



## Starting nursery letter

Dear parents,

Welcome to Great Minds ECC. Whether you are returning to school after the summer holidays or if you are new to Great Minds, we want to make sure that you have all the relevant information you need to know in order for your child to have a smooth start to the academic year.

During the first two weeks of nursery, arrival and departure timings are flexible in order to allow students a comfortable transition from the home environment to the new nursery life. However, the arrival/departure timings schedule should be confirmed with your child's class teacher and strictly followed. New students will start attending the program two/three hours per day and according to their needs and their adjustment this will progressively increase to five hours within the first two weeks. Please see below for details:

♪ **Classes** - Great Minds ECC operates with 4 active classes. At Great Minds ECC each class has one designated classroom area.

- ❖ Class "butterflies" consists of children from 1-2 years old. The classroom is located on the ground floor. This class consists of maximum 10 children per a day and 3 designated staff members.
- ❖ Class "beetles" consists of children from the age of 2 to 3 years and has maximum 15 children per a day and 3 designated staff members.
- ❖ Class "bats" consists of children from the age of 3 to 5 years and has maximum 15 children per a day and 2 designated staff members. The classroom is located on the first floor.
- ❖ Class "bees" consists of children from the age of 4 to 6 years and has maximum 10 children per a day and 2 designated staff members. The classroom is located on the first floor.

♪ **Induction Period and Timings** -To support the transition into Great Minds, new students should have an induction period of two weeks and the timings for pick up and drop off will be confirmed with the class teacher. Once the two-week induction period

has been completed (for new students) the class teacher will then discuss with parents if they feel the child requires additional time to settle in, after which a plan will be made accordingly. For old students who might be too emotional after the long summer break we will have induction period during the first week where the school day will end one hour earlier. During the first week main program will end at 12. Once the induction period has been complete the children will begin attending full day program.

### **Full day timings:**

**07:30 – 08:00: Optional early drop off confirmed in advance**

**08:00 – 08:10: Drop off – Registration**

**12:50 – 13:00: Home time (Friday Home Time 12:20-12:30)**

**13:00 – 17:00 – Optional afternoon program confirmed in advance**

♪ **Drop off and pick up procedures-** Parents should check child's temperature before leaving the house. All the children attending should have a body temperature below 37.5. Parents and staff meet on the entrance to the nursery during the drop off/pick up time. Parent's visits should be as brief as possible. Parents should follow the time schedule given for drop off/pick up. If an additional conversation is needed, then a phone conversation or meeting can be scheduled.

The items your child needs to take with him/her depend on his/her age, and the type of program option (regular/afternoon) you have chosen. However, the following checklist offers you a general guide as to what you should consider including in your child's bag:

♪ **In written form;** child's home routine about sleeping schedule, special diaper changing instructions, eating time and food regime (preferably send in advance by e-mail). If there are any tips that make your child more comfortable when they are emotional please let us know (for example favourite rhyme).

♪ **Spill-proof water bottle** - Parents should send a labeled water bottle with a protective cover/lid from home. Your child needs to stay hydrated with all that running around and the Dubai weather conditions.

♪ **Extra set of clothes, socks, and underwear** - Toddlers aren't known for their careful cleanliness, so please pack at least 2 extra (seasonally appropriate) labeled change of clothes, including 2 pairs of socks. Even if your child is potty-trained, accidents are bound to happen so please provide at least extra 2 pairs of underwear too, each set of clothing will need to be packed in separate plastic bags, all items will be sent home daily.

♪ **Shoes off policy** - We follow the shoes off policy and children will be required to take off their shoes before entering the nursery building, therefore please send your child in easy to put on/take off shoes that will support your child's independence during drop off and pick up. In addition you can send an extra pair of non slippery socks or soft vinyl covers/swimming shoes for indoor time in case you don't wish your child to be barefoot.

♪ **Uniform** Students should wear the Great Minds ECC white polo shirt on a daily basis. Your child will be gifted one Great Minds ECC polo at the beginning of the year. If you wish to purchase additional cotton polo shirts please contact the Manager, the cost for each polo shirt is AED55.00 (Vat exclusive 5%).

♪ **Sleeping gear** - If your child has a nap at the nursery, you will need to pack a bed sheet and blanket.

♪ **Diapers, wipes, and cream** - If your little one isn't quite ready for the potty, you'll need to send along diapers, wipes and diaper cream (if your child is using). Pack enough for the day, plus spares just to be sure. If you wish, you can leave an unopened wet wipe packet and a one week stock of unopened nappies at the nursery. Your child's teacher can let you know when they need a refill. Creams and applicators need to be sent to school in a zip lock bag which will be kept in your child's bag. Please note that upon opening any cream or medicine the shelf life should be 28 days as per Dubai Health Authority guidelines.

♪ **Food** - There is optional catering available at Great Minds. However in case you prefer to send lunch boxes from home please make sure that food is placed in temperature safe boxes/containers. All the belongings will be kept in designated classroom cubbies which will be cleaned and disinfected daily. Great Minds ECC promotes healthy eating. Fast food or any items containing nuts, seeds, sea food, chocolate, sugary snacks, chips and desserts are not allowed. Parents should not pack any snack that could be a choking hazard. For example, grapes are allowed only if cut in half, fruits should be washed, pitted, and cut. All the food packed in lunch boxes must be labeled including the name of child and time of the meal (for example, is it morning snack/breakfast or lunch). Parents should send cutlery for the day in the lunch box. Used cutlery, meal boxes, and bibs (if provided) will be returned in lunch boxes without being washed at the nursery. All food should be packed in ready prepared form for eating and in a temperature safe box that

will keep food hot or cold until eating time. Children will be encouraged to handle their own food containers. If your child is using formula or expressed breastmilk, parents should provide packed sterilised bottles, a bottle warmer, and measured formula. If a parent wishes to provide frozen breast milk it must be stored in an insulated bag with ice packs (breast milk can be safe to use for a maximum of 24 hours if stored accordingly). Please make sure you have enough bottles and expressed breastmilk or formula milk for the whole day.

♪ **Comfort item** - Packing your child's pacifier or other comfort items can help during the adjustment period and separation time from parents. The comfort item must either be made from plastic or other materials that can be easily sanitized. Items must be placed in a zip lock bag and will be kept in your child's bag. The teacher will only provide this comfort item to your child when necessary. We encourage parents do not send toys from home for entertainment reasons as this may lead to conflicts among children.

♪ **Nursery policies** - Nursery policies includes all important information and procedures that we follow. They are attached in Parents Educare application under "Policy" in settings. We strongly urge all parents to read the whole set of policies thoroughly in order to understand all the procedures implemented at Great Minds ECC.

**Thank you very much!**

**We are so excited and looking forward to spending time with your child!**

**Happy first days of the nursery to your child and you!**

**Great Minds ECC Team**