



2026-2027

GEMS AL KHALEEJ INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL - DUBAI

ELEMENTARY

PARENT HANDBOOK KG - GRADE 5



Dear Parents,

Welcome to AKIS Elementary School!

We are delighted to welcome both new and returning families to the Elementary School of Al Khaleej International School. This Parent Handbook is a helpful guide designed to make you an active partner in your child's education at AKIS.

The handbook provides a clear overview of everything you need to know about AKIS Elementary. It includes details about our school's approaches to learning, the curriculum used by our teachers, and the exciting programs offered to help your child excel in academics, grow socially, and develop a lifelong love of learning. We strongly recommend taking the time to read through this handbook. Doing so will create a strong foundation for open communication and collaboration between our school and your family.

At AKIS Elementary, we understand the importance of these Elementary school years in building a strong base for future academic success. Our teachers and administrators work together to design and deliver an American curriculum that is both intellectually stimulating and encourages positive social interaction. We create a supportive environment that celebrates each student's individual progress and fosters both self-esteem and a love for discovery. We warmly invite you and your child to join us on this rewarding educational journey together.

Kind Regards,

The Elementary Team

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WHO'S IN CHARGE OF WHAT

Position	Name	Email	Extension
Elementary Principal	Ayat Bakir	ayat.b_akn@gemsedu.com	04-2173810
KG Assistant Principal	Serpouhi Vartivarian	serpouhi.v_akn@gemsedu.com	04-2173865
G1-2 Assistant Principal	Amorie Kapp	amorie.k_akn@gemsedu.com	04-2173827
G3-5 Assistant Principal	Sima Akkawi	sima.a2_akn@gemsedu.com	04-2173832
G1-5 Pastoral Assistant Principal	Noura Ghanem	noura.g_akn@gemsedu.com	04-2173872
Teaching and Learning Assistant Principal	Natalie Bridges	natalie.b2_akn@gemsedu.com	-----
Elementary Secretary	Zahia Barghouthi	zahieh.i_akn@gemsedu.com	04-2173823
KG Receptionist	Vidad Khouri	vidad.k_akn@gemsedu.com	04-2173833
Student Counselor K-2	Wafa Qutait	wafaa.q_akn@gemsedu.com	04-2173866
Student Counselor G3-G5	Nirmeen Saassouh	nirmeen.s_akn@gemsedu.com	04-2173892
Student Affairs G1, G2A,B,C, G5	Heba Wassif	heba.w_akn@gemsedu.com	
Student Affairs G2D, E, F,G G3, G4	Nour AlHasani	nour.a7_akn@gemsedu.com	

OUR VISION

Empowering balanced lifelong learners to drive positive change.

OUR MISSION

Through values, cultural heritage, and academic excellence, AKIS nurtures globally minded, principled leaders who are agents of change, dedicated to making a meaningful impact.

OUR CORE VALUES



CARE

I respect the needs of my stakeholders. I will ensure they feel listened to and cared for.

GEMS EDUCATION | OUR VALUES



EXCELLENCE

I dream big, setting ambitious goals, aiming to be the best at what I do.



ONE TEAM

I am a team player. I work with the bigger picture in mind. I put the team's needs ahead of my own.

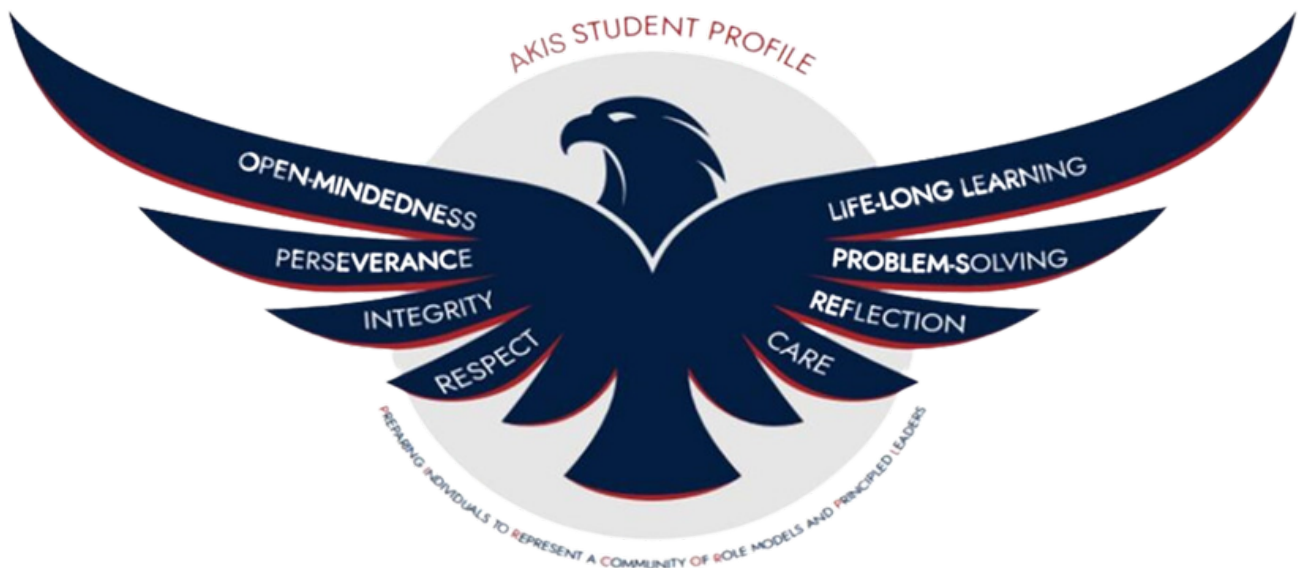
Our values are at the heart of everything we do...



ALWAYS LEARNING

My open minded curiosity fuels my love for learning. I ask questions & listen so that I continuously learn & improve.

AKIS Students Profile and Mascot



AKIS Policies

Policies are important as they help a school establish rules and procedures and create standards of quality for learning and safety, as well as expectations and accountability. Without these, schools would lack the structure and functions necessary to provide the educational needs of students. Parents and students must familiarize themselves with all AKIS policies for a smooth and structured relationship with the school. All AKIS policies are available for you to view on the school website via this [link](#).



SCHOOL PROCEDURES

School Hours

Morning Arrival

- School main gates open at 7:00 am.
- K- 5 classrooms open at 7:15 am.
- Students are expected to be in school between 7:15 am and 7:40 am.
- School gates close at 7:45 am, and students will be marked late after 7:45 am.
- The first lesson starts at 7:45 am .
- KG parents can escort their children to the classroom, from the KG reception.
- Grades 1 and 2 parents can escort their children to the beginning of the corridor on the ground floor.
- Grades 3 to 5 parents can escort their children only to the reception area. Several teachers are always on duty to assist.

Afternoon Departure	Monday - Thursday	PreK & KG1	1:00pm
	Monday - Thursday	KG2 - 5	2:30pm
	Friday	All Grades	11:15am

- Students must be promptly collected from classrooms by a parent or a designated guardian once the doors are open. Parents/guardians must be wearing their ID issued by the school to enter the school premises and collect their child.
- KG ECP Program starts at 1:00 pm and finishes at 2:30 pm. Please refer to the school circular for details.
- Elementary After-school activities start at 3:00 pm and finish at 4:00 pm. Please refer to the school circular for details.
- The school campus is closed on Saturdays and Sundays, except for special events.
- Elementary students should enter and leave the school from the designated gates. Please refer to the school circular for details.

Absences / Excused Absences

Every day is an important learning day as our teachers create authentic and meaningful learning opportunities for their students. As such, it is important that children are present regularly throughout the year. We understand that extended absences are sometimes unavoidable due to unforeseen circumstances. However, please be aware that missing school can disrupt a student's learning progress. Parents are kindly asked to inform the school about the reason of the absence and to ensure to follow up on all taught material during the child's absence by referring to the weekly home learning materials and communicating with the teacher about any missed assignments. Please note that assessments may not always be available in advance. As per the KHDA-parent contract, if a student has an unexcused absence for 21 consecutive days or 28 non-consecutive days, the student may face retention in the same grade.

Tardiness



AKIS gates and classrooms open at 7:15 am. Students are marked late after 7:45 am. Punctuality shows respect for others, classmates, and teachers. Late arrivals affect not only the student who is late but disrupts the entire group. Advisory time (7:15 – 7:45) is an important part of our school routine and is used to work on personalized and targeted skills for each student. Parents are requested to emphasize the importance of being on time with their children. When your child is going to be late or absent from school, please email your child's teacher well in advance to notify them. Students who arrive late will be admitted to class but will be marked late, affecting their conduct mark on the school report card.

Dismissal and Early Leaves

K-5 students will be dismissed directly from the classroom. All students must be picked up at the latest by 2:55 pm. Parents will be notified if they are late several times. In case of repeated late pick-up after the notifications, your child will be automatically enrolled in the late room; a paid service to ensure the safety of our students.

If you need to apply for an early leave for your child or there are changes to your pickup arrangements, please follow the following protocols:

All early leave requests should be made via the Gems Connect app. Go to Attendance- Gate pass- Request gate pass- then fill the information.

Notify your child's teacher a day in advance to help them plan accordingly.

If your child is on the bus, please inform the bus representative from STS.

Please try your best to schedule all appointments outside of school hours. Early pick up for Elementary should be requested before 11:30 am.

If the early pick up is for a pre-planned medical appointment, you will be required to show proof on arrival at reception.

Please note that last-minute changes to pick-up routines are not permitted for health and safety reasons.

School Uniform

Students are requested to have a proper appearance at school, following the below expectations:

- All students must wear the school uniform every day to school.
- The school uniform can be purchased from the uniform shop Threads.
- Students must wear black shoes and white socks on normal uniform days and white trainers and white socks on P.E. days.
- Girls should have short, neat nails and hair away from their eyes and tied back with no jewelry. Hair ties should be black and/or white only.
- Boys should have neat hair with their hair no longer than their ears.
- Alternative dress or house t-shirt is acceptable on designated days and special occasions such as National Day celebrations and World Book Day. Details will be announced as they occur throughout the year.
- Please ensure that all your child's clothing and belongings are clearly labeled with their name, class and section.

House System

The House Point System fosters community, teamwork, and school spirit by giving students a sense of belonging and shared responsibility. It encourages positive peer relationships and healthy competition in a supportive environment. Students are recognized for demonstrating Be a GEM values and learner profile attributes, linking positive behavior to recognition and reward. By contributing to their house, students see how their actions impact both themselves and their peers, building motivation, resilience, and pride in collective success. Children/families are placed into one of the four houses, Falcons, Sharks, Camels, or Oryxes, and proudly wear their house shirts during special days and activities. House T-shirts can be purchased from the uniform shop, Threads, or from the Threads website (www.threadsme.com). Kindly note that the House T-shirt doesn't replace the P.E. uniform. If you haven't received your child's house yet, please contact Miss Zahia- zahieh.ikn@gemsedu.com.

Assemblies

All Students will have their assembly on their allocated day in the multipurpose hall, where they develop confidence and competence and share with others, in addition to learning appropriate audience skills. Assemblies will be used to celebrate achievements and special announcements. Each class has one assembly/performance during the year. You will receive an invitation from the class teacher to attend your child's class assembly.

Learning Environment

Students will place their bags and bottles in their cubbies in the classrooms. For all grades, please ensure your child's school bag **does not have wheels**. The larger bags do not fit in the classroom cubby holes, they therefore pose a health and safety risk. Please send labelled headphones for your child to be kept in the classroom as they will need them when they use the iPad station in the classroom. The headphones should be over the ear, not buds and have a microphone.

Photo and Video Consent

We regularly share events, photos and videos showcasing students learning inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, we request your consent to post these pictures on our school's website, social media, newsletters, and yearbook. Please complete the permission form via GEMS Connect (under: Student Info → General Consent). The school will also share a form at the beginning of every academic year to ask you for your consent. Parents who do not fill out the form will be considered as having provided implied consent.

Celebrations/Birthday Parties

Pre-KG to KG2

Birthdays may be acknowledged on Fridays only. Parents may send plain, individually portioned cupcakes for the class to share. This keeps celebrations simple, safe, and age-appropriate for our youngest learners.

Grades 1–5

Birthdays are encouraged to be celebrated outside of school. We will still acknowledge students' birthdays in a simple way at school, but cakes, gift bags, giveaways, or gifts are not permitted.

Giveaways may only be sent during designated school events, such as National Day.

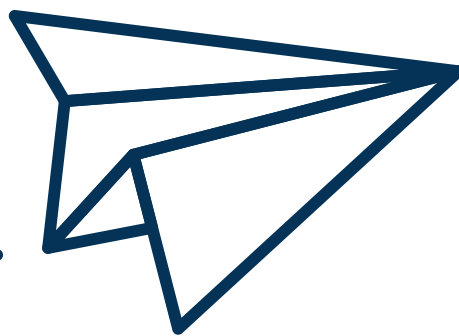
Field Trips

Field trips are an integral part of students' learning and feeling of belonging to their community. Therefore, students go on 2 trips per year. We select the venues for field trips based on the units' students are covering at school to link what they are learning in class with the real world. A letter is always sent home a week prior to the trip with details. If you would like your child to join his/her class on the trip, please note that you must fill in the permission slip attached to the letter along with completing the payment on GEMS Connect or in person at the cashier as teachers cannot accept cash from students. It is very important that you pay for your child to attend school trips and events before the deadline given by the school to avoid any disappointments. We cannot accept payments on the day of the trip for health and safety reasons. Please also ensure that you are paying for the correct activity on GEMS Connect.

GEMS AKIS Curriculum Overview

GEMS Al Khaleej International school follows the U.S. Curriculum, aligned to:

- Common core state standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts and Math.
- Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for Science.
- California state standards for all other subjects taught in the English language.
- Ministry of education's prescribed programs for the Arabic language, Islamic studies, and Social Studies.



LEARN LIKE A GEM

At AKIS, students are active participants in their learning. Through classroom discussions, hands-on activities, problem-solving tasks, paired work, and collaborative group projects, they develop the confidence to share ideas, ask questions, and learn from one another. These experiences help build important skills such as teamwork, communication, critical thinking, and independence.

Our teachers use a range of evidence-informed teaching strategies that are designed to help students think deeply, engage with new learning, and retain knowledge over time. By using a consistent approach across our school, students understand the purpose of each learning activity and are able to take greater ownership of their progress.

The techniques used in lessons are familiar to our students and form part of our daily classroom practice. By understanding their role within each strategy, students become more reflective, independent learners and are better equipped to achieve success both in and beyond the classroom.

All of the teaching techniques below are grounded in the work of leading educational thinkers, drawing heavily on Daniel Willingham’s research on cognitive science, Barak Rosenshine’s Principles of Instruction, and Doug Lemov’s Teach Like a Champion.

GEMS Essentials: Structuring Learning for Impact



Do Now
(retrieval practice)



Learning Outcomes



To Know



I Do, We Do, You Do



Affirmative Checking



Exit Ticket

GEMS Talk: Fostering a Culture of Discourse



Turn and Talk



Show Call



Show Me



Everybody Writes



Cold Call



Right is Right



Stretch It



Habits of Discussion

GEMS Culture: Optimising Learning Opportunities



What To Do
(directions and
corrections)



Whole Class Reset



Teacher Radar



Secure Student Attention

Curriculum Overview

Our Pre-KG to Grade 5 curriculum follows the U.S. Curriculum, with learning aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts and Mathematics and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for science. Arabic Language, Islamic Studies, and Social Studies follow the programs and guidelines prescribed by the UAE Ministry of Education.

Across all grade levels, we aim to develop confident, independent learners who communicate effectively, think critically, collaborate with others, and demonstrate kindness, respect, responsibility, and appreciation of cultural diversity.

KINDERGARTEN

Our Kindergarten program provides a bilingual, child-centered, and hands-on learning experience that builds strong foundations and prepares children for a successful transition to Grade 1.

English and Arabic are integral parts of the learning experience, with children developing early literacy and communication skills through meaningful and engaging experiences. English learning is supported through Benchmark Advance and UFLI Foundations, with a strong focus on early phonics, reading, writing, and communication.

The curriculum also places a strong emphasis on early numeracy, science, social and emotional development, creativity, communication, collaboration, and problem-solving.

Learning takes place through a balance of teacher-guided activities, purposeful play, collaboration, and learning areas including Reading, Writing, Role Play, Creative Arts, Inquiry, and Math. Children are encouraged to explore, ask questions, investigate, make connections, and share their ideas through stories, songs, role-play, experiments, manipulatives, and hands-on activities.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

In Grades 1–5, students build progressively on the foundations developed in Kindergarten through a structured, engaging, and developmentally appropriate curriculum.

English Language Arts is supported through Benchmark Advance, while UFLI Foundations continues to support phonics and early literacy development in the younger grades. Students develop their reading, comprehension, vocabulary, speaking, listening, and writing skills across a range of texts and contexts.

Writing is taught explicitly across a variety of genres, including narrative, informational, opinion, explanatory, and persuasive writing. Students learn to plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish their work while developing increasingly accurate grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and sentence structure.

Arabic Language, Islamic Studies, and Social Studies are taught in line with UAE Ministry of Education requirements. Arabic lessons focus on developing students' reading, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary, and comprehension skills. Islamic Studies supports students in developing their knowledge and understanding of Islamic values, beliefs, practices, and teachings and encourages them to apply these values in their daily lives.

Learning focuses on developing strong knowledge and skills across subjects while encouraging students to apply their learning, think critically, solve problems, collaborate, and become increasingly independent. Students are provided with opportunities to read, write, discuss, investigate, create, and apply their learning across a range of subjects and real-life contexts.

Lessons include a balance of explicit teaching, discussion, inquiry, practical experiences, and opportunities for students to demonstrate and reflect on their learning. Our approach ensures that students are appropriately challenged and supported as they progress through Elementary and prepare for the next stage of their educational journey.

English Language Learners (ELL)

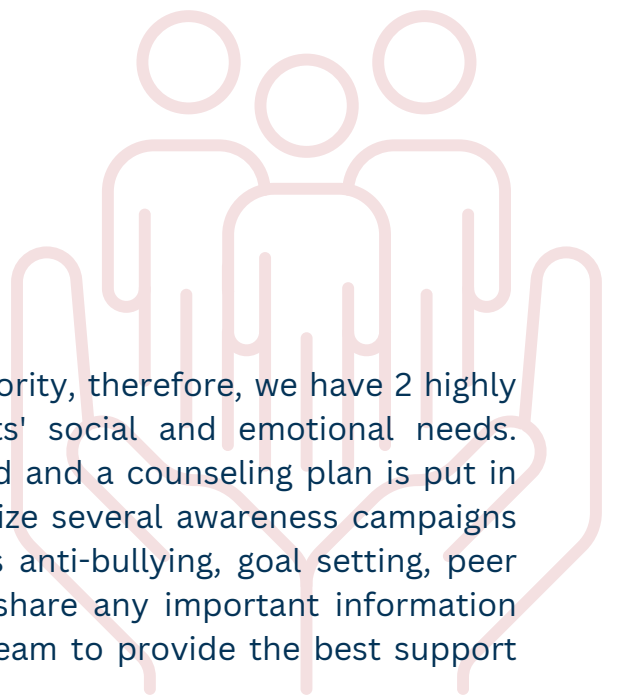
Students who are new to the English language may receive additional ELL support through small-group pull-out sessions. These sessions provide targeted language instruction to help students develop the English skills needed to access classroom learning successfully. Parents will be informed if their child is identified for this support.

Inclusion (SEN, Gifted and Talented)

At AKIS we are fully dedicated to the Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework. The Inclusion department, comprised of qualified and experienced special education teachers, supports students who need additional academic and social and emotional support in all grades. This includes students with special educational needs and gifted and talented students who need to be further challenged. Personalized support is provided either inside or outside the classroom based on the students' needs and the recommendations stated in their report. The Elementary Inclusion Team provides planned accommodations, modifications, and teacher training and guidance. Further information can be found in the Inclusion Handbook.

Counseling Services

At AKIS we have placed students' wellbeing as a top priority, therefore, we have 2 highly qualified counselors available to support all students' social and emotional needs. Teachers refer students to the counselors when needed and a counseling plan is put in place for each referred student. Counselors also organize several awareness campaigns throughout the academic year to cover topics such as anti-bullying, goal setting, peer pressure and many more. Parents are encouraged to share any important information relating to their child's wellbeing with the counseling team to provide the best support possible.



Assessments

One of our main goals at AKIS is to teach, guide, and support our students to ultimately achieve and master the Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, MOE standards for Arabic and Islamic Studies, and the parameters of the National Agenda document.

To achieve this, we regularly assess students' attainment and progress through internal ongoing formative and summative assessments, as well as external assessments. Various forms of internal assessment, supported by detailed rubrics, are used, including pencil-and-paper tasks, online assessments, projects, collaborative work, presentations, and external benchmark assessments such as:

- NGRT (Grades 1–5)
- MAP (Grades 3–5)
- CAT4 (Grades 3–5)
- IBT Arabic Assessment (Grades 3–5)

Peer and self-assessment are also an important part of the learning process. Students are encouraged to reflect on their own learning, use success criteria and rubrics to evaluate their work, and provide constructive feedback to their peers. This helps students develop greater independence, ownership of their learning, and a clearer understanding of how they can improve.

Additionally, students in targeted grade levels participate in TIMSS and PISA assessments as mandated by KHDA as part of the National Agenda parameters. This helps ensure that high standards of education are consistently maintained and that students are supported to achieve outcomes aligned with the National Agenda and the school's mission and vision.

Report Cards

Official Report Cards are issued twice a year, at the end of each semester. These reports include **achievement levels** and teacher comments which give parents a clear image of their child's abilities and progress.

REPORT CARD ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS	
Mastering (MA)	The student provides compelling evidence demonstrating the transfer of concept, knowledge and skills in the stated learning outcome (Standard). The student can apply the learning independently.
Achieving (AC)	The student provides sufficient evidence to securely demonstrate the concept, knowledge, and skills in the stated learning outcome (standard). The student can apply the learning with prompting.
Approaching (AP)	The student provides partial evidence to demonstrate the concepts, knowledge, and skills in the stated learning outcome (Standard). The student can apply the learning with support. Additional focus and practice are needed to develop and solidify the learning outcome.
Emerging (EM)	The student is beginning to demonstrate the concepts, knowledge, and skills in stated learning outcome (Standard). The student requires extensive support
Not Yet (NY)	The student demonstrates serious misconceptions and/or flaws in the application of the required knowledge and skills of the standard
Incomplete (IN)	The student has submitted insufficient evidence to allow the teacher to assess understanding or learning to standard.

iPads and Resources

At AKIS, we use a wide range of resources to enrich our curriculum and students' learning experience. These resources include books both digital and physical, shared iPads, online portals, applications, stationery and VR sets among others. Login details for all platforms used in school will be sent to the primary email.

As technology is an integral part of the innovative current practices and strategies in education, it is essential that we train students to use technology responsibly and wisely. **The e-policy**, available on the school website, details the expectations of technology use and the consequences for students who do not abide by the policy.

Swimming

Swimming lessons in a temperature controlled and shaded swimming pool are offered as a mandatory part of the PE curriculum for grades 1-5 and will be reflected on the report card. Swimming lessons will be a course in rotation between grade levels and not year-round. You will be notified by your homeroom teacher when your child's swimming lessons start and end. A qualified and licensed lifeguard is always attending to supervise swimming lessons and the PE teachers. If adverse weather conditions occur, we may have to cancel swimming lessons at our own discretion for health and safety reasons. You will be notified if such cancellations occur, and students will be given a PE lesson instead. Students should wear the AKIS swimming kit which is available at the uniform shop Threads. No student can be excused from swimming without a medical report.

After School Activities

KG Extended Care Program

The Extended Care Program (ECP) is available for Pre-KG and KG1 students from 1:00–2:30 p.m. Students are provided with time to rest, eat, and participate in age-appropriate activities. Places are subject to availability and class capacity. Further details regarding registration will be shared with parents.

After-School Activities – Grades 1–5

AKIS partners with ESM to offer a range of free and paid after-school activities from 3:00–4:00 p.m., Monday to Thursday. Activity options and registration details will be shared with parents at the beginning of each term.

Please note that school bus transportation is not available after these activities, and students must be collected at 4:00 p.m.

Library Services

- AKIS students visit the library during the academic year based on a schedule shared by the elementary librarian. All students receive direct instruction in age-appropriate reading material and general research skills during their library visits. They also learn about the different literature genres and authors along with reinforcing skills and techniques learned in the classroom.
- **Library Guidelines:**
- Books and other library materials must be returned on time. Students that have overdue library materials will be sent reminders via their child's teacher.
- If a student has overdue items, library materials cannot be checked out until the overdue items are returned.
- Library materials that are damaged or lost need to be replaced. Teachers will reach out to parents to inform them of the cost. Payment must be completed through the school accounts.
- Books and materials may be collected for inventory at various times during the year; usually before winter break and/or at the end of the academic year.
- Report cards and transfer certificates will not be issued unless all books or materials are cleared.
- Students who withdraw early must return library materials so their clearance form can be signed.





BEHAVIORAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

Elementary Behavior Expectations

At AKIS, we are committed to creating a positive, safe, and respectful environment where every student can thrive. Our approach is guided by Be a GEM and is built on clear and consistent expectations, positive relationships, and shared responsibility between students, staff, and parents.

Students are encouraged to demonstrate the FLAME attributes in their learning, behavior, and involvement in the school community. We support students to develop integrity, responsibility, independence, and positive decision-making. When mistakes occur, students are encouraged to reflect, understand the impact of their choices, restore relationships where appropriate, and make better decisions moving forward.

Behavior Policy

At AKIS, our commitment to maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment is not just a priority; it is our essential duty. The team pledges to undertake the following actions involving our staff and students:

- Our school leadership will diligently and regularly review behavioral expectations across the school.
- Teachers will discuss behavior expectations with their students.
- Teachers will develop positive relationships with students and parents to ensure that all students exhibit integrity proactively.
- Staff will consistently reinforce and acknowledge positive behaviors.
- Student Affairs Officers and counselors will collaborate with teachers to address behavioral concerns.
- Teachers will communicate with parents via email, seesaw, or phone call (when appropriate) concerning inappropriate behaviors.
- The Student Affairs Officer will intervene if issues concerning student safety or continuous disruptive behavior arise.
- Student Affairs Officers may implement consequences such as in-school reflection time or suspension for behaviors related to safety concerns or severe disrespect.

Recognition and Rewards

- The Be a GEM rewards system recognizes students who demonstrate the GEMS values of Care, Always Learning, Excellence, and One Team. Positive achievement points are recorded in the Conduct Module in Phoenix, with each positive point also contributing one House Point.
- Students are recognized through daily praise, weekly awards and milestone certificates, and half-termly recognition for demonstrating GEMS values, excellent attendance, punctuality, and positive behaviour.
- At the end of the academic year, students who consistently demonstrate the Be a GEM expectations and GEMS values are celebrated through the prestigious GEMS of Honor Award.

Expectations and Consequences

- Behavior is addressed according to its nature, frequency, and severity.
- Minor concerns, such as incorrect uniform, lateness, lack of equipment, or incomplete work, are addressed early to help students develop responsibility and readiness to learn.
- Repeated disruptive behavior, including disrespect, refusal to follow instructions, inappropriate use of devices, or unsafe behavior, is recorded in Phoenix and may result in escalating interventions.
- Red Line Behaviors are serious breaches of school expectations that compromise safety or well-being, including bullying, cyberbullying, fighting, racism, inappropriate touch, theft, serious academic dishonesty, and other dangerous or unsafe conduct. These result in immediate intervention and may lead to suspension or, where applicable, expulsion.
- Consequences are supported by pastoral and counseling support to help students reflect, restore relationships, and make positive changes.

Conduct Marks

- Conduct marks reflect students' attendance, punctuality, and behavior. Unexcused absences, repeated tardiness, and breaches of school expectations may result in conduct mark deductions.
- Repeated concerns may lead to parent communication, written warnings, meetings, or other consequences in line with school policy.
- Continued attendance concerns may also affect re-enrollment and may be reported to the relevant educational authorities.



Bus Behavior Expectations

Bus transportation to AKIS is provided via STS. For more details, please contact the school's STS representative. All bus services used by AKIS students have established rules to ensure bus safety. Parents are advised to review these rules with their child.

Student Responsibilities on the Bus, Student MUST:

- treat the bus monitor and driver respectfully.
- remain seated and wear seatbelts, whether moving or stationary, throughout the bus journey.
- speak quietly and behave respectfully during the bus journey.
- sit facing forward on their seats throughout the bus trip.
- keep the aisles and walkways clear of any obstructions.
- report any issues or problems immediately to the bus monitor or driver.
- be considerate when boarding and disembarking the bus.
- travel only on the bus designated to use and parent to inform STS representative if a temporary change is needed.
- be ready and on time for both the departure and pickup, arriving at the bus stop at least 5 minutes before the scheduled departure time.
- line up and board the bus in an orderly and timely manner, promptly storing bags out of the aisle and following the bus seating plan.
- follow the driver's or monitor's instructions immediately and refrain from arguing, fighting, pushing, or shouting.
- not carry medication (except inhalers with consent), animals, glass objects, or anything that could be perceived as a threat.
- not allow large objects to occupy seating space and ensure they are stored safely.
- refrain from consuming food or beverages on the bus.
- not open windows or doors while the bus is in motion.
- leave the bus when it has come to a complete stop and exit only when it is safe.

Parents are not allowed to get on the bus under any circumstances. Any incidents on the bus should be reported to the bus driver and STS Manager for immediate follow-up by the school. Failure to comply with these rules may result in the suspension of bus services.

Breaks and Canteen

- Monday to Thursday, students have **two breaks** during the school day: a snack break and a lunch break. Please ensure your child brings enough food for both breaks. On Fridays, due to the shorter school day, students have one short break only.
- At AKIS, we prioritize promoting a healthy lifestyle for our students. We kindly request parents to pack a nutritious lunch for their child, excluding sugary food, chocolates, Nutella, chips, or soft/energy drinks. Students who adhere to this healthy eating policy will be recognized with a healthy eating certificate, reinforcing our school's values. **Only grades 3, 4, and 5 students have access to the school canteen.**

Nut Free School

- We prioritize the safety of our students with food allergies through a strict policy that minimizes exposure risks and ensures a safe, educational environment. We prohibit common allergens like crustaceans, peanuts, soybeans, tree nuts, and sesame seeds from being brought into the school. Parents must collaborate by providing medical documentation and current contact information and working with our medical team to develop or update their child's Individualized Health Plan (IHP). This plan should cover all school activities and settings, ensuring comprehensive support for the students. We also ask parents to educate their children about managing their allergies, such as recognizing unsafe foods, understanding the symptoms of reactions, and knowing how to respond appropriately. Children should be taught not to share food and to know where their medications are stored. Following these guidelines can maintain a safe and inclusive environment for all students. In class sharing parties take place throughout the academic year, a consent form will be sent from school please ensure to fill in the form to allow your child to participate in the sharing parties.

Outdoor Play

- The sun and heat in Dubai are intense. High temperatures can cause rapid dehydration and sunburn. Please purchase an AKIS hat to keep in your child's cubby to cover their heads when out in the sun. Also, apply sunscreen every morning before coming to school to prevent sunburn and skin damage. To prevent dehydration and overheating, please provide your child with a water bottle that can be refilled at one of our many water coolers and reinforce that your child continues to drink water throughout the day. Please label the bottle with a permanent marker to ensure it is returned to your child if it is lost or misplaced.

Academic Honesty

- AKIS school community places a high value on academic honesty, expecting students to complete their assignments and acknowledge sources for ideas, language, or thoughts that are not their own. **Plagiarism**, the act of presenting someone else's work as one's own, is a serious breach of academic integrity. This rule applies to all forms of media, including print and digital sources like the internet. Any instances of academic dishonesty are viewed with great concern, as they undermine the trust within our community. Students found guilty of such violations will face significant consequences, and repeated offenses may lead to expulsion. Any suspected violations are immediately reported to the principal.

Safeguarding

- At AKIS, safeguarding students is a paramount responsibility shared across our entire community. We have implemented a comprehensive policy designed to protect and promote the well-being of every child within our care. This policy outlines clear procedures for addressing any child protection issues. It mandates regular training for all staff to ensure they are equipped with the latest knowledge and skills required for effective safeguarding. AKIS empowers students by educating them about the potential dangers they may face, both in real life and online, and equips them with strategies to safeguard themselves.
- The roles and responsibilities for safeguarding are clearly defined, ensuring that every member of our school community knows what is expected of them. School staff have a duty to report any safeguarding, child protection or welfare concerns on the Guard platform and to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in their school or service. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, adults report to a Deputy DSL. In the case of volunteers and visitors, all safeguarding, child protection or welfare concerns are immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy DSL or Principal.
- AKIS policy is backed by strong measures for dealing with any violations, ensuring that all concerns are managed promptly and by the highest standards of care and legal compliance. To further support this environment, we ensure rigorous recruitment processes and maintain high levels of security on campus. AKIS commitment to these principles is determined as we strive to maintain a safe, nurturing educational setting where our students can excel without concern for their personal safety.

Lost and found services

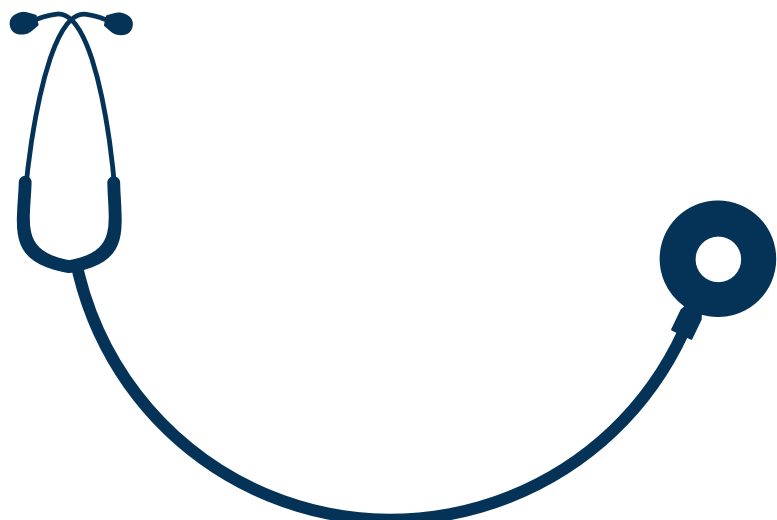
- Lost and found items are kept in a locked designated area. Students are encouraged to reach out to teachers in case they need to check the lost and found area. Watches, jewelry, and glasses are usually kept in the MSO's office. Any unclaimed items are donated to charity before each long holiday.

School Clinic and Health Guidelines

The safety, emotional well-being, and physical health of our students are a priority at AKIS. To help us maintain a healthy school environment, please follow the guidelines below:

- Keep your child at home if they are unwell.
- Students with a fever of 37.5°C or above should not attend school. If a fever develops during the school day, parents will be contacted to collect their child within 30 minutes.
- Do not send medication in your child's school bag.
- If medication, including antibiotics, is required during school hours, it must be handed directly to the clinic with the doctor's note, prescription, and signed parental consent.
- Encourage good hand hygiene, cough etiquette, healthy eating, and regular physical activity.
- Please ensure your child maintains good personal hygiene, including clean clothes, neat hair, trimmed nails, and regular checks for head lice.
- PreK- G1 students should keep a spare set of clothes in their school bag.
- Please keep the school informed of any changes to your child's health or medical needs.

Children showing symptoms such as fever, runny nose, coughing or sneezing, throat pain, body aches, conjunctivitis, chest pain, or difficulty breathing should remain at home and seek medical advice where appropriate, in line with our "Stay at Home if Unwell" policy.



School Security

AKIS has taken steps to increase security measures to ensure a safe environment for everyone. These measures include:

- All parents are required to wear their ID cards with the yellow lanyard.
- Drills are practiced so that students know the appropriate responses in emergency scenarios, such as a fire. Students practice emergency procedures for building evacuation and relocation to a safer area of the school multiple times throughout the year.
- All school staff are trained in Safeguarding students and reporting any incidents to the appropriate relevant parties immediately.
- Security cameras monitor all parts of the school including the classrooms.





HOME SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

General Communication

At AKIS, communication between parents and the school is a top priority. Throughout the year, parents receive notifications about school events. Homeroom teachers also send out updates via Seesaw or emails. Here are the main official school-home communication ways in the elementary phase:

- **Seesaw** is a platform we use to keep parents informed and share student experiences, learning, and successes. We encourage parents to use Seesaw as an easy and quick way to communicate with their child's teacher.
- **Email** is the preferred method of communication with teachers. You can always reach out to your child's teachers via email. Please allow 24-48 hours for a response, as teachers may be busy teaching in the classroom. For any emergencies, you can always call the school directly.

Note: Please ensure you join the school's official WhatsApp groups to receive important updates, announcements, and reminders. Parent-created WhatsApp groups can be helpful for socializing and building community; however, they are not managed by the school. For any clarification or official information, please refer to the school's official communication channels.

Weekly Home Learning

- Weekly home learning is posted on Seesaw every Friday. Elementary school's home learning policy emphasizes fostering a love for reading, encouraging students to spend at least 20 minutes each evening engaged in independent or shared reading. Students are asked to log their reading time, which helps them track progress and provides teachers with a valuable tool to assess reading habits and offer necessary support. Additionally, home learning includes practicing numeracy skills to reinforce concepts covered in class and improve number fluency and recall. This approach enables students to develop strong literacy skills, a lifelong love for reading, and solid foundational numeracy skills while still allowing ample time for other activities and family engagement.

Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences

- Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences are held across the academic year. The first conference is designed for teachers and parents to share information that will ensure their child has a successful year. At the last conference, a Student Led Conference is organized to provide students with the opportunity to present their work and set goals with their parents. Also, all teachers are available to meet with parents throughout the year, given prior scheduled appointments; at the request of the teacher or parents.

Coffee Morning/Parent Engagement

- Parents are invited throughout the academic year to attend various school sessions and events designed to keep them well-informed about different aspects of their child's education. These engagements cover a wide range of topics, including the curriculum session, pastoral care, and student well-being. By attending these meetings, parents gain valuable insights into the academic programs, the support systems in place for their children, and the strategies employed to ensure student overall development. These sessions also provide an opportunity for parents to ask questions, share concerns, and engage with the school community, fostering a collaborative environment.

Parent Support at Home and School

- Parents play a crucial role in supporting their children both at home and in school.
- **At home**, parents can create a conducive learning environment by establishing routines, providing a quiet study space, and encouraging good study habits. They have to check the Newsletter weekly, and assist their children with homework, engage in discussions about school activities, and foster a love for learning by providing access to books and educational resources.
- **In school**, parents can support their children by maintaining open communication with teachers and school staff. Attending parent-teacher conferences, school events, and coffee mornings helps parents stay informed about their child's progress and the school's expectations. Volunteering for school activities and participating in parent committees also strengthens the school community and shows children that their education is a priority.
- By being actively involved both at home and in school, parents can significantly contribute to their child's academic success and overall well-being.

Appointments with School Leadership Team

- While AKIS believes in an open-door policy and parents are always welcome on campus, we strongly encourage you to schedule appointments through the phase secretary to avoid waiting time and ensure a team member is available to discuss a specific issue. If the issue concerns a particular staff member, parents should make an appointment to address their concerns directly with that person via email, phone, or a message left with the phase secretary or receptionist. If concerns persist after meeting with the staff member, then reach out to a leadership team member for support.

Life at Home Updates

- It is important that the school is kept informed of any significant changes happening at home. This is to ensure we can provide the best possible support for your child. Events such as a death in the family, separation of parents, or the arrival of a new sibling can have a considerable emotional impact on students. By being aware of these changes, we can better understand and support your child through any adjustments they may need to make. Please feel free to share any such updates with the phase counselor and/or SLT member knowing that this information will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and sensitivity. Our goal is to create a nurturing and supportive environment for your child, and your cooperation in keeping the school informed is invaluable.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

AKIS has established a Parents' Teachers Association (PTA) to welcome and encourage the active participation of AKIS parents into the school community. The responsibility of the PTA include:

- **Facilitating Communication:** Acting as a bridge between parents and teachers to ensure effective communication on school matters, events, and initiatives.
- **Supporting School Activities:** Organizing and assisting with school events, fundraisers, and activities that enrich the educational experience of students.
- **Volunteer Coordination:** Recruiting and coordinating volunteers for various school activities and events.
- **Parent Education:** Providing opportunities for parents' education and involvement in their child's education and school life.
- **Community Building:** Promoting a sense of community among parents, teachers, and students through social events and programs.

By fulfilling these responsibilities, the PTA contributes significantly to the school's success and positive environment, fostering a strong partnership between home and school for all students' benefit. At the beginning of each academic year, details on how to join PTA are sent by the school.

GEMS AKIS Accreditations

