement, math activities
Things for Parents to Know in Preparation for School

* School starts at 8:00 and finishes at 2:45, except on Wednesdays where the children leave at 12:00 pm.

* We encourage children to arrive on time and come regularly to school, unless they are sick or need to travel with their parents. Children who are consistently late or miss many days generally miss important learning concepts, which creates gaps in his or her learning in later grades. This also affects their social development as they often return to school and need time to fit back into the social climate.

* Lunch can be ordered at the cafeteria. Parents receive a monthly menu and pay at the bookkeeping office. If parents prefer to send lunch from home, they need to send it in the morning with their child.

* The children need to bring one healthy snack for the morning and one for the afternoon. We encourage healthy snacks such as fruits, vegetables, cheese, etc. Chocolate, chips, candy, and soda are not allowed.

* Children need to wear appropriate PE uniforms on PE days (Nursery: Monday/Wednesday and Kinder: Tuesday/Friday).
Supply List

4 glue sticks

2 packs of wipes

2 boxes of tissues

1 white board, a pack of markers, and a board eraser

1 small bed sheet and a small pillow

1 smock for painting

Rain boots

Important: Children should bring a hat, an extra set of clothes and should wear Velcro shoes.

Please, label all your child’s belongings.
**Snack List**

Here is a sample weekly schedule of healthy snacks. This was developed last year by a nutritionist and CAS parent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amlou and Banana</td>
<td>Seasonal Fruit +</td>
<td>Cheese sandwich on</td>
<td>Dried fruit (raisins,</td>
<td>Cucumber sticks +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sandwich on whole</td>
<td>Salt Free crackers</td>
<td>whole wheat toast</td>
<td>apricots, dates) +</td>
<td>spreadable cheese +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wheat toast +</td>
<td>(3 or 4 crackers</td>
<td>+ seasonal fruit +</td>
<td>natural sugar free</td>
<td>seasonal fruit +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seasonal fruit</td>
<td>per child) +</td>
<td>fruit + Water</td>
<td>yogurt + water</td>
<td>water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children are expected to bring their own healthy snack and water for the day. Healthy snacks provide the energy preschoolers need to play and learn.

**HEALTHY FOOD =**

![Image of brain with fruits]
Parent Communication & Involvement

Parent Communication

- Classroom newsletters will be sent home monthly. This will give you an opportunity to learn more about the learning taking place in your child’s classroom.

- Weekly email bulletins will be sent on Monday afternoon from Mr. Robert Vander Eyken, Director of Casablanca American School. The bulletins will keep you informed of whole school events and showcase student learning.

Involvement

Students’ success in school is directly tied to their attendance as well as their parents’ involvement. We welcome and encourage parents to drop by and see what is going on in their child’s class. If there are any questions, parents are asked to set up an appointment with their child’s teachers.

Parents can also volunteer to go on field trips with the class and help out in the classroom. Throughout the year, there are special events such as UN Day, Explore Morocco, and Literacy Week. These are wonderful opportunities for families to celebrate with their child at school.

Throughout the year, the preschool offers parent workshops. It is important to attend the workshops as a way to stay informed and connected to what is happening in your child’s classroom.
Helping Your Child

Familiarize
Prepare your child for a change in schools, or a new entry to school, by telling your child in advance about his/her new school. If possible, drop by with your child to visit the school before starting.
Get to know your child’s teachers.

Routines
Routines are important to children. Try to drop them off and pick them upon a regular schedule.

Keep in Touch
Discuss your child’s day at school with him/her each evening.
Help your child draw a picture or bring a flower for the teacher. This will help your child bond with his/her teacher.

Practice Your Goodbyes
Get your child used to goodbyes by leaving him/her with a babysitter every once in a while.

Give a Piece of Yourself
Give your child a piece of yourself. Let your child bring a beloved blanket, favorite doll, or special teddy with him/her to school. It can also be a comfort to your child to bring along something that reminds him/her of you.
Building a Good Self-Concept

Self-concept is defined as how a child feels about himself or herself. If a child feels good about himself or herself, then it is likely that he or she will feel sufficiently confident and want to try new experiences and make new discoveries. Much of what children learn about themselves comes from the support and encouragement received at home. As parents, you provide your child with a good self-concept. We, on the other hand, will work with you in a partnership to help your child build a positive self-image.

Educational research documents the importance of self-concept on success in life. By constantly supporting your child, giving genuine praise at every opportunity, and helping your child feel good about how he or she is. You can help your child develop a valuable self-image—a determinant of lifelong success.

1. Give your child some genuine praise everyday. Let your child know that you are aware of the many things he or she is learning and that you are constantly supporting those efforts. Praise can consist of a pleasant comment, a pat on the back, a big smile, or best of all a hug. Make sure your child gets several every day.

2. Make a personal scrapbook with your child. Special photographs of your child, drawings, pictures of favorite foods, books, TV shows, people, and some other artifacts can be used for the scrapbook. Be
sure to take some time regularly to add new things and to talk about them with your child.

Help your child share in some family decisions. These decisions can be very simple ones, such as where certain family members should sit at the dining table or what TV program to watch at a specific time. By providing your child with the opportunities to make these choices, and respecting his or her decisions, you are helping your child build a very positive self-image.
Ten Commitments for Parents

• I will always love and respect my child for who he/she is and not who I want him/her to be

• I will give my child space to grow, to dream, to succeed and even sometimes to fail

• I will create a loving home environment and show my child that he/she is loved whenever and however I can

• I will, when discipline is necessary, let my child know that I disapprove of what he/she does, not who he/she is

• I will set limits for my child and help him/her find security in the knowledge of what is expected of him/her

• I will make time for my child and cherish our moments together, realizing how important- and fleeting- they are

• I will not burden my child with emotions and problems he/she is not equipped to deal with, remembering that I am the parent and he/she is the child

• I will encourage my child to experience the world and all its possibilities, guiding him/her in its ways and taking pains to leave him/her careful but not fearful

• I will take care of myself physically and emotionally, so that I can be there for my child when he/she needs me

• I will try to be the kind of person I want my child to grow up to be- loving, fair minded, giving, and hopeful