



معتمدة من هيئة الشمال الاوسط
للاعتداف وتحسين المدارس
International program
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شركة مدارس الظهران الأهلية
Dhahran Ahliyya Schools Company



وزارة التعليم
Ministry of Education

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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION 280
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DHAHRAN AHLIYYA SCHOOLS

ADMISSION POLICY

Revised: November 29, 2020

Admission Policy Committee Members

Deputy and Vice Presidents
Academic Consultants/ IB coordinators
Principals
Academic Coaches
Teachers' Representatives
Students' Representatives
Parents' Representatives

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INTRODUCTION

DAS Mission

Inspired by the principles of Islam, the mission of Dhahran Ahliyya Schools (DAS) is to empower each student to be a compassionate, thinking, lifelong bi-lingual learner who makes a positive difference, locally and globally.

DAS Vision

Our vision is to provide a world-class education with an Arab and Islamic identity through a pioneering learning community that is sustainable and socially responsible.

Philosophy

We believe that an excellent education touches both the hearts and minds of students, developing their intellectual, personal, emotional, and social skills to learn and work in a rapidly changing and globalizing world. Moreover, it should provide them with a sense of belonging in their own country while also developing an openness to their roles as citizens of the world who are committed to taking action to help make their world a better place.

We believe that this kind of education is best provided through a collaborative, constructivist learning process that is based on inquiry, action, and reflection. It should result in meaningful, rigorous, interdisciplinary academic learning which students apply to solve real-world problems while, at the same time, developing the attributes described in the IB Learner Profile and the attitudes that support lifelong learning. In our approach, assessment plays an important role, must be multi-faceted, and integrated into the process of learning and planning.

We believe that language is central to the intellectual, social, cultural, and emotional development of students. To this end, every teacher is a language teacher. Our goal is to honor and support the development of both Arabic and English. We highlight the transdisciplinary nature of language learning by teaching the academic language through content in both English and Arabic.

We believe that the promotion of a positive, supportive climate of respect, safety, and responsibility is essential. All our students deserve equal opportunity and should be treated with respect and dignity. However, we also recognize that to be inclusive to all learners; we need to differentiate in the type and amount of instruction and learning support.

The International Baccalaureate's Mission Statement:

The International Baccalaureate (IB) aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end, the organization works with schools, governments, and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

The IB Learner Profile:

Inquirers: We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry, and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

Knowledgeable: We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

Thinkers: We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators: We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

Principled: We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

Open-minded: We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring: We show empathy, compassion, and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

Risk-takers: We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

Balanced: We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, (spiritual), and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

Reflective: We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

Admission: Purpose and Practices

DAS aims to prepare girls and boys to acquire IB learner profile; be thinking, caring, healthy individuals who will contribute to sustainable development and thrive on the challenges of the changing world. The new dual language International Program aims to ensure that DAS graduates can learn, work, and think effectively in both English and Arabic. Grade nine students choose between continuing in the International Program to earn an American Diploma through a focus on more English, or switching to the advanced Saudi *Muqararat* curriculum which offers more subjects in Arabic. Both programs enable students to make use of up-to-date resources, methodologies, and technology in both languages throughout their school career, and are accepted for gaining admission to universities in Saudi Arabia and abroad.

The purpose of the admissions process is to select students who are committed to making full use of all the opportunities offered at DAS and to cooperate in its ethos and systems in order to become active, productive members of their society and make a positive difference, locally and globally. As a Saudi organization, DAS has a particular

commitment to preparing the leaders of tomorrow for Saudi Arabia; however, this goal requires a certain level of diversity in the student body in order to enrich the school community with many perspectives.

3.1 Overview of Admission to DAS:

Applications for admission will be accepted throughout the year; however, most decisions will be made on previously announced dates. Test dates and the announcement of results are communicated to applicants by email and the school website.

According to its Statutes of Foundation DAS “aims primarily at students whose academic potential is at least average or above”. Therefore, the criteria for the screening process should be such that children of average ability, without severe learning difficulties, should be able to pass.

All new students, regardless of their age, certificates or record of previous schooling, will be tested in order to determine qualification for entry and appropriate grade level placement. For the younger aged children, internationally recognized readiness tests will be used, according to the age level of the child. These tests will be designed to give a picture of the child’s general aptitude and achievement in English, Arabic and math. At the intermediate and secondary levels, some other subjects’ might also be tested.

Parents will be advised as to the test results and the grade level for which the applicant is considered to be prepared and the applicant will be accepted only for that grade level.

Applicants whose results on such tests indicate they do not have the capability of speaking or understanding Arabic / English sufficiently will not be admitted when that causes adverse effect on the applicant or the class. In cases where the student is close to reaching the minimum level, special consideration might be given if the parents can prove that they are conducting a program to bring the skill level up to the minimum in one semester and, if they request, will be offered suggestions regarding tutoring needed., otherwise, the student will not be accepted.

The granting or refusal of admission, and the placement of students in a class or grade, are the responsibility of the Registrar’s office in collaboration with the relevant Principal. Applicants who pass will be accepted in order of priority published in a pamphlet which is given to all applicants and posted on the DAS website.

Because the school does not have the facilities to serve the educational needs of students who have significant mental, emotional or physical handicaps or significant learning difficulties, it must apologize from accepting them for admission. The school also reserves the right to refuse admission to students whose school records indicate problems with behavior or other matters that the school is not equipped or staffed to handle.

The academic achievement, effort and behavior of all students will be continuously monitored. The Principal with Counseling Committee of that section of the school will review the position of students who demonstrate that they are unable to maintain the standards expected. By following appropriate procedures, which have been described in the Student Behavior Policy or the Policy for Continuous Low Achievement, this Committee has the authority, subject to local laws, to refuse the student’s continued participation in the school if they judge this to be in the best interests of the student or

of the school community.

3.2 Acceptance Criteria and Selection Process

The selection of students for enrollment at DAS is a process carefully carried out according to published policies and written procedures and is implemented through an Admissions Committee headed by DAS Vice Presidents.

50% of the school's spaces are reserved for dependents of Aramco employees who have passed the admissions tests. They will also receive a discount of 35% of the tuition in place of a monetary payment for the lease of Aramco's building. These students are accepted according to the Aramco policy.

The priority for acceptance of students into the Aramco discounted quota is based on the date of submitting a complete application with all the required documents; children who already have siblings registered in the school are accepted before those who do not.

Aramco dependents above the 50% will be charged the full tuition for as many years as they represent more than 50% of the class. In the event that openings later occur within Aramco's 50% quota for the class, Saudi Aramco children registered outside Aramco quota will be moved into the Aramco discount groups. These students will be moved into the discount group in the order of the number of years that the students have been enrolled at DAS, starting with the one who has been in school the longest and moving down to the ones who have entered more recently. In each case, priority will be given to those with brothers and sisters in the school, in the order of the dates of their enrollment, before those who do not have brothers and sisters in the school.

The other 50% of student body do not receive the discount as they are mostly from families outside Aramco. Candidates from this subset who have passed the admissions tests will be accepted according to priorities noted below:

- a. Non-Aramco children of graduates and Dhahranieen who have been officially registered as members of the Alumni + Council data base and who have brothers and/or sisters enrolled at DAS
- b. Other non-Aramco students who have brothers and/or sisters enrolled at DAS
- c. Non-Aramco children of DAS graduates who do not have brothers and/or sisters enrolled at DAS
- d. Other non-Aramco children who do not have brothers and/or sisters already enrolled at DAS

3.3 Admission Procedures

3.3.1 Identifying number of seats Available

The first stage of the process begins with the current DAS students' payment of registration for the following year. When our existing students complete their tuition payments, the Registrar can specify the number of spaces that have become available due to some parents' decision to move away or remove their children from the school

for one reason or another.

Parents applying for new students will be informed of number of spaces expected to be available. In cases when it seems quite sure that there will be no empty spaces available in a particular grade level, the school will not hold entrance tests for new applicants for that grade.

In the case that there are new seats available, the process of selection will be repeated at the end of the school year and, if need be, again at the beginning of the new school year. In order to have a better chance for their children's acceptance, parents should do their best to bring their children for the first session of the entrance exams which are held during the second semester because there are usually no more seats available after that time.

When the admissions tests are finished and the number of passing students has been identified, the Registrar prepares the files of the applicants according to the priorities. The committee then meets to apply the policy without referring to the names of the parents but only focusing on the factors that determine their priority.

When parents of current DAS students are late in paying the registration fee for the following year or in informing DAS if their children will be leaving the school in the following year, they increase the difficulty of the admissions process. By delaying their notice to DAS that they are leaving, these parents are denying opportunity for registration to other students who may be waiting. For this reason, DAS charges penalties to parents who inform the school late about their decision to move their child elsewhere as per the [withdrawing procedures](#) published on the school website.

3.3.2 New Student Admission

Students may apply for admissions to DAS at any time during the school year, yet the application will not be considered valid unless they complete the following steps:

Step 1: Submitting the application of interest

Parents submit the [application online](#) any time before the date of the entrance exam with all the official documents requested below. The Registrar gives a formal date for completed applications on the day which the file and ALL the required documents are uploaded on DAS platform. It is especially important for Saudi Aramco personnel to know this as their applications will be accepted on a “first-come-first-served” basis.

The official papers required are the following:

- Copy of Family Document for Saudis or copy of Passport and Residence Card (Iqama) for non- Saudis (both sides)
- Copy of valid Aramco ID for Aramcons
- Copy of student's passport + student ID (both sides)
- Photograph of the student
- Copy of Birth certificate for KG and Grade 1 applicants
- Copy of the grades and report from the previous school (for students to enter grade 2 or above)

Step 2: Attending Orientation

Mothers/ students attend an orientation meeting online or in the school where the student will later be examined. Those entering grade 2 or above will also receive a link or worksheets for practice so they understand the nature and content of the tests

and the format of the questions that will be asked.

Step 3: Paying Testing Expenses

Parents settle the payment of the applicant's testing expenses.

Step 4: Passing the Entrance Exams

The applicant sits for the entrance exams which are designed to measure the student's level in relation to the standards and expectations of our schools. The formula for admission tests varies by grade:

1. The tests for kindergartens and primary school are called interviews, and the interview period includes several types of activities that require focus and instruction, some individual, some with the teacher, some while playing with other children.
2. The second and third grades of primary are written tests and include the following subjects: Arabic, mathematics and English.
3. Grades 4 and above are international standardized tests -- MAP for mathematics and English as well as TALA for Arabic language --and are conducted in computer laboratories.

After completing the exams, candidates who have passed the tests for grades 3 and above and who meet the priorities announced in the policies are personally interviewed by a committee lead by the Principal of the appropriate level.

Exam dates are announced by DAS Registrar and posted on DAS website. The interviews for pre-school and first grade are usually in February/March. The exams for grades 2 and above are usually nearer to the end of the school year. Parents should watch for announcements of specific days and arrive at least ten minutes before the appointed time.

Step 5: Receiving Admission results

In light of the availability of spaces in a given year, the Admission Committee finalizes the acceptance decisions based on the published priorities. Parents then receive the admission results by email. These emails are all distributed at the same time on a Thursday (usually three weeks after the exams) on a date announced by the registrar and posted on the school's website.

Step 6 Completing Tuition Payment and Paper File

Parents of children who have been accepted are required to submit a complete paper file with all documents required in step 1 in addition to the most recent vaccination record, and a receipt confirming the payment of the annual tuition for the first year within one week after the announcement. If the payment is not completed within one week, the space will be given to the first child on the waiting list.

3.3.3 Priorities of Acceptance

Of the students who pass the test, complete their file and pay the full tuition, **DAS Admissions Committee** will make its selection according to the following priorities:

1. The children of DAS employees and current members of the Advisory Board and Alumni Board
2. The 50% of seats reserved for Saudi Aramco: Children of Saudi Aramco employees who come within the Aramco discount quota of 50% of the seats in each grade level,

and/or 50% of the school as a whole are taken first. They will be accepted according to the following priority:

- a. Children who have brothers and/or sisters already enrolled at DAS will be taken on a “first-come-first-served” basis, according to the official date of the completion of the applicant’s original file in DAS
- b. Children who do not have brothers and/or sisters already enrolled at DAS will be taken on a “first-come-first-served” basis, according to the official date of the completion of the applicant’s original file in DAS.

Note: Children of DAS graduates who are Aramco employees are accepted according to normal Aramco priorities.

3. The 50% of seats reserved for non-Aramco dependents:

- a. Non-Aramco children of graduates and Dhahranieen who have been officially registered as members of the Alumni + Council data base and who have brothers and/or sisters enrolled at DAS
- b. Non-Aramco students who have brothers and/or sisters enrolled at DAS Priority will be given to the children of active volunteers in DAS.)
- c. Non-Aramco children of DAS graduates who have been officially registered as members of the Alumni + Council who do not have brothers and/or sisters enrolled at DAS
- d. Non-Aramco children who do not have brothers and/or sisters already enrolled at DAS. (Priority will be given to the children of active volunteers in DAS.)

Note: Saudi Aramco applicants above the 50% quota allotted for the Aramco discount, may be accepted in one of the other categories listed above. If there are still spaces left after the children of other members of the community have been admitted, they can be accepted as non-Aramco students. In that case, they must pay the full fees, i.e., they will not take the Aramco discount. They will continue in this status for as many years as necessary until a space opens up within the 50% allotted to Saudi Aramco. At the beginning of the new academic year after this space becomes available, the child moves into the Aramco discount quota according to the Aramco order of priority and begins to pay only 65% of the tuition.

3.3.4 Selection Process

The process of admission and selections is carefully carried out according to the published policies and procedures explained and is implemented through an Admissions Committee headed by DAS Vice Presidents.

The list of applicants who passed the test, completed their file is shared with the Admissions Committee headed by DAS Vice Presidents who finalize the selection of students accepted for enrollment at DAS according to the priorities listed in section above.