



DOHA ENGLISH SPEAKING SCHOOL

Learning Together • High Expectations • Celebrating Success



PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR AGES 3-13

PROSPECTUS

“ The quality of education provided is **excellent**. A broad and balanced curriculum, delivered in well-paced, engaging lessons, ensures that students make strong progress in **all subject areas**. ”

BSO REPORT 2023





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OUR HISTORY

For over 40 years, Doha English Speaking School (DESS), one of the oldest non-profit schools in Qatar, has been providing children with an excellent education based on the English national curriculum.

Our story began in 1971, when an English language primary school for British children was built in Doha. The junior school was opened in February 1979 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the Father of the current Amir. With Year 7 opening in 2021 and Year 8 opening in September 2022, DESS is now the only non-profit preparatory school in Qatar. As a member of IAPS (Independent Association of Preparatory Schools) a beacon of excellence in

UK education, DESS is focused on providing the best possible education for children aged 3-13.

At DESS we are committed to creating a caring and disciplined environment that supports our entire school community's love of lifelong learning. We work together for the benefit of each student, teaching them the importance of friendship and respecting and caring for others. With a rigorous academic curriculum and a wide range of extracurricular activities, our children are given the best opportunity for self-development and discovery to become whole, happy and confident individuals who reach their full potential.



“ At DESS, we are committed to creating a caring and disciplined environment that supports our entire school **community's love** of lifelong learning. ”

SEAN SIBLEY, PRINCIPAL

INSPECTION REPORTS

In 2023 DESS received two “Outstanding” inspection reports (COBIS & BSO). We were awarded the highest possible grading in all key areas. This grading allows DESS to be compared favourably with other UK and overseas independent schools. BSO is the gold standard of inspections and the only international accreditation system advocated and supported by the British Government for British international schools.

We pride ourselves as a family at DESS, working with parents to nurture and educate their children on an emotional and practical level during some of the most exciting and formative years of the children's lives. Our students leave DESS well-prepared for a seamless transition to UK independent, grammar, state and international schools.

Almost all of our teachers are British trained and a high percentage of our children are British passport holders. This together with facilities and grounds of the highest quality means we have a platform for learning which reminds our children and parents of a traditional school yet with a truly international feel in Doha.



Sean Sibley

Principal

Sean has 31 year's experience in education and has been in Qatar since 2016 serving as Principal of Doha English Speaking School. Previously, he was Headteacher in the UK for 10 years. Sean is a trained BSO (British Schools Overseas) school inspector. As a BSO team inspector, he acts on behalf of the UK DFE (Department For Education) measuring the performance of British International Schools against the BSO standard framework. He has recently inspected schools in Vietnam and Egypt. Sean brings knowledge from these inspections to DESS.

In the past, Sean has been a Lead Facilitator for the National College of Leadership and Management in the UK. He has worked on all their major leadership development programmes for Headteachers and Middle Leaders. He has also worked for the National College as a Local Leader of Education. This involved a coaching and mentoring role with Head Teachers whose schools were in challenging circumstances. Sean led his previous UK school to an Outstanding Ofsted judgement and has led DESS to two Outstanding Inspection judgements in 2017 and 2023 as well as the COBIS (Council Of British International Schools) Compliance and Accreditation. Sean has achieved the NPQH (National Professional Qualification for Headteachers) and the NPQEL (National Professional Qualification for Executive Leaders). Sean is passionate about education and is pleased to continue to develop DESS as a beacon of excellence both in Qatar and internationally.

DESS SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM



Mark Loader

Business Manager

Mark has been the Business Manager at Doha English Speaking School since September 2022. He brings a breadth of experience in leadership positions across schools, both internationally and within the UK.

The Institute of School Business Leadership has recognised his contribution to the profession through making him a Fellow of the Institute. This appointment recognised his roles in hosting the Federation of British International Schools in Asia Business Managers Conference, presenting at global conferences for professional development in educational leadership and driving innovation and cohesion within both UK schools and British International Schools. He holds a First Class Honours degree in accounting and finance and was awarded the prize for highest overall mark across the faculty. Works undertaken during his studies focused on the non-academic roles of educational establishments and infrastructure and have been used to support EU research initiatives and published by the University. His very successful career also includes roles as finance director for a group of 21 companies in the UK and treasury manager for a UK building society alongside Companies House appointments.



Mark is passionate about collaboration across the administrative and support functions with the academic team. Through embedding controls and governance in efficient processes he seeks ways to ease the path for teaching staff to further develop educational outcomes for pupils. He relishes the versatile nature of the role and loves welcoming families to school in the mornings. Mark is married with two children and a dog, in his spare time he likes to travel and explore new cultures and cuisines.



Colette Forest

Head of Lower School
(FS1 - Y2)

Cole joined DESS in 2016 to manage our Key Stage One department. In her time at DESS, she has held many roles such as Year Group Leader, Phase Leader and Class Teacher. Through these positions, Cole has implemented a plethora of new teaching initiatives, ensuring that the department has always been in line with top performing schools in the UK.

Cole has a wealth of experience in education, both in the UK and in international settings. She originally acquired her Honours Degree in Business from Strathclyde University. This led her into the world of business where she worked for the Scottish Executive as a Project Manager for the financial education of young people. Realising through this role that she had a passion for education, Cole returned to university to acquire her teaching qualification. She first earned a PGCE in Teaching from Glasgow University which she received with Merit. She then went on to study for a Masters degree in Education, also from Glasgow University, again receiving a Merit. Her Masters degree focussed on literacy acquisition for young learners, and she has published articles and teaching resources on this topic.



Liam Mernagh

Head of Middle School
(Y3 - Y5)

Liam graduated with a PGCE from the University of East London in 2011. Prior to this, he studied English and Sociology at The National University of Maynooth in Ireland.

His experiences before DESS, were initially in a school in East London for four years where he worked in Key Stage One and Early Years whilst being part of the Senior Leadership Team. He was also responsible for PE and phonics and was the staff representative on the Governing Board.

Prior to joining DESS in 2024, Liam spent 7 years at Oryx International School and was part of the team that grew the school from 75 children to 1875. He held a teaching and management role in Key Stage One and Key Stage Two whilst completing his Senior Leadership (NPQSL) Award before becoming Assistant Principal, and was later promoted to Deputy Head. His roles during this time have included Teaching and Learning, Assessment and Reporting, Safeguarding, EAL and CPD. He is currently completing a Headship qualification (NPQH).



Heather Rinaldi

Head of Upper School
(Y6 - Y8)

Heather joined DESS in 2021 to launch the inaugural Year 7 and Year 8. Since this time, the provision has greatly expanded and Heather leads a highly experienced and impactful team of teachers in the Upper Preparatory phase.

Heather has over fifteen years of experience in education, both in the UK and internationally. Heather studied French and History at the University of Warwick and achieved First Class Honours. Heather trained via the Teach First scheme and taught in Liverpool for 5 years before embarking on her first international role in Singapore. Whilst in Liverpool, Heather taught Modern Foreign Languages and also led literacy school-wide. In Singapore, Heather was Deputy Head and Acting Head of Secondary in a highly reputed British-curriculum international school and taught History, French and English. Heather worked closely with Year 5 and Year 6 in order to prepare students for their transition into the next phase of the school. Heather also led the successful authorisation in order to become an IB World School. Having taught GCSE, IGCSE, A Level and IB Diploma, Heather is

therefore extremely well-placed to work with the students, parents and teachers at DESS. With the successful launch of the Year 7 and 8 programme at DESS, Heather is delighted to be continuing to develop the school to ensure it remains as the most sought-after Preparatory School in Doha.



At Doha English Speaking School we believe in making children world class learners, developing a confidence and thirst for knowledge that enables them to realise their talents and create their own futures. Children leave our school with an appreciation of the diverse range of the intelligences that are needed for our society to function. They are prepared for the wider world because they know what to do when faced with challenges; better than that, they embrace challenges.

In our school our own understanding of effective learning is constantly evolving and developing. We spend a lot of time researching, developing and adapting the way in which we teach our children ensuring that if something works, we do more of it; if it doesn't we change it. We provide our children with an inspirational curriculum that lights a fire inside them. Our curriculum creates life-long and treasured memories. Our curriculum is supported with curricular and extra-curricular enrichment that is innovative and purposeful and we pride ourselves on the opportunities that we provide for our children. I am so proud of our school and, more importantly, the individuals who make it such a special place to be. Choosing the right school for your child is one of the most important decisions you'll ever make and I warmly invite you to visit our vibrant and caring learning environment where you can experience first-hand what Doha English Speaking School means to us all.

S. Sibley
Principal

CURRICULUM

The curriculum in the Prep School environment is exciting. It's where inquisitiveness is channelled, independence is formed and accomplishment is celebrated. The curriculum is broad but balanced and your child will be assessed to ensure that he or she continues to make progress and receives appropriate support and guidance.

Subject specialists in all year groups are focused on laying the foundations for students to achieve highly in their future studies, whether that may be GCSE, IGCSE, A Level or the International Baccalaureate.

Subject specialist teachers in the upper school environment will be focused primarily on Years 7 and 8, working to attain the highest level within that two year period.

Science, Geography, History, Music, Art, Computing, Design Technology, Drama, and P.E, as well as the core subjects of Maths and English are studied in Year 7 & 8. All students participate in either Arabic or French.



PASTORAL CARE

At DESS we are committed to providing a caring and well disciplined environment as a basis for our whole school community to engage in a life-long love of learning. We work together for the benefit of each individual student, teaching them the importance of making friendships and to respect and care for others.

Through the rigorous academic curriculum and our wide range of extra-curricular activities our children are given the best opportunity for self-development and discovery to become well rounded, happy, confident individuals who reach their full potential. Health and well-being is a priority at DESS. We have a dedicated Nurse, full-time Health and Safety Officer and a Safeguarding Team. We offer lessons in Personal, Social and Health Education as part of the core curriculum.

Above all we recognise the importance of pastoral care and ensure that the school environment is

nurturing, supportive and safeguards every child. We also offer something very unique at DESS, a dedicated 'Learning Mentor' for parents and children. She provides a link between the school and home, offering guidance on aspects which expats in particular may find challenging such as transitioning between countries or schools as well as other important aspects of social and emotional well-being at school.

In Upper School students have a dedicated Form Tutor who is their main point of contact for pastoral support. Students see their Form Tutor twice daily; this regular contact ensures very personalised support.



OUR MISSION AND VALUES

Mission: "To care for the whole child and prepare successful global citizens by creating a nurturing learning environment that challenges each pupil and embraces innovation and critical thinking."

Responsibility, Kindness, Perseverance and Respect, are at the core of our school.

Children learn about these values directly through assemblies and lessons, but also discreetly through their daily life at school as they underpin everything they do. As a result, we help to nurture respectful, resourceful and empathetic children who progress as well rounded students ready for their next phase of education.

LOWER SCHOOL

FS1 - YEAR 2

During our Foundation Stage we aim to provide a happy, caring and stimulating environment where all children are encouraged to reach their full potential. Play is at the heart of our curriculum. We believe that children learn best through hands-on experiences that are provided both indoors and outdoors. Children will develop positive attitudes towards learning if they are provided with a curriculum that meets their developmental needs. We allow the children to make choices about the activities they want to participate in.

As you walk around the Foundation Stage area you will observe the children engaging in adult-led focused or child initiated learning activities. We place a strong emphasis on the prime areas of learning by developing your child's personal, social and emotional skills. This helps them to feel confident and to achieve their full potential in all areas of learning. We nurture their communication and language skills and encourage their physical development through fun, play-based activities. We teach the specific areas of learning, which are Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the World and Expressive Arts and Design. We value the

learning that has already happened in the home environment and aim to build on this by developing close relationships with parents and carers.

In Year 1 & Year 2, we have created a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment where pupils feel respected and valued. In both years, we foster a lifelong love of learning and promote inquisitive minds in our young people by teaching through a problem solving approach. Children are encouraged to be independent, successful learners, through investigation and reasoning activities. We help the children to blossom and develop their confidence in an atmosphere where children feel safe to share their thoughts and opinions and to experiment and explore.

We believe in nurturing the whole child and achieve this by delivering the full English national curriculum as well as Arabic and Qatar History. Year 1 & Year 2 students together with their teachers enjoy the outstanding facilities at DESS and use them creatively to maximise learning experiences; these include individual class gardens, a Computing Suite and Lower School Music Room.

MIDDLE SCHOOL YEAR 3 - YEAR 5

As our children move through Years 3 to 5, the focus continues to be on developing knowledgeable forward thinking communicators with a passion for learning. Teaching staff challenge and give opportunities for academic and personal growth, develop interests, talents and self-confidence. We inspire and nurture the children in our care, enabling them to fulfil their potential, whatever their ability.

Our students enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum beyond the essential life skills of English and Maths. We integrate special days or weeks, where the emphasis is on developing, reinforcing and applying skills learned such as Roman Day and Environmental Day as well as Science and Book Week. Everyday technology is used to facilitate and enhance learning.

An education beyond the walls of our school is central to developing confidence and self-discovery. The children in middle school take part in adventures outside school, such as school trips.

As an integral part of the curriculum, Personal Social & Health Education (PSHE) covers personal development. Specialist subjects

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are taught by our experienced Music, PE, Computing, Arabic, Islamic Studies and French teachers. Exciting and wide ranging Extracurricular Activities complement our teaching programme. Our children are actively engaged in a variety of experiences which foster their ability to research, debate, become analytical, evaluate and extend critical thinking skills. We push the boundaries beyond mere acquisition of knowledge.

UPPER SCHOOL YEAR 6 - YEAR 8

In the course of Year 6, 7 and Year 8 you will see your child grow in confidence, develop their passion for learning with an awareness of their responsibility as a global citizen. Your child will be challenged to reach their full potential and, as a result, will be well prepared for their progression to the senior school of their choice.

As a smaller community school with a family ethos, we get to know your child and can nurture their strengths, enabling us to foster the best from them during these integral years. At DESS, children can feel comfortable in growing their independence gradually, cementing a self-affirmation and ability to recognise their strengths and achievements. Year 7 & 8 has a new uniform which identifies them as the senior students. They also enjoy canteen facilities and a dedicated Common Room.

There are a number of Leadership opportunities for Year 7 and 8 students as they have the chance to undertake roles such as Head Boy and Head Girl, Prefects and House Captains,

reserved at other schools as a privilege fondly for Year 11, 12 or 13 students.

Behaviour & Expectations: There are high standards of behaviour expected in Year 7 and 8; the students are role models for the younger students. A clear 'Behaviour for Learning' approach is adhered to ensuring all students are supported in meeting the expectations. Upon leaving the Prep school environment, pupils are better equipped socially for the rigours of senior school at the age of 13.



WHY CHOOSE DESS?

Our students' academic results are significantly above those demonstrated in the UK national average statistics. We are extremely proud that during our recent inspections in 2023 DESS received two "Outstanding" inspection reports (COBIS & BSO).

We were awarded the highest possible grading of **"Outstanding"** in all key areas:

1. Quality of education
2. Spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils
3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils
4. Suitability of the proprietor and staff
5. Premises and accommodation
6. The provision of information to parents
7. Leadership and management

The grading allows DESS to be easily compared with other UK and overseas independent schools.

Some of the findings reported include:

*"The quality of education provided is **excellent**. A broad and balanced curriculum, delivered in well-paced, engaging lessons, ensures that students make strong progress in all subject areas."*

*"The quality of the teaching and assessment is **excellent**."*

*"Students are well-behaved, **engaged** and take ownership of their learning."*

*"Across the school, teachers demonstrate **deep knowledge** and understanding of the subjects they teach."*

*"The British nature of the school is **clear** and is a strength of the school."*

Students leave DESS well-prepared to move on successfully to their next phase of education, whether in the UK or Internationally.



OUR COMMUNITY

We pride ourselves as a family at DESS working with parents to nurture and educate their children on an emotional and practical level during some of the most exciting and formative years of the children's lives. Our students leave DESS well-prepared for a seamless transition to UK independent, grammar, state and international schools. We have strong links with our parental body through our Parent Council who have assisted our Senior Leadership Team to improve areas of the school including communication, home learning and outcomes for children.

OUR CLASSES

With a maximum of four form entry in each Year Group our school remains relatively small with a true community spirit and family feel. This permits our staff to have individual knowledge of every child in our care and ensures that each child is nurtured in a secure and supportive environment encouraging them to embrace new challenges.

Our teaching staff are hard-working, committed, experienced UK trained specialists who deliver creative and inspiring lessons.

Friends of DESS (FOD) is the fundraising forum for DESS parents and teachers. FOD have generously contributed to our Community Garden, Adventure Playground and Trim Trail. Every year FOD organises fantastic events including the Community Garden Planting Morning, Winter Fair, Ice Lolly and Pizza Days and Bake Sales for the children to enjoy. We have a strong connection with our local community and have a special relationship with the British Embassy. Our Alumni community hold dear their memories of attending DESS and still remain in contact with us.



FACILITIES

DESS benefits from 'state of the art' facilities on a campus which is surrounded by trees, greenery and grounds where students can learn and play.

DESS facilities include an exceptional Library with over 17,000 books; two fully equipped Gymnasias, a covered Swimming Pool, a grass Pitch and Hard Courts, a fabulous Adventure Playground, an Eco Friendly Community Garden, a Theatre (as part of the Multi-Purpose Hall), covered Tennis Courts, Science Laboratory, Art and Technology suite, 2 dedicated Music Rooms with dedicated practice rooms and music technology equipment, Computing Suite and a Cookery Room as well as a dedicated Upper School Common Room.

SPORT

At DESS we want all our students to benefit from and to enjoy participation in sport. Accordingly, we provide a wide range of curricular and extracurricular sporting opportunities. Sport is an integral part of life at DESS and we have an excellent reputation in sports within Qatar with a sporting prowess to be proud of.

We offer a diverse Physical Education programme with unrivalled opportunities for both girls and boys to acquire skills, develop strength and stamina and play competitively for the school. Our Swimming, Netball, Football, indoor and outdoor Athletics and Basketball squads are regularly placed on the winning podium in the many key national and international competitions they participate in, including the BSME Games (British Schools Middle East), Qatar Private Primary Schools Sports Association (QPPSSA) competitions and the British International Schools Qatar Games (BISQ Games).

MUSIC AND DRAMA

Music is a foundation subject taught to every child where pupils learn music theory, sing and play instruments as part of their lessons. Children also have the opportunity to take part in instrumental lessons after school hours.

Our choir has won the Qatar Primary School Choir of the Year Competition and is well known throughout the country, performing at high profile events at the British Embassy, other local events and national competitions, and was the first international choir to perform at 'Choirfest Middle East'. We think it's important for children to have the opportunity to express themselves outside of the classroom in a fun environment. DESS is fortunate to have a fully equipped stage with lighting and sound equipment and the children perform in imaginative and creative fully choreographed musical productions.





ART AND DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

Our specialist Art & Design suite is equipped with state of the art equipment, including 3D printers. DESS provides a high-quality art and design education. This should engage, inspire and challenge pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design.

As pupils progress through the school, they are able to think critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of art and design. They are encouraged to produce creative work,

“ Our teaching staff are hard-working, committed, experienced UK trained specialists ”

exploring their ideas and recording their experiences. The students become more proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft and design techniques as well as becoming more able to evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design. They learn about great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms.

SCIENCE

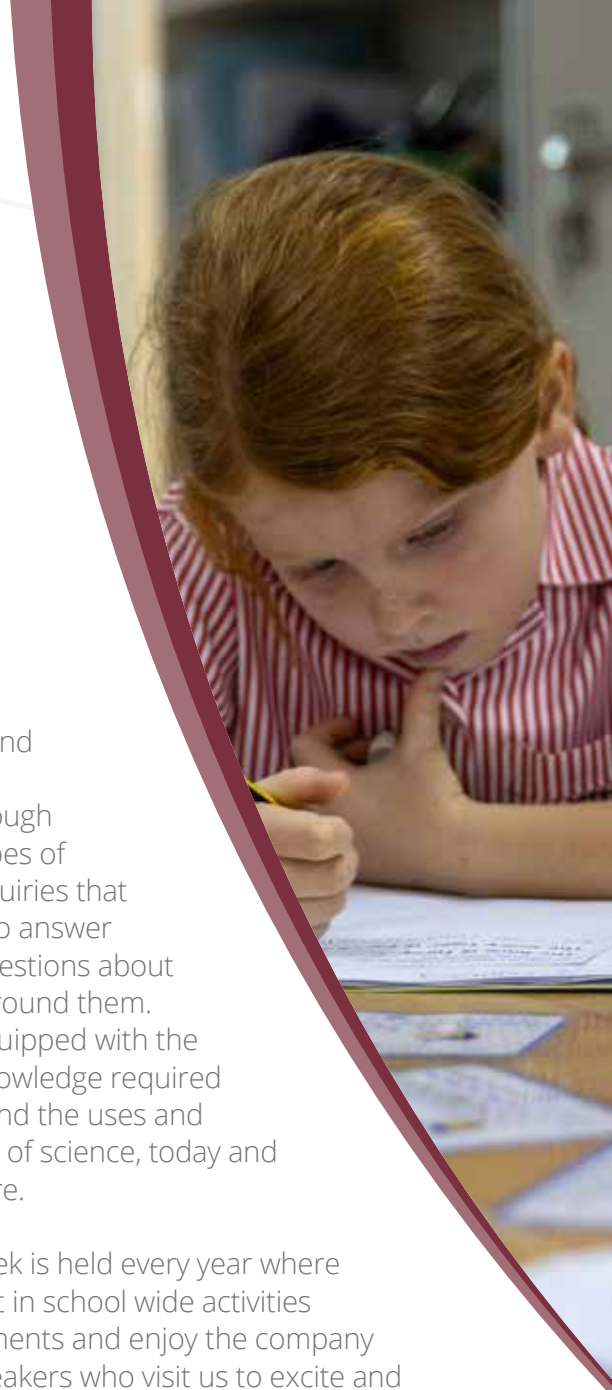
Exploring the wonders of Science captivates the imagination of the children and sparks their curiosity. Science taught in the Lower School is about fostering a love of exploration, encouraging questions and instilling a sense of wonder. The science modules at this age are taught through playful experiments and interactive activities.

In Year groups 3 - 5 we focus on topic based learning. All our pupils are taught essential aspects of the knowledge, methods, processes and uses of science. Through building up a body of key foundational knowledge and concepts, pupils are encouraged to recognise the power of rational explanation and develop a sense of excitement and curiosity about natural phenomena. They are encouraged to understand how science can be used to explain what is occurring, predict how things will behave, and analyse causes.

In the Upper School Science lessons take place in our state of the art Science Laboratory with a focus on developing scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics. Students develop an understanding of the nature,

processes and methods of science through different types of science enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them. They are equipped with the scientific knowledge required to understand the uses and implications of science, today and for the future.

Science Week is held every year where we take part in school wide activities and experiments and enjoy the company of guest speakers who visit us to excite and inspire students with their knowledge.







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