



Dear Early Years Families,

It is my pleasure to welcome everyone back for another great year in Al Maaref Private School. We are all excited to have students back in our classrooms and hallways filling them with energy and enthusiasm for learning. It is our mission to help every child feel welcomed, connected, and a part of our Al Maaref Private School family. Additionally, we strive to challenge each student to grow in his or her academic abilities and to be college-ready by the end of school years. At Al Maaref Private School, we have great teachers who spend hours planning and creating classroom activities to engage our students in learning. Our teachers utilize research-based best practices and analyze academic data to determine current skill levels and to set goals for growth and improvement. We believe that all students should graduate from high school prepared for the demands of postsecondary education, meaningful careers, and effective citizenship.

As you look through these pages we hope that you will find the information needed to answer any questions you may have regarding our programs and procedures. Most of all we hope it gives you a glimpse into our engaging and warm Early Childhood world. Thank you for taking the time to review this handbook and for being familiar with how our Early Childhood works to create a rich and engaging learning experience for your child.

AMPS Guiding Statement:

Vision:

At AMPS, we Inspire innovation, cultivate lifelong learning skills, and nurture diversity.

Mission:

Our mission is to provide a caring, respectful, and diverse environment that encourages learners to take risks, be autonomous, and be creative. AMPS will strive to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be lifelong learners who are proud of their cultural identity.

Values:

Respect-Cooperation-Responsibility-Tolerance

Definition of High-Quality Learning Environment (HQLE):

At AMPS, a High-Quality learning environment is where:

The environment is conducive to learning, the students are active, self-directed, and collaborative learners, the teachers are effective facilitators, and the instructional leaders are supportive mentors.

CODE OF CONDUCT

We strive to embody in thought, word, and deed, courage, inquiry, kindness, and respect. This means that we believe that every member of our learning community has to right to:

- Participate in meaningful, dynamic, and relevant learning opportunities.
- Learn in a positive and safe environment, free of physical, emotional, psychological, and verbal harassment or bullying.
- Mutual trust and respect from all community members.
- Responsive, positive guidance aimed to help each of us learn and grow.

THE SCHOOL DAY

7:15 am - 1:45 pm Monday - Wednesday

7:15am - 1:20 pm Thursday

7:15 am - 11:00 am Friday

Supervision Before and After School Morning:

- Parents need to drop off and pick up their Pre-KG, KG1 and KG2 children to and from Gate 4 and supervisors will escort them to their respective classes
- Close supervision is the responsibility of the parent once a child is picked up at the end of the day. Please note that we do not have any adult supervision for students after 2:15

pm and for safety reasons students are not allowed on the playground or soccer pitch without adult supervision.

Car students are dismissed from their homeroom classes as follows:

-Pick up: at 1:50 pm Monday - Wednesday

1:30 pm Thursday

10:50 am Friday from Gate 4

-Bus riders: are walked to the buses by an AMPS staff member.

-Car riders: Students are dismissed to parents, authorized adults, or middle/high school siblings who are listed on the permission form. Please be prompt in picking up your child as homeroom teachers have professional duties and responsibilities right after school. Children not collected on time will be escorted to the reception area.

The Assistant Head for Early years or leadership team member will then phone parents and supervise children until collected. When the child is collected the parent/caretaker must sign and note the time of collection. Continued late pick up will result in a meeting with the Assistant Head for Early years and Head of School.

Early Dismissal Day Procedure

-On Friday when the students are dismissed at 11:00 am, bus transportation will leave the school at 11:15 am. Parents will be responsible for picking up non-bus riding students from Gate 4, parents will be notified well in advance of any other early dismissals and can also check the school calendar for these dates.

-Change to Regular Pick-Up Routines

-Please communicate with the homeroom teacher or Assistant Head for Early years manal.ajami@almaaref.ae in writing (note or email) if your child is going home in a way different from their routine. This includes external activities off campus and birthday parties. Without written permission we cannot send a child with a friend or another parent. If any change in plans occurs during the school day, please inform the homeroom teacher or Assistant Head for Early years manal.ajami@almaaref.ae in writing or in the case of bus-riders, the STS desk before 12:00 pm.

Leaving Campus Early

We ask that appointments be made outside the school day whenever possible to help students stay in the routine of learning and not miss any instructional time or community events. If a student needs to leave before scheduled dismissal times, please notify the Early years office via email manal.ajami@almaaref.ae and the homeroom teacher. Children

will be escorted to the reception when you arrive to pick them up after signing the leave early permission.

School Supplies

- Basic school supplies such as pencils, books, crayons, and markers are provided by the school. If specialized supplies are needed, your child's homeroom teacher will inform you.
- We do encourage students to explore their creativity and while we make every effort to source only washable paints and materials, and provide painter smocks, we request that your child bring in an oversized shirt or smock to use during messy projects.

Dress Code

- Students need to wear the AMPS uniform as required by KHDA. The purpose of this is to establish an environment that is comfortable for students while conducive to learning and respectful of our host culture.
- Alternative dress is acceptable on designated Spirit Days and special occasions such as national celebrations. Details will be announced as they occur throughout the year.
- Please ensure that all your child's clothes are clearly labeled with his/her name.
- If your child comes to school out of uniform, we will notify you to bring him/her a uniform for the day.
- Only stud earrings allowed for girls. For safety and Security, other jewelry is discouraged.

Water bottles

- Please send your child with a labeled water bottle each day. We encourage students to refill their bottles at school and avoid using plastic bottles or paper cups as far as possible.

Snack and Lunch

- All students have a mid-morning snack and lunch. We encourage all children to bring healthy snacks to school like fruit or yogurt as opposed to snacks/ treats like cookies or cake. If students are bringing a packed lunch from home, we encourage a balanced meal so that they have the energy to get through the day.

Recess

-Students have scheduled recess times. Each division has a dedicated, shaded playground area with appropriate outdoor educational equipment. Depending on scheduled use by PE classes, the playground and/or multipurpose room (auditorium) may be available for play during recess times. All students are expected to play safely and fairly, and to be respectful of each other and of the equipment. During hot weather, hats are encouraged during outdoor play. Please apply sunscreen at home. We will have indoor recess on days when the temperature is 37 degrees or above.

Physical Education

-It is essential that students bring a full water bottle and hat (when outside) to each PE class.

-On the rare occasions that students need to be excused from a PE, please write a note or email to your child's PE teacher. If your child misses more than one PE or swimming lesson in a row, please provide a doctor's note. Unexcused absences from PE and swimming will impact PE grades.

Kindergarten Program KG1 and KG2)

-The kindergarten program is comprised of classes for children aged from four to six years old. We believe that the Kindergarten years are the foundation for children's future well-being and learning. This time has to be nurtured through high-quality experiences that enhance children's social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development. We maintain that at this age, children learn best when these concepts are couched in developmentally appropriate, concrete, play-based experiences that connect with the life experiences of our students.

Hence teachers are intentional in how they prepare the learning spaces and create a safe and nurturing environment for the young learner. They facilitate active, play-based, and interdisciplinary experiences. Opportunities are provided to encourage your child's development while meeting the unique needs of every learner. Through careful observation, documentation and planning, teachers nurture and foster children's growth in early literacy, early numeracy, language, social/emotional, and physical development.

Kindergarten 1 (KG1)

The KG1 program for students ages four to five incorporates aspects of play-based learning whilst also introducing students to more academic concepts such as Literacy (reading and writing), Mathematics,

Science, and Social Studies. Through inquiry and reflective play, children form theories and ideas about life and the world around them. The inquiry units undertaken allow for

hands-on exploration in Science, Social Studies, and the arts while also developing children's language, early literacy, early numeracy, gross and fine motor, problem solving, and social skills. The curriculum also offers children opportunities to apply their acquired skills in meaningful ways and real-life contexts. Sustaining positive and collaborative relationships are hallmarks of social-emotional development in Kindergarten. Children learn to identify and communicate their feelings, engage in problem solving, share materials, and play alongside or cooperatively with their peers.

Kindergarten 2 (KG2)

The KG2 program starts to bring additional structure into the learning experiences of our young learners who are five to six years of age. In addition to a longer academic day, the KG2 program starts to introduce formal lessons in the core subjects of Reading, Writing, Mathematics and Science. Literacy development in Kindergarten includes phonological awareness, emergent reading skills, and concepts of print. Kindergartners begin exploring different units of study encompassing narrative, informational, and opinion text in literacy. Kindergartners extend their mathematical thinking on a variety of concepts including number sense, geometry, and data analysis. Studies in Kindergarten integrate technology, Art, Music, Arabic, and Physical Education.

Specialist Subjects

Early years students receive a rich curriculum including specialist classes such as Visual Art, Music, Physical Education, Arabic Studies, Islamic Studies (for Muslim students) and Library Media. Specialized teachers provide instruction during these periods.

Visual Art

The Visual Arts program aims to create a learning atmosphere where students can enhance creativity, expand critical thinking skills, problem-solve, communicate ideas through a multitude of media, and reflect on their work. The goal of our visual art's program is to support a child's creative expression and imagination while engaging in learning about the principles of art.

Music

Our Music program exposes students to singing, playing instruments, movement, composing, improvising, and reading music. Students develop confidence and see themselves as musicians as they are exposed to and explore different aspects of music.

Physical Education (PE)

Physical Education equips students with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to encourage lifelong healthy habits, and establish a positive relationship towards physical activity and well-being. While we place emphasis on the physical, we recognize the importance of developing the mental, emotional and social attributes of each child through developmentally-appropriate, structured activities. Instruction includes developing basic motor skills and movement patterns, as well as expanding and deepening their knowledge of movement concepts, principles, and strategies. We support the individual needs of each child while challenging them to achieve their personal best.

All students are expected to participate in all units of Physical Education. If a student is well enough to be present at school, then they are considered well enough to participate in PE classes. However, if a student is unable to participate in Physical Education class for more than one class period, a note from a parent or doctor needs to be given to the Physical Education teacher.

Digital Learning and Technology Integration

We use technology to enrich teaching and learning so that all our students are equipped with the skills they need to navigate the rapidly changing digital landscape. Homeroom teachers integrate the use of digital tools in meaningful and relevant ways to personalize and enhance the learning experience of our students. Devices are used for learning purposes only and early years students have device free recess and mealtimes.

Student Headphones

Kg1 and 2 students need to bring in a set of headphones.

Headphone criteria:

1. Cost less than 100 dhs
2. Cover the whole ear (no earbuds)
3. Compatible with iPad headphone jack



Attendance Requirements

Attendance in school and punctuality are essential for successful attainment. The odd day off here and there soon mounts up, as does arriving late at school. Research has shown that there is a significant association between absence and attainment, and that there is also evidence that there may be critical thresholds of absence (31 or more half-day sessions) linked to significantly lower performance outcomes. The Ministry of Education for the UAE takes these findings very seriously and states that "if a student is absent from school for 20 consecutive days or 25 nonconsecutive days", the School can remove the child's right to a place at school.

KHDA guidelines for attendance are as follows:

98% of school days present

96% of school days present

92% of school days present

Less than 92% of school days present

Excellent Good Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

Therefore, please ensure that your child is at school every day of the school year except for illness or other unavoidable reasons. We request that parents plan holidays and trips during the scheduled vacation times as determined by the official school calendar.

Parents need to inform the homeroom teacher or the Assistant Head for Early years by 7:00 am if your child will be absent. After 48 hours absence a sick note is required from the doctor. Absences of more than 48 hours without the support of a sick note will be marked as unauthorized.

The following key is used while taking attendance:

Excused Absences

Illness

Medical/Doctor's Appointment Family Emergencies Immigration Appointment Assessment

Unexcused Absence

Travel

Extended Holiday

Family Visiting

No notification from parents

We analyze attendance records on a monthly basis and action accordingly:

- If a child's attendance is 91% or lower, an email is sent by the homeroom teacher to the parent to inform them of their child's poor attendance and the Ministry guidelines.
- If a child's attendance continues to be below 91% in subsequent months, an email is sent by the homeroom teacher to request a meeting with the parent to discuss attendance.
- On the third occasion, the principal will schedule a meeting with the parent and inform the Head of School.
- If after this a parent is unable (without good reason) to ensure the timely and/or regular attendance of their child to the extent that the child's learning is affected, then the Assistant Head for Early years and Head of School will meet with the parent. All meetings and communications will be documented and filed under the student's records.

Active Parenting

The kindergarten school years are a critical time for students to develop their courage, responsibility, and character. The home environment is where parents teach and encourage family values and routines. An effective foundation built in elementary school can serve to guide and protect students when they reach middle school age - a time of increasing autonomy and expanding choices for a variety of behaviours. We know that parenting well during these stages is important. Below are some guidelines for consideration as parents build this important foundation in the elementary years.

Birthday Celebrations

It is important for our students to be acknowledged on their special day and be given an opportunity to share something special with his/her class classmates. For the wellbeing of all students, we do not encourage sweets or food items to be brought to school or to be sent home with students on birthdays. In place of snacks, students may donate an item to the class to be enjoyed by others (i.e., a game, a deck of cards, favorite books, special

pencils, etc.). Student nutrition and positive academic/social success are very closely linked. Thank you for your support and understanding of this policy as we continue to reinforce healthy life choices. Birthday invitations will only be distributed if all children in the class will receive them. Students may not have gifts or goodie bags delivered to campus.

Field Trips

Field trips/Enrichment opportunities are activities that are designed to extend the student learning experience. We strive to organize two - four such activities during the school year to provide students with hands-on learning opportunities and to help students observe real-life application of their classroom learning. Students are expected to give the teacher in charge and all chaperones full cooperation. All school rules apply. A signed permission slip is required to attend the field trip.

Teachers are not permitted to administer medication to students except under special circumstances i.e., field trips, emergencies.

Our school doctor and nurse also conduct health checks during the school year. These exams include a basic head to toe assessment, height and weight measurements, as well as distance and color vision checks.

The school should be informed immediately of any change in telephone numbers to enable us to contact a parent or guardian in the event of sickness or accident. In the event of both parents being out of the country an alternative contact number must be left with the Health Office and with the Registrar.

Newsletters

Communication between parents and school is a high priority at AMPS. Each grade level provides monthly updates. Parents receive notices throughout the year about school events through school-wide newsletter and weekly updates. More regular communication between your child's teacher and yourself can be done in-person or by telephone before or after the academic day, via email or through the SEE - SAW app.

Nut Policy

To ensure a safe environment for our community we are a "NUT AWARE" school and request that no products with nuts are brought to school. There may be confusion with the

phrases, "Nut Free" and "Nut Aware." It is our understanding and agreement here at AMPS that Nut Free means that the entire campus is free of nuts, nut products, or possible contaminants and nobody brings nuts or nut products to campus. NUT AWARE means that the community has been made aware and asked not to have nuts or nut products on campus.

Toys at School

Students should keep toys, electronic devices, and other similar items at home, except for specific purposes or as pre-arranged. Pre-KG and KG students may bring stuffed animals as transition and safety objects, but teachers may encourage them to keep them in the cubby or back-pack if the items become a distraction. Toys may not be brought onto the playground.

When to Keep Your Child at Home

A sick child cannot learn effectively and is unable to participate in classes in a meaningful way. Keeping a sick child home prevents the spread of illness in the school community and allows your child the opportunity to rest and recover.

-Vomiting and/or diarrhea: A child with either of these problems should stay at home and return to school only after being symptom free for 24 hours.

-keep your child at home for the following reasons:

-A temperature of 37.8c/100f and above: Even if the temperature has been reduced with medication, please keep your child at home until they have been fever-free for 24 hours WITHOUT using medications.

-Conjunctivitis: Following a diagnosis of conjunctivitis (also known as "pink eye"), a child may return to school 24 hours after the first dose of prescribed medicine.

-Rashes: Common infectious diseases with rashes are most contagious in the early stages. A child with a suspicious rash should return to school only after a doctor has made a diagnosis and the school nurse has seen your child before returning to the classroom. Please take your child to see the school nurse before he/she attends class.

-Colds: Consider keeping your child at home if he/she is experiencing discomfort from cold symptoms such as nasal congestion and/or cough. A continuous green discharge from the nose may be a sign of infection.

- Lice: If a case of lice is identified kindly inform the Health Office. Thorough treatment needs to include the use of a medicated lice shampoo and the combing out of nits and adult lice. Students need to check in at the Health Office prior to returning to class.

-Absences due to sickness: If your child is sick and unable to attend school, please inform the receptionist before 7:00 am. She will then pass on the message to the appropriate secretary and teacher.

-Collection of a sick child: Once a member of the health office team has contacted you, please collect your child as soon as possible.

Behavior Policy:

We value having students follow agreed upon expectations and guidelines, and it is important for students to understand their purpose. Part of the learning process involves making decisions and mistakes; however, we do expect that students will learn from their mistakes and demonstrate growth. The AMPS staff uses a *positive discipline* approach that focuses on looking at misbehavior as an opportunity for learning.

Our Discipline Philosophy:

When a child is struggling with behavior, we teach strategies to solve problems.

Expectations and Process

To ensure our school is a safe and respectful learning environment, we will undertake the following with staff and students;

- - Teachers will review the behaviour expectations with their students.
- - Teachers will build positive relationships with students and parents to proactively ensure integrity is demonstrated by all their students.
- - Staff will ensure they reinforce and recognize positive behaviour.
- - Early Years Principal and Assistant Principal will work with teachers in support of behavioural issues.
- - Teachers will ensure follow up by email and/or phone call (when appropriate) with parents regarding inappropriate behaviour.
- - When student safety and/or continuous disruptive misbehavior occurs, the Early Years Principal and assistant Principal will become involved.
- - For behavior that involves safety issues or egregious disrespect, an in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension and/or expulsion (After raising the case to the concerned authority) are consequences that will be applied after the following steps have been taken:
 - 3 verbal warnings (documented).
 - 1 written warning (parents sign and return).
 - Verbal warning by Principal (including, where appropriate, an explanation of the consequences of subsequent misbehaviors)

- Parent-Teacher (including the student where appropriate) conference (documented)
- Suspension from school for 1, 3 or 5 days. (After raising the case to the concerned authority)