

Lower School Parents' Handbook
 2024-2025

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Introduction

Ahliah School believes that all children have the right to learn in a caring nurturing environment and to be treated with respect and dignity.

The purpose of this Handbook is to familiarize you with the expected responsibilities and procedures and set guidelines that will provide for the efficient operation of the school.

Mission Statement

Ahliah School develops young minds to their best abilities while nurturing self-confidence, respect, compassion, creativity, joy for learning, and working collaboratively within a diverse environment. Ahliah graduates are primed to take responsibility for their future and to be active citizens engaged in local, regional, and global issues.

Ahliah Code of Ethics

Integrity
Respect for self and others
Diversity
Collaboration
Excellence
Growth mindset

Quality Education at Ahliah

Ahliah School is committed to providing quality education through,

- providing a clearly documented curriculum, learning experiences, and teaching approaches that promote the acquisition of knowledge, critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, decision-making, working collaboratively, and the appreciation of arts
- nurturing responsibility, respect, compassion, and collaboration
- nurturing citizenship and engagement in local, regional, and global issues
- promoting student-centered teaching to develop students' full potential cognitively, emotionally, socially, physically, and aesthetically
- providing a healthy, safe, protective, and supportive learning environment
- promoting the continuous learning of the whole school community through effective and productive collaboration
- conducting results-driven assessment and evaluation that identifies students' needs
- strengthening home-school relationships to ensure parental and community involvement in school
- Leveraging the use of technology by the school community and in accordance with the International Society for Technology in Education standards.

Global Citizenship at Ahliah

Ahliah is committed to developing Global Citizenship and open-minded individuals by providing opportunities for:

- appreciating diversity and multiple perspectives
- communicating in more than one language
- fostering citizenship and engagement in local, regional, and global issues
- nurturing the values of respect, compassion, responsibility, collaboration and conflict resolution
- understanding and advocating human rights, social justice, and equity
- recognizing and appreciating different cultures including beliefs, values, languages, heritage, environment, economic, social, and political systems
- developing the ability to engage productively with all others in a diverse world
- recognizing and practicing the rights, responsibilities, and ethical behaviors of living, learning, and working in an interconnected digital world

Website (www.ahliahschool.edu.lb) / eSchool website /Social Media (Ahliah School)/

- Parents will be provided with accounts during the first month of the academic year for the online Academic Dashboard “eSchool. In addition to that, you are kindly asked to download eSchool mobile applications for easier usage and communication with the school (an email or SMS will be sent later to provide you with the names of the apps).
- Parents can also visit social media pages to stay up-to-date with all school events and activities

Ahliah Lower School

Ahliah Lower School provides each child with the opportunity to create, socialize, explore, enjoy learning, and prepare for a lifetime of learning and discovery. Students learn in a safe environment to develop cognitive, social, and emotional skills.

Lower School Division includes 2 cycles consisting of six academic years from grade 1 to grade 6; that is 6 to 11 years old).

Teaching and learning **The Curriculum**

Ahliah's Lower school curriculum ensures the following guidelines:

- Align Ahliah's curriculum with Ahliah Standards which are mostly adopted from Common Core International Standards

- Include language arts (English, Arabic, and French), math (including coding), science, social studies, music, art, drama, physical education (including swimming for grade 3 and cycle 2), and Social-emotional learning (including Character Education).
- Use classical Arabic in Arabic teaching
- Use the English language for instruction in English, Math, Science, Social studies, Art, Music, Drama and Physical Education
- Provide opportunities for active learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving
- Ensure opportunities for the appreciation of fine arts
- Design the scope and sequence in all subject areas to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment, continuity, and appropriate distribution
- Cater to the individual needs of students through the implementation of Co-Teaching approach and social-emotional learning
- Engage students in different hands-on learning and learning through action activities to link knowledge to their personal experiences or daily life interactions
- Include group interaction in cooperative and differentiated learning, group investigation, and discussions with open-ended questions
- Promote project-based learning, problem-based learning, and guided inquiry.

Co-Teaching approach

A co-teaching approach at the lower school level entails having two equally responsible teachers for all duties and responsibilities. Two teachers are available in class during the main Subjects Math, English, and Arabic. These teachers will be:

- Providing students with individual feedback, prompting, or assistance.
- Catering to diverse learning needs (differentiation)
- Supporting a more student-centered approach.
- Facilitating earlier instructional intervention.

Both teachers tend to students' needs and ensure that they are acquiring the skills. Sometimes the class is divided into two groups and each teacher leads the group in-class activities to ensure the acquisition of skills. This, will reduce the ratio of teacher to students and allow more engagement and participation of all students. Students who require further support and explanation at a slower pace may sometimes be in a differentiated group with one of the teachers in class to tend to their needs.

Social Emotional Learning

The social-emotional learning program includes three domains, self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness. The skills of these domains will be learned through in-class activities integrated within subjects or through target activities implemented by the school counselor.

- Self-Awareness (Integrating personal & social identities)
- Self-Management (Identifying & Managing emotions)
- Social Awareness (Demonstrate empathy and compassion and showing concern for the feelings of others)

Assessment

- Students' ongoing assessment is based on observation and monitoring of their multiple developing skills, and outcomes such as class journals, class participation, hands-on activities, open discussions, worksheets, projects, environment-based learning, etc.
- Rubrics, checklists, anecdotal records, remarks, and report cards are tools used to document students' performance.
- Differentiated assignments and assessments are given based on students' readiness, ability, and acquired skills. Thus, the grade is reflective of the student's ability and not necessarily his/her grade level.
- Students in lower school division do not go through term exams.

Homework

- Students should normally complete their daily homework without help.
- Daily homework includes written assignments, studying and/ or reviewing material, projects, presentations, experiments, etc...
- Homework is differentiated based on the student's readiness, ability, and acquired skills.
- An average student in grades 1, 2, and 3 needs about 30 minutes to 1 hour to finish his/her daily homework.
- An average student in grades 4, 5, and 6 needs about 1-2 hours to finish his/her homework.
- Parents are asked to check the school agenda daily and monitor their child's performance. Grades 1 & 2 agenda is posted in clasdojo, while grades 3-6 are posted in Google Classrooms as a to-do list or found under classwork tab.

Academic Support/ Remedial Programs

- The school recommends academic support and remedial programs when appropriate.
- Parents will be notified of any support or remedial programs their child might be in need of.
- Academic support may include the intervention of a special educator, speech therapist or psychomotor therapist or all three services.

Promotion

- Students should accumulate a passing general average (12/20) in order to be promoted.
- Students need to have a passing general average above 12 and a passing general average (above 12) in all main subjects (English, Arabic, Math and Science).
- Students should attend a minimum of 90% of school days.

Honors/ Awards

- High achievers in all classes will have the privilege of being included in the school's honors list.
- An average of 17 entitles the student to be on the honors list and an average of 18 entitles them to be on the distinction list.
- High achievers will be given awards of achievement by the end of each academic year.
- Students who have shown academic progress will also be awarded by the end of each academic year.
- Students who show an outstanding performance in skills would be recognized by an award.

Follow-up

- Teachers and academic and behavioural administrators will constantly follow up on students' academic and behavioural performance and put intervention plan when necessary.
- Teachers and academic and behavioural administrators might call for a parent conference if a student's academic and/or behavioural performance is not up to expectation.

Parent Meetings

- Meetings with teachers are very important and beneficial to the student, parent, and teacher.
- Our teachers are readily available to communicate regularly with parents.
- Meetings with teachers are scheduled on a weekly basis.
- Parents who want to meet with their child's teacher are kindly asked to notify the school in writing, by email or by calling the Lower school HoD ahead of time. The teacher will send back a written message through eschool to set the time for a meeting.
- Information concerning family matters and personal lives remain strictly confidential.

Parent/Teacher Conference (PTC)

- Parent/ teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year.
- Parents are notified ahead of time and are requested to attend the meetings.

Tutoring

- Ahliah School does not encourage private tutoring. It is preferable that students' work independently and enhance their study skills
- Teachers at Ahliah School are not allowed to give private tutoring for Ahliah students.
- It is the parents' responsibility to find the suitable tutor for their child at home when needed.
- Tutors are asked to communicate with parents and teachers at school for students' assistance

Extra-curricular Program

- Students may choose to enroll in any of the school clubs / athletic teams.
- Extra-curricular activities may be scheduled outside the regular school hours.
- The scope and variety of the extracurricular activities may vary from year to year
- Extra fee is required for the after-school extra-curricular program.

Dress Code

- Children should come to school wearing the school **uniform** (The school shirt, dark blue pants or jeans should be adjustable and comfortable preferably without shoelaces
- On days when students have PE classes, students are required to wear the school's PE uniform (**T-shirt, shorts, jacket, pants**) and a pair of tennis shoes.
- Dresses, skirts, sandals, jewelry, accessories, nail polish, colored pants and high heel shoes are not allowed.
- Girls should have their hair tied. Also, boys with long hair should have their hair tied.
- A violation of the dress code will require the parents to supply the student with the appropriate uniform. Students might not be allowed to attend their class until their parents supply them with the uniform.

School Hours/ Attendance

- Parents are kindly asked to bring their children between 7:30 am and 7:50 am. **School gates will be closed sharply at 8:00 am.**
- On Mondays, students are expected to be present at school before 7:45 for the weekly assembly
- There is **no** supervision for children who arrive **earlier than 7:20 am.**
- Parents are responsible to bring their children to school on time; our doors **close sharply at 8:00 am.** Children arriving after 8:00 am may disrupt the class routine and may feel uncomfortable about arriving after everyone else has become involved in play and learning activities.

- Class hours are from 8:00 am to 2:30 pm on all days except on Wednesdays; class hours on that day end at 1:30 pm.
- It is important for parents to pick up their children on time otherwise; they are requested to contact the school on the following numbers 01-372579/ 01-372960.
- Full Attendance of all classes is imperative.
- Students should attend a minimum of 90 % of school days.

Tardiness/ Absences

- Your child is expected to be in class at maximum 7:55 am;
- Parents are asked to contact the Lower school administration if their child cannot attend school.
- When a child returns after a short absence, supply him/her with a note stating the reason for the absence.
- After absence due to illness, parents should send a medical report to the Lower school administration. The school nurse shall follow up on the medical case accordingly.
- Students that leave the school early to attend to a doctor's appointment need to submit a **medical report** to the Lower school administration when they come back the next day.

Persons Authorized For Picking up Children

- Parents must provide the school with the names of the persons authorized to pick up their children by filling a form that will be sent at the beginning of the year. They also need to provide a copy of the ID with a passport photo.
- It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school ahead of time of any changes.
- If parents request from the school to release the child with a person who was not previously identified the school shall request a copy of his/ her ID before releasing the child.

Transportation

- Ahliyah School does not provide bus services. Parents need to notify the school of the way their child leaves the school: by car (parent/driver)-private bus or walking
- Ahliyah school hands in the children enrolled in a private bus to the driver and his assistant
- Children who are not enrolled in the private bus are not allowed to ride the bus with their friends for any reason
- Parents should send a note to the HoD indicating their permission if a child is not going to use the private bus on a particular day.

Visitors

- Parents are expected not to disrupt students and teachers during their class time except when they are invited to volunteer in pre-planned activities.

School Events

- During the academic year, the school will celebrate different events. We will notify you of the events as the school year progresses.

Field Trips

- Ahliyah School organizes educational field trips throughout the year to relate learning to real life experiences.
- At the beginning of the year, parents are asked to sign a permission form for field trips.
- Each trip will be announced a couple of days ahead of the actual date.

Birthdays

- Grades 1, 2 and 3 students celebrate their birthday at school during a school organized event which gives the students equal opportunity of celebrating their birthdays at school.
- Parents do not attend this event.

Money/ Games/ Valuables

- Children **may not bring toys and games** unless they are asked to.
- Children may not bring **any valuable item** to school; therefore parents are asked to check their bags before coming to school.
- The school will not compensate for a valuable item that is lost or damaged at school.
- Parents are requested not to send money with their children in Lower school Division.
- Long earrings, bracelets, and necklaces are not allowed in school. Such items may prove to be dangerous while children are playing.

Lost and Found

- Children, with the support of their parents, should be encouraged to be responsible for their belongings.
- Labeling your child's items with their initials (please don't label full names for your child's personal safety reasons) could facilitate returning any lost item. Lost and found items are placed in the Lower school Division.

- At the end of the year, all lost and found items that are not picked up are given to a charity organization.

Library and Media

- All students visit the library on a weekly basis.
- All students are encouraged and entitled to use the library and to borrow books.
- Books may be borrowed for a period of time.
- A certain fine per school day is charged for each book returned late.
- Damage to books beyond reasonable wear or computers and all lost books shall be paid for by the student.
- No materials may be taken from the library unless they have been checked out.
- Food and drink are not permitted in the library.
- A student who has been asked to leave the library more than two times for disruptive activity might lose the privilege of using it for a period of time.
- Students using the Library or computers are to abide by the Computer Usage Policy:
- Web browsing on school computers is intended for school related work only. All non-school related browsing is discouraged. Any inappropriate and/or objectionable content will not be tolerated.
- The school's network is protected by the Firewall protection system that filters inappropriate and black listed websites. However, access to inappropriate websites using 3G connections, is strictly forbidden and will lead to strict disciplinary action.
- Respect and consideration for others using the library are necessary at all times.

Discipline/ Code of Conduct

- The discipline and code of conduct at Ahliyah stem from the belief that teachers are the sole and utmost authority in their classes and all disciplinary actions are carried out upon their initiation and consent.
- To promote self-discipline, teachers reward good conduct, deeds and active participation with positive points on the behavior chart or ClassDojo. Students collect points and redeem tickets with privileges
- School rules apply while on school premises, buses or any other school property, during school activities at or away from school.
- A violation of any rule may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to:
 - Parents will be notified of any measure taken and a parent conference may be called for.
 - A call will be conducted to notify parents of the infraction or a message may be sent to parents on eschool.
- The reoccurrence of violations or infraction might lead to any of the following measures:
 - Assigned work related to the infraction
 - In-School detention
 - Lunch time detention
 - After school detention

- Loss of PE session
- Out-of-School Suspension
- Compensatory payment of damages
- Loss of privileges
- Any of the disciplinary actions stated above might be applied during, but not limited to any of the following:
 - Disruption of the normal operation of the school
 - Harassment: whether of racial, ethnic or religious nature that are deemed offensive.
 - Threats: Students shall not make statements that contain physical or emotional threats to another.
 - Use of profanity or obscene Language / Materials / Actions / Gestures
 - Damage of Property: Students shall not cause or attempt to cause damage of school property.
 - Assault: Students shall not act or threaten to act in such a way as to cause physical injury to other students, any school employee or other persons
 - Failure to abide by instructions or show disrespect
 - Possession of Dangerous Instruments
 - Theft: Students shall respect the personal ownership rights of others. Students shall not take ownership of items of others.
 - Computers usage: (See Computer Usage Policy in Media Center section)
 - Violation of Bus Rules: Students must follow all Bus Rules
 - General Misconduct: Students shall refrain from throwing objects, or being abusive or excessively disruptive in their behavior. Respect the rights, feeling and safety of others.

Grievance Policy and procedure

Students and parents have the right to raise a grievance in the following cases:

- Improper implementation of a regulation or a procedure
- Unfair behavior or procedure used in arriving at a disciplinary action.
- Students and parents have the right to follow the informal and formal procedures of the grievance policy.

Procedure:

- Student(s) or parent(s) will ask for a meeting with the head of division to follow the informal procedures of the grievance policy.
- Student(s) or parent(s) may directly go for the formal step and submit the grievance in writing to the school principal in case the complaint is against the head of the division in which the student is enrolled.
- In the case when the complaint is with respect to a school employee, the student or parent filing the complaint should be aware that the employee will be given an

opportunity to respond, in person and/or in writing, to the complaint. He/she might be present during any conference between the Head of division, principal, or board with the student(s) or parent(s). The student(s) or parent(s) has/ve the responsibility to provide evidence for a concern for the lack of the implementation of a procedure or regulation.

Bullying

- Bullying is not tolerated at Ahliyah School. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive, **repetitive** behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance among peers. This means that the bully uses his/ her power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, popularity or authority—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. Bullying might happen between:
 - Student-student
 - Students - a group of students
 - Group of students- one student
- Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things. Verbal bullying includes:
 - Teasing
 - Name-calling
 - Inappropriate comments
 - Threatening to cause harm
- Social bullying or relational bullying, it involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. It might occur on social media platforms. Social bullying includes:
 - Leaving someone out on purpose
 - Telling others not to be friends with someone
 - Spreading rumors about someone
 - Embarrassing someone in public
- Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes:
 - Hitting/kicking/pinching
 - Spitting
 - Tripping/pushing
 - Taking or breaking someone's things
 - Making mean or rude hand gestures

Health and Safety

A- Child protection policy

- Ahliah community shall adhere to Ahliah School Child protection policy
<https://www.ahliahschool.edu.lb/child-protection-policy/>

B- Healthy Eating Habits

Children who are healthy and well-nourished have enough energy to take them through a full day of school activities.

- Parents should make sure that their children have adequate time to eat proper breakfast every day before coming to school.
- Please be informed that the school offers optional hot meals for lunch to children. Thus, parents who are interested may refer to the Admission Office and subscribe to this Food Service. Parents may fill a prepaid card from the Admission office and preorder the meal on the previous day before 12:00 noon.
- Parents who are not interested in subscribing in the food service are kindly asked to send healthy and nutritional food that is properly wrapped, for example sandwiches, fruits (apples, pears, bananas) and vegetables (cucumbers, lettuce, carrots, broccoli,...) stored in bags or labeled lunch boxes...
- Parents may also send fresh juice and milk in a box container; **glass** containers are **prohibited**.
- Furthermore, other food including candy, chips, gum, lollipops, soft drinks, or other types of junk food should be left at home. If brought to school, these foods will be confiscated.

C- Water

- The school provides drinking water in the playground. The water is treated and regularly tested.
- Parents may send a bottle with their child for refilling.
- Parents are requested to send a bottle of water or even two (when the weather is hot) with their child.
- The bottle should be clearly marked with the child's initials.
- The bottle must be washed and freshly filled with water every day.

D- Items Needed

- Parents are requested to laminate all the books with clear names on cover
- Parents should check the children's bag and the school's e-agenda daily for agenda, and memos.
- Parents are requested to **refrain** from sending **wheeled bags**, these are not allowed for the child's safety.

- Parents are required to ask for the list of items needed per grade level from the HOD

E- Health Information at Admission

- Parents are requested to fill in the medical report form, provided at the beginning of the year, and submitted by the first month of the year.
- This must include current immunizations and health care summary.
- Information remains strictly confidential.

F- Medication Policy

- Staff members are not allowed to give medication to the children.
- However, if children are on medication, parents are asked to notify the Head of division, as a child's behavior can be affected by it.
- Medication will be administered to a child only upon the written request of the parent and attached to a medical prescription.
- The medication must be in its original packaging with the child's name and directions for use clearly marked on it. The following procedure is used:
- Parents bring medication early in the morning and give it only to the school nurse.
- Any medication that is kept at the infirmary during the week will be sent home on Friday. The nurse shall return the medication directly to the parents or to the bus assistant
- Parents are kindly asked **not to** give Panadol or other antipyretic early in the morning before sending the students to school.

G- Procedures in Case of Accidents

- In case of student injury in class or on the playground, the following procedures will be followed:
 - The teacher in class or on duty informs the administration/nurse about the case and goes back to her/his duty.
 - A report is sent home to the parents on the same day describing what happened, where the accident took place, and the procedures followed by the nurse.
- In incidents of an emergency that is beyond the capacity and facilities of the infirmary, the nurse will contact the parents for their approval before transferring the student to the hospital

H- Insurance:

The school has an insurance policy that covers accidents within school campus and field trips. The school insurance does not cover preexisting health diseases. But if

the nurse judges necessary for the student's safety to be transferred to the hospital, she will accompany him/her after informing the parents.

I- Illness Policy:

The Below symptoms may suggest the presence of a communicable disease:

- Fever: a temperature of 37.5 degrees or higher that occurred at least within the previous 24 hours.
 - Respiratory Symptoms: difficulty in breathing, severe coughing, croup with high-pitched whistling cough, with or without fever.
 - Diarrhea: It is the result of an increased number of abnormally loose stools within the previous 24 hours. The student shall be observed for other symptoms such as fever, abdominal pain, or vomiting.
 - Vomiting: eye/nose drainage, thick mucus or pus draining from the eye or nose.
 - Sore throat.
 - Skin Problems: skin rashes, undiagnosed or contagious.
 - Persistent itching of body or scalp.
 - Any change in the child's appearance/behavior: child looks or acts differently: unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, confused, irritable, and difficult to awaken.
 - Swollen neck gland.
-
- In case the child shows symptoms of a communicable disease, parents are asked to notify the school within 24 hours .The child can join the school once the family physician provide a written report stating that the child has recovered.
 - Children, who have the symptoms of communicable diseases, should be given time outside the classroom
 - Parents are requested to provide the school with a medical report clarifying that the case is nor more communicable.
 - If the student should become ill or is injured during school, s/he should ask for a pass to the infirmary.
 - The school must obtain parental permission in order for a student to be released from school due to illness.