



Early Childhood Program KG1 and KG2

STUDENT-FAMILY HANDBOOK 2025-2026

P.O. BOX 42114, ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

PHONE: +971 2 681 5115 EX: 800; FAX NUMBER: +971 2 681 6006

ACS.SCH.AE

ACS Mission and Vision

Our community empowers all students to define and shape their futures for learning, service, and global citizenship. We are a compassionate, student-centered community of learners that engages, prepares, and inspires.

Core Values

- **Courage:** Having the confidence to take risks and do the right thing.
- **Curiosity:** Being eager to learn and explore to gain a deeper understanding through inquiry and critical questioning.
- **Compassion:** Taking actions to understand how others think and feel and appreciate the value of difference.
- **Integrity:** Being honest, fair, and responsible in words and actions, and staying true to one's principles.

Core Beliefs

- Curiosity and an enthusiasm for learning foster creativity, innovation, and deeper understanding.
- An ethical and compassionate community is built through participation, collaboration, and mutual respect.
- Reflection on learning experiences in and out of the classroom enables learners to define and shape their futures.
- Intellectual, physical, social, and emotional balance contribute to one's well-being.
- Leadership is developed through courage, resilience, and integrity.

ACS Learners Are ...

Collaborative team members who...

- promote and sustain learning.
- communicate and listen actively and openly.

Responsible people who...

- balance their intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being.
- act with integrity and courage.

Self-directed learners who...

- are curious problem solvers and resourceful critical thinkers.
- persevere in the face of challenge.

Global citizens who...

- respect diversity.
- actively contribute to their world with empathy and compassion

Social Media Channels

Follow us on our social media channels Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE	5
FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT	6
The School's Commitment:	6
Our Parents' Commitment:	6
Contact Details	7
SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION HANDBOOK	7
WHOLE SCHOOL CALENDAR	8
FIRST DAYS OF SCHOOL	9
Staggered Start to Begin School Year	9
Helpful Hints for a Successful Beginning to the School Year	9
Fostering Greater Independence for KG1 Students	9
Bathroom Independence	9
Snack and Lunch	9
Classroom Care	9
Clothing Management	10
EARLY CHILDHOOD PHILOSOPHY AND CURRICULUM	10
Overview of KG1 Curriculum	10
Overview of KG2 Curriculum	10
Arabic Language and Culture	10
Specialist Classes	10
OUR LEARNING STRUCTURES	11
Collaborative Learning Communities	11
Homebase Teacher	11
Daily Schedule	11
Open-Concept Space	12
DOCUMENTING EACH CHILD'S GROWTH	12
KG1	12
KG2	13
TECHNOLOGY USE	13
LIBRARY	13
Book Checkout	13
Responsibility	14
Library Learning	14
PARENT SUPPORT FOR LEARNING	14
LEARNING THROUGH PLAY AT RECESS	15
Playground Rules	15
DROP-OFF, PICK-UP, AND BUS TRANSPORTATION	15
Drop Off	15
Pick-Up	16
Early Pick-Up	16
KG1 Shortened Day Option	16
	2

Changes to Pick-Up	16
Bus Transportation	16
ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES AND TARDINESS	16
Attendance	16
Absences	17
Tardiness	17
FOOD, DRINK, AND HEALTHY HABITS	17
Allergen-Awareness	17
Lunch and Snacks	17
Cafeteria Purchases	18
Water	19
Recycling & Garbage-Free Snacks and Lunches	19
WHAT STUDENTS NEED FOR SCHOOL	19
Uniforms	20
Backpack	20
Extra Items	20
COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS	20
COUNSELING PROGRAM	20
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES	21
Purpose	21
Oversight and Collaboration	21
Parental Communication	21
Additional Support	21
Contact	21
HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION	22
Weekly Newsletters	22
Toddle	22
Contacting Teachers and Staff	22
Channels of Communication	22
Parent Coffees	23
Parent-Teacher or Student Led Conferences	23
HEALTH AND SAFETY	23
The Health Office	23
Medication	24
Illness During the School Day	24
Return to School After Illness	24
Head Lice Guidance for Families	24
Air Quality Guidelines	24
Activity Guidelines by AQI Level	25
Heat Policy	25
MINI-VIPERS: AFTER SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES	25
PARENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES	25
Parent Liaisons	26

Library Volunteers	26
Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)	26
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	26
Birthdays	26
Books	26
Chewing Gum	26
Class Parties	27
Community Service	27
Field Trips	27
Gifts	27
Guests and Visitors	27
Lost and Found	27
Movies	27
Nuisance Items	27
Phones and Smart Watches	27
Security	28
Smoking and Drug Use	28
Valuables	28
Withdrawal	28
DIRECTORY	28

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Families,

We are delighted to welcome you and your child to ACS and to the start of their educational journey in our Early Childhood Program. Beginning school is an important milestone in your child's life, and we are honored to partner with you during this exciting time. Whether this is your family's first experience with ACS or you already have older children here, please know how thrilled we are to walk alongside you as your child takes these first steps into formal schooling.

Our Early Childhood Program is designed to nurture curiosity, creativity, and independence in a safe and joyful environment. We believe that parents are a child's first teachers, and together, we will build a strong foundation for your child's growth. Through play, exploration, and meaningful learning experiences, children begin developing the skills, confidence, and friendships that will serve them for years to come.

As a school community, we are guided by our Core Values of *courage, curiosity, compassion, and integrity*. These values shape our classrooms, our relationships, and the way we celebrate learning each day. In early childhood, these values come alive when children try something new, ask thoughtful questions, show kindness to a friend, or learn to make choices for themselves.

Our program also reflects our Four Pillars: *Academics, Athletics, Arts, and Service*. Even in kindergarten, your child will begin to experience these pillars in developmentally appropriate ways: discovering the joy of early literacy and math, exploring creativity through art and music, developing coordination and confidence in physical education, and learning the importance of caring for others through simple acts of service.

This handbook has been created especially for families of our youngest learners and is intended to answer questions unique to the Early Childhood Program.

We are excited to begin this journey with you and look forward to the many discoveries, milestones, and joyful moments that await your child at ACS.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Mueller

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

✉ jmueller@acs.sch.ae



Jenna Murray

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
KG 1 - GRADE 1

✉ jmurray@acs.sch.ae



Evelyn Lucero

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
GRADE 2 - GRADE 5

✉ elucero@acs.sch.ae

FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

As an independent international community school, we encourage parent participation in all facets of school life. This agreement aims to help families understand the importance of parent involvement in the ACS experience.

The School's Commitment:

- We will do everything possible to fulfill the mission of the school and live the school's values. ACS offers a not-for-profit, college-preparatory, American-based curriculum. We promote excellence in the arts, academics and athletics, as well as strong commitment to service and experiential learning.
- We are committed to providing a safe and secure place of learning for all our students, staff, and community members.
- We are cognizant of child development as we provide instruction and learning experiences for our students. We look to foster growth in the whole child. We make every effort to provide support for all students, including remediation and extension when necessary. We do not place students beyond their age-appropriate grade level. Our focus is on development and growth.
- In the spirit of true partnership, all staff members of the school – most notably the teachers who work directly with your child – share responsibility with you for your child's success. By subscribing to the ideas outlined in this partnership agreement, you will help your child succeed at ACS. Positive parent partnership cannot be understated, and your cooperation with the agreement is essential, and enrollment and re-enrollment of your child is dependent on this parent partnership.

Our Parents' Commitment:

- Talk to my child often about school life, demonstrating my interest in helping the school equip my child with the ability to inquire, interact, and accept constructive criticism.
- Help my child learn from mistakes and to benefit from suggestions for improvement.
- Ensure that my child has proper rest, nutrition and recreation.
- Understand our school curriculum and to realize what is offered and what is not offered. ACS is limited in its ability to offer special needs and/or gifted instruction. Most differentiation happens within the ability of the classroom teacher.
- Attend orientations, back to school nights, parent conferences, and be an active participant in school functions.
- Be informed with regards to school communication – to read emails and newsletters, to view the school's website and calendar, to update contact and health information, to communicate when something is unclear, and to provide feedback and participate in surveys, etc.
- Help my child accept and comply with the student dress code, and as parents to dress appropriately on campus, taking into consideration the modest local culture.
- Practice and model effective conflict resolution by handling concerns appropriately, directly, and honestly, only with those involved.

- Ensure that my child arrives on time and remains for the full length of the school day.
- Comply with the school calendar for vacations.
- Make tuition payments and other fees on time so that ACS can continue to be a financially stable non-profit organization.
- Balance activities outside of school and school responsibilities.
- Permit and encourage my child to attend grade level and experiential field trips, acknowledging that they are an integral part of the curriculum.

In order to effectively pursue our mission, it is important that the school and parents partner together to instill pride, self-worth, and a passion for learning in our students. Parents can play an integral role in the program.

Contact Details

Parents must inform the school promptly of a new address, telephone number, and/or email address. Notification can be given via email to the recipient, or contact our Executive Assistant, Lone Wennestad, directly.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION HANDBOOK

We are committed to:

- Protecting students against any physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation, and/or peer-on-peer abuse.
- Identifying at-risk students and taking action to prevent reasonably foreseeable harm.
- Reporting when there is reasonable suspicion of harm or risk of harm to students.
- Applying Safer Recruitment and hiring practices, including staff training (as defined in the Child Protection Handbook).

Every suspicion or disclosure of abuse from within or outside the school will be taken seriously. Action will be taken by members of the Child Protection team, and as appropriate, may include referral to an external agency.

Please take the time to review the contents of the [Student Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures Handbook](#) and let your Counselor, Principal or Superintendent know if you have any questions about our commitment to work in partnership to protect children.

WHOLE SCHOOL CALENDAR



AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL
OF ABU DHABI SINCE 1972

2025-2026 SCHOOL CALENDAR

JULY 2025 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31							AUGUST 2025 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31						
SEPTEMBER 2025 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30							OCTOBER 2025 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31						
NOVEMBER 2025 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30							DECEMBER 2025 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31						
JANUARY 2026 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31							FEBRUARY 2026 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28						
MARCH 2026 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31							APRIL 2026 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30						
MAY 2026 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31							JUNE 2026 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30						

AUGUST

- Aug 11 - 15
- Aug 18
- Aug 19
- Aug 20 - 21
- Aug 21 - 22
- Aug 30

Professional Learning - No School for Students
New Family Orientation
Grades 1 - 12 First Day of Classes
KG 2 First Day of Classes - Staggered Start
KG 1 First Day of Classes - Staggered Start
PTA New Family Welcome

SEPTEMBER

- Sept 5
- Sept 15

Prophet's Birthday - No School
Professional Learning - No School for Students

OCTOBER

- Oct 3, 6 & 7
- Oct 6 & 7
- Oct 8 - 10
- Oct 24

MS/HS Parent/Teacher Conferences
ES Parent/Teacher Conferences
Fall Break - No School
PTA Fall Festival

NOVEMBER

- Nov 3
- Nov 27

Professional Learning - No School for Students
Thanksgiving - Early Release Day

DECEMBER

- Dec 1
- Dec 2-3
- Dec 6
- Dec 15 - Jan 2

UAE Commemoration Day - No School
UAE Union Day - No School
PTA Holiday Extravaganza
Winter Break - No School

JANUARY

- Jan 26
- Jan 31

Professional Learning - No School for Students
PTA International Day

FEBRUARY

- Feb 18 - March 15

Ramadan Schedule (Subject to Change)

MARCH

- March 13 - 20
- March 18 - 20

Spring Break - No School
Eid Al Fitr Holiday - No School

APRIL

- April 8
- April 11
- April 24

ES Student- Led Conferences
ACS Gala
Professional Learning - No School for Students

MAY

- May 27 - 29

Eid Al Adha Holiday - No School

JUNE

- June 11
- June 12

Last Day of Classes - Early Release Day
Professional Learning - No School for Students

*Islamic religious holidays are subject to change based on government announcements.

FIRST DAYS OF SCHOOL

Staggered Start to Begin School Year

To facilitate a soft entry for our youngest learners, Kindergarten students will start their ACS journey with a staggered start. On the first days of school only half the class will be present for the morning hours 8:30 a.m. - 12:00p.m. on their first day. KG1 & KG2 students will continue half day hours for the second week of school to facilitate strong routines and student connections.

Helpful Hints for a Successful Beginning to the School Year

A smooth start to the school year begins with routines at home. Children thrive when they get nine to twelve hours of sleep each night, so a calm and consistent bedtime routine is especially important. Mornings also feel easier when they follow a predictable rhythm, with enough time for a healthy breakfast and a calm start to the day. In the early weeks, allowing a little extra time to get ready helps everyone feel less rushed.

To set your child up for success, we suggest:

- Creating a special spot at home for their backpack, library book, and other essentials.
- Arriving on time: between 8:15–8:30 am for drop-off, and at 3:30 pm for pick-up (12:00 pm on Fridays).
- Talking positively about school and asking open-ended questions, such as:
 - *What made you smile today?*
 - *Who did you play with at recess?*
 - *What new thing did you try or learn?*

Finally, encouraging independence with self-help skills, such as using the toilet, putting on shoes and socks, or asking for help, builds your child's confidence and helps them feel ready for school each day.

Fostering Greater Independence for KG1 Students

To feel comfortable, confident, and prepared throughout the school day, KG1 students are expected to develop key habits of self-reliance. The skills identified below help children participate fully in the school day and build confidence in their growing independence.

Bathroom Independence

Children must be fully independent in using the bathroom before entering KG1. This includes pulling pants up and down, using the toilet, wiping, flushing, and washing and drying hands. While the occasional accident is developmentally appropriate, students should demonstrate consistent toileting independence. If a child requires ongoing one-on-one support, teachers, parents, and the Health Office will work together to determine next steps, which may include practicing skills at home before returning to school.

Snack and Lunch

Students should be able to open and close containers, feed themselves, use garbage bins, and repack their snack bags after eating.

Classroom Care

Children are expected to help care for their learning space by cleaning tables and putting away materials.

Clothing Management

Students should manage their own clothing, such as buttoning and unbuttoning shirts, zipping pants or shorts, or wearing elastic waistbands if needed.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PHILOSOPHY AND CURRICULUM

In KG1 and KG2, we believe children learn best through play, exploration, and discovery. Parents are a child's first and most important teachers, and when children join us at school, we see our role as building on that strong foundation together. Our goal is to nurture each child's natural curiosity, creativity, and confidence, while supporting their growth socially, emotionally, and academically. We view children as capable learners who thrive when given opportunities to ask questions, solve problems, and make connections. Above all, we aim to create a joyful, welcoming environment where children feel known, supported, and excited to learn, and where parents and teachers work side by side as partners in this important first step of their educational journey.

Overview of KG1 Curriculum

In KG1, instructional planning and practice are guided by the [*Creative Curriculum*TM](#), a play-based approach that allows children to learn through exploration and hands-on experiences. Much of the learning unfolds through multi-week unit studies that grow from the children's interests and questions. These studies provide meaningful contexts where early literacy, math, art, SEL, and Arabic are integrated into everything the children do.

Overview of KG2 Curriculum

In KG2, we build on the strong play-based foundation of KG1 by continuing with the [*Creative Curriculum*TM](#) while also introducing a more structured, standards-referenced academic approach (Common Core, NGSS Science, C3 Social Studies). This interdisciplinary program combines play, exploration, hands-on learning, and explicit instruction, helping children develop important academic skills while continuing to nurture their natural curiosity and creativity.

Arabic Language and Culture

Arabic in KG1 and KG2 is woven into the daily classroom experience. The language is embedded in the learning environment, creating authentic opportunities for students to hear, use, and enjoy Arabic in meaningful ways. The Arabic learning content is inspired by the Homebase curriculum and delivered during dedicated daily Arabic sessions. In addition, students enjoy Arabic learning experiences during inquiry, interest groups, and play time. For more information regarding our Arabic Language Program, please contact our Director of Arabic Studies, [Dr. Hanadi Dayyeh](#)

Specialist Classes

In both KG1 and KG2, children take part in specialist classes each week, including Music, Art, Design Technology, Library, and PE. These experiences enrich the core program by encouraging curiosity, exploration, and creativity, while also nurturing a love of discovery. Each area is guided by internationally recognized standards that set clear expectations for growth and development.

- **Art:** Guided by the National Core Arts Standards, students create, respond, and present in ways that develop confidence, reflection, and appreciation of global traditions.

- **Music:** Aligned with the National Core Arts Standards, students sing, play, and compose while collaborating and exploring diverse cultures.
- **Design Technology:** Grounded in the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards, students design, construct, and code to solve problems and innovate.
- **Physical Education (PE):** Based on the SHAPE Standards, students build coordination, teamwork, and healthy habits; they also learn swimming for safety, stamina, and confidence.

OUR LEARNING STRUCTURES

Collaborative Learning Communities

KG1 and KG2 are *Learning Communities*, where all teachers share responsibility for the growth and success of every student. Teachers collaborate to plan, teach, and monitor growth, ensuring that all learners benefit from the expertise of the entire team. This shared responsibility fosters a supportive environment where every child is known, valued, and challenged.

Homebase Teacher

While every student benefits from the full *Learning Community*, each child is also assigned a *Homebase Teacher*. This teacher serves as the student's daily anchor and primary point of contact for both the child and their family. Homebase Teachers welcome students each morning, monitor and share updates on each child's growth and development, and serve as the first point of contact for parents with questions or concerns. They provide consistency and connection, ensuring every student feels a strong sense of belonging while also linking families to the broader support of the entire grade-level team.

Daily Schedule

We establish consistent routines and procedures to help children feel secure and confident in their classrooms. Knowing what to expect—and understanding what is expected of them—helps students settle quickly, focus on learning, and enjoy a calm, predictable environment.

A typical full day in KG1 or KG2 might include:

- Arrival & Exploration Time: *Children settle in, explore learning centers, and begin the day at their own pace*
- Morning Meeting: *A time to connect, share, and set intentions for the day*
- Group Work: *Collaborative activities that build social and academic skills*
- Recess
- Snack Time
- Inquiry Time: *Hands-on learning, exploration, and discovery*
- Lunch
- Quiet Time
- Specialist Classes: *Music, Art, PE, or Arabic*
- Afternoon Meeting / Storytime
- End-of-Day & Dismissal

While this provides a general structure, schedules may vary slightly to respond to children's interests, needs, and special events. This balance of consistency and flexibility helps create an environment where learning thrives.

Open-Concept Space

Our KG1 and KG2 classrooms are designed as open-concept spaces, with four Homebase classes sharing one large, flexible environment. This design reflects how young children learn best, through movement, exploration, and collaboration. With plenty of room to grow and discover, children engage in activities that spark independence, creativity, and social skills, while learning in a joyful and welcoming community.

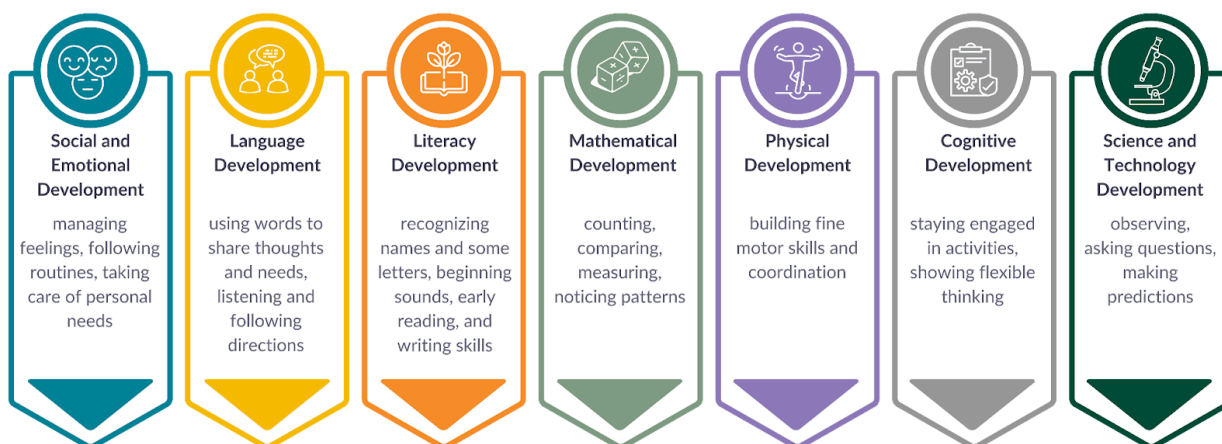
Within this shared space, classrooms are organized into areas of interest such as building blocks, dramatic play, art, writing, library, discovery, technology, and more. Cooking, sand, and water play are also introduced at different points in the year to enrich children's experiences. While each child has a homebase teacher, all kindergarten teachers and assistants work together to guide and support every learner. This collaborative approach allows children to benefit from the strengths of the entire teaching team and fosters a true sense of community where everyone learns and grows together.

Known as the *Wonder Studio*, Art, Music, and Design Tech and Innovation are integrated together also in a shared-space for KG1 and KG2 specialist classes. The Wonder Studio is a creative, exploratory, and collaborative space where children engage in art, design, and music as expressive languages of learning. Rooted in curiosity and play, the studio invites children to experiment, share ideas, and develop their imagination in joyful and meaningful ways. Through hands-on discovery, students learn to express themselves, reflect on their process, and collaborate with others, laying the foundation for confident, original thinking.

DOCUMENTING EACH CHILD'S GROWTH

KG1

In KG1, we carefully observe and celebrate each child's growth as they move toward important developmental milestones, using our assessment system to help guide their learning journey. Teachers document growth in key competencies, which form the basis of parent conferences (held in the fall and spring) and report cards (issued after each semester). These key competencies are:



KG2

As children move into KG2, their learning continues to be rooted in play, exploration, conversation, and meaningful relationships. While KG2 introduces more structured assessment, it still honors how young children learn best. Teachers continue to observe, document, and support each child's growth with care and intention.

What's new in KG2:

- Children are introduced to clear learning targets aligned with early grade-level expectations.
- Teachers use a wider range of tools, including skill checklists, classroom tasks, and student work samples, to gather evidence of learning.
- Progress is shared using standards-based language, similar to Grades 1–5, to support a smooth and confident transition into the elementary years.
- Approaches to Learning (AtLs) such as responsibility, independence, and collaboration remain central and are reflected in both progress reports and conversations.
- In the spring, children take part in student-led conferences, sharing their growth and setting personal goals with support from their teachers.

TECHNOLOGY USE

We view technology as a powerful way to support learning, creativity, and connection across all grade levels. Technology is integrated thoughtfully and gradually, with clear boundaries, age-appropriate tools, and increasing independence as students mature.

In KG1, technology is used sparingly and always with teacher guidance to support storytelling, language development, and documentation of learning.

In KG2, students begin documenting their learning and practicing foundational digital skills, while also being introduced to core concepts of digital citizenship. Across both grades, technology is used to deepen thinking, spark creativity, and encourage meaningful collaboration.

For more details on expectations and guidelines, please see our [K-12 Technology Philosophy & Responsible Use Policy](#).

LIBRARY

Our Library, located on the ground floor next to the ES Office, is open daily from 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and provides a welcoming space where students can explore new worlds, develop literacy skills, and engage their imaginations through both traditional texts and innovative learning experiences.

Book Checkout

- KG1 students may check out one book per week.
- KG2 students may check out two books at a time for a two-week period.
- Materials may be renewed for extended use.

Responsibility

Students and parents are financially responsible for lost or damaged books and materials. Costs reflect not only the purchase price but also shipping and processing. Students with overdue or lost items will not receive their report cards until the obligation is resolved.

Library Learning

During library class rotations, students engage in literacy lessons, explore a range of texts, and participate in creative projects that may incorporate technology. The librarian also supports classroom lessons to extend learning and foster a love of reading.

PARENT SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

At ACS, we believe in the power of community and the importance of partnering with parents to support every child's learning journey. Research—and our own experience—shows that the most successful students have parents who are actively engaged in their school lives. We warmly encourage you to participate in the joy of your child's growth and development.

To help your child enjoy every opportunity to succeed and be ready to learn each day, we ask parents to:

- Prioritize healthy sleep routines so children come to school well-rested.
- Support healthy eating habits by providing breakfast and sending a nutritious snack (and lunch) from home, or by maintaining your child's Spare account.
- Follow our communication chain by first reaching out to your child's Homebase Teacher or Counselor with questions or concerns.
- Be an active member of the ACS community by attending Back-to-School Night, parent conferences, school events, and volunteer opportunities.

When challenges arise, strong partnership between home and school is essential. Families are expected to work in trust and collaboration with teachers and staff, sharing openly so we can best support the child together.

Developmental Academic Support at Home

Young children develop skills at different rates and often in waves and they learn best by watching, listening, and imitating what they see and hear. Children who see their parents reading, writing, talking, and listening with purpose and enjoyment are more likely to do the same. You can nurture a love of learning at home through simple, everyday activities. For example:

- Encourage early literacy by reading signs, labels, and advertisements together. Celebrate your child's early writing attempts, such as "I LV U," by reading them aloud with excitement.
- Foster math skills by noticing patterns and shapes, counting objects, sorting items, or cooking and baking together using steps and measurements.
- Engage your child in frequent one-on-one conversations. Sing songs, play word games, and enjoy rhymes together.
- Provide crayons, markers, paper, and a space where your child can draw, write, and create freely.
- While reading or watching a show, ask your child what happened first or what they think might happen next.
- Model how to handle books with care and show joy when sharing stories.

By providing rich experiences, engaging conversations, and encouragement at home, parents play an essential role in supporting children's curiosity, confidence, and readiness to learn

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY AT RECESS

Recess is an essential part of the school day, providing students with a purposeful opportunity for social, physical, and emotional growth. Time spent playing, exploring, and interacting with peers supports creativity, collaboration, problem-solving, and overall well-being. All students are encouraged to participate fully in recess, though some may have modified options if additional structure is needed to ensure safety and success on the playground.

Playground Rules

To ensure safety and a positive experience for all, students are expected to follow these guidelines while on campus:

- Demonstrate respect, responsibility, honesty, and fairness toward peers and school property.
- Playground and equipment use during school hours is reserved for Elementary students.
- KG1 & KG2 bicycles will only be used in cooler months and only during school hours.
- Use playground equipment safely and appropriately.
- Food and drinks (except water) are not permitted on the playgrounds or any artificial turf fields.
- Wear secure shoes at all times (flip-flops and crocs are not allowed). Shoes may be removed only while playing in the sand.
- Wear hats for sun protection or stay in shaded areas.
- Playground supervision is provided only during school hours. After school, parents or caregivers are responsible for supervising their children in close proximity.

DROP-OFF, PICK-UP, AND BUS TRANSPORTATION

Drop Off

Keeping students safe and supported is at the heart of everything we do. Clear routines help children feel secure, make transitions smoother, and ensure every student is accounted for at the end of the day.

To support a smooth start each morning, please note the following routines:

- School gates open at 8:15 a.m.
- Students may enter via Gate 1 or Gate 2.
- KG1 and KG2 students dropped off at Gate 1 should be accompanied by an older sibling, especially during the first weeks of school.
- Between 8:15 and 8:40 a.m., students should enter through their grade-level door and proceed directly to the classroom.
- After 8:45 a.m., all students must enter through the main entrance and check in at the office so attendance can be updated.

Pick-Up

Between Mondays - Thursdays, KG1 and KG2 children must be picked up by a designated adult at 3:30 p.m. Friday pick up is at 12:00 p.m. (noon). A parent or caregiver must park and walk through Gate 2 to meet their

child on the KG playground. Students who ride the bus will be escorted to the buses after school by a KG team member.

Early Pick-Up

- Parents needing to pick up a child before regular dismissal must notify the classroom teacher and the ES Executive Assistant, [Lone Wennestad](#)
- The classroom teacher will provide an Exit Slip, and the child will be sent to the waiting area outside the ES Office for pickup.

KG1 Shortened Day Option

KG1 students do have an opportunity to go home at mid-day. This may support some students in transitioning to a school program successfully with a soft start. Parents may choose this early pick-up for their child and must commit to a shortened schedule for one school quarter. Exact pick-up time will be determined based on the class schedule and timetable.

Changes to Pick-Up

If your child's regular pick-up plan changes, please notify **both the Homebase Teacher and the [ES Office](#)** as early as possible. Written communication through email is preferred so we can share the information with all staff who may be helping at dismissal. Last-minute changes should always be called in to the ES Office to ensure the message is received in time. This process allows us to carefully monitor who is picking up each child, communicate with all supervising adults, and provide a safe, organized transition for your child and their classmates.

Bus Transportation

ACS partners with Imperial Transport, a trusted transportation provider with over 20 years of experience in Abu Dhabi. Imperial Transport ensures student safety with features such as GPS monitoring, electronic attendance systems, seat belts, a central operations control team, and professionally trained drivers. They also provide a dedicated representative for ACS families.

For current ACS families, please log into the Veracross Parent Portal to register and access detailed information about bus transportation. If you are interested in bus service for part or all of the year, please email bus@acs.sch.ae to receive more information. Standard home-to-school round transport service will be AED 8,000 per student annually. A prorated cost will be available for families opting to only use transportation for part of the year.

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES AND TARDINESS

Attendance

Regular attendance helps students stay engaged with learning, build friendships, and fully benefit from classroom experiences. To count as a school day, students must be in attendance for at least four hours. For reporting purposes, students must attend at least 80% of the days in a term, generally no more than nine days per quarter or 18 days per semester, to receive grades and teacher comments on their report card.

While teachers support students with extended absences due to emergencies, many classroom experiences—discussions, hands-on activities, and special events—cannot be recreated at home. Please note:

- Work is not provided in advance for family vacations.
- Students who miss school may not participate in school events, (parties or programs) on the same day.
- Attendance and punctuality are recorded on Report Cards.

Absences

If students are absent from school, even for one day, parents must inform the Homebase Teacher and the ES Executive Assistant before 8:15 a.m. [Please use Veracross to report your child's absence.](#) The nurses will be updated if follow-up is required. At 8:45 a.m., the ES administrative assistant will begin calling parents of absent students if we have not heard from parents. If students are absent for more than three days, due to medical reasons, they must submit a doctor's clearance form.

Tardiness

Classes begin at 8:30 a.m. with the UAE National Anthem. Families who are tardy on a regular basis will be asked to meet with the Principal to discuss strategies for improving attendance and punctuality.

FOOD, DRINK, AND HEALTHY HABITS

Allergen-Awareness

We strive to be an allergen-aware campus, and **not** an allergen-free school. An allergen-aware campus seeks to create an environment in which children with severe allergies can learn to make appropriate choices to keep themselves safe.

We encourage parents to help us provide a safe environment for students by not sending food with peanuts or cross-contamination warnings. Should your child's class include a student with a serious peanut allergy, a letter will be sent home for class guidelines on food brought into the school. For more information, please access this link: [Tree Nut and Peanut Allergies](#)

Students who have chronic conditions such as allergies, asthma, and diabetes will require their parents to complete a [health care plan](#) with relevant supporting medical reports/prescriptions so that we can ensure their health needs are met and considered throughout the school day.

Lunch and Snacks

All students will eat their snack and lunch in the Cafeteria. Lunch will begin with five minutes of quiet eating time so students can focus on eating their food. Then, students will be able to converse with friends for the rest of lunch and recess. The five minutes of pause provides time for everyone to focus on eating and begin their break in a mindful manner. Much research has been done on nutrition's impact on children and their learning. It is clear that there are foods that nourish the brain and foods that contribute to lack of focus, tiredness, and/or hyperactivity.

Healthy Snack Suggestions	Healthy Lunch Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit: fresh (apples, grapes, bananas, pears, sliced mango or orange) and dried (raisins, dates, all citrus fruits) • Veggies: carrots, cucumber, green/red pepper or celery sticks/slices, cauliflower or broccoli florets, sugar snap peas, dark green leafy vegetables • Crackers • Snack mix: combine pretzels, whole-grain cereal, banana chips, plain popcorn, etc. in a plastic container • Boiled eggs (one egg gives a child almost 1/3 of their daily protein needs. Boil a dozen and leave them in the refrigerator; they last for a week!) • Plain popcorn • Dairy products: cheese (string, sliced, or cubes), plain yogurt or labneh (add fruit, wheat germ, or sugar-free cereals), milk • Meat: tuna, salmon, sliced turkey or chicken • Bread/baked items: whole wheat sandwiches; muffins and breads made with grains and banana, zucchini, blueberry, etc.; raisin bread toasted with cinnamon; whole wheat rolls w/butter; oatmeal/raisin cookies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandwiches: falafel, egg and cheese, turkey, deli meat, quesadillas, hummus, cheese • Salads • Pasta: spaghetti with sauce, macaroni and cheese • Soup in a thermos • Chicken “fingers”, chicken legs, sliced chicken breast • Potatoes • Meatballs with sauce • Drinks: water, juice, milk <p>Snacks are often eaten at a set time each day between classes or during an activity. Please pack items that make it easy for your child to enjoy his/her snack:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple: nothing messy, no drippy sauces, nothing that needs to be cut up • Small: the size of your child’s fist • Quick: must be eaten in a few minutes
Foods and Drink to Avoid	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soda • Candy bars • Candy • Cookies • Anything with frosting or powdered sugar on top • Salty products - chips, pretzels, salted popcorn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chocolate • Donuts • Cake • Brownies • Sugary granola bars • Nuts

Cafeteria Purchases

Students in KG2 may purchase lunch from the Cafeteria. A weekly menu is shared every Friday in the Principal’s Newsletter.

All food and beverage purchases are made using the student’s ID card, which is linked to the [SPARE App](#). This secure digital pocket money platform allows parents to add funds directly to their child’s account. At the

Cafeteria, students simply present their ID card to pay—no cash needed. The teachers and instructional assistants are there to facilitate this process with our youngest students.

Water

The water from the school water fountains is drinkable since it is on the campus water purification system. We encourage students to stay well-hydrated by drinking lots of fluids. Students should bring a reusable water bottle that can be refilled periodically during the day.

Recycling & Garbage-Free Snacks and Lunches

As an environmentally responsible campus, we encourage families to minimize waste by choosing reusable or recyclable options whenever possible. Consider sending food in containers that can be washed and used again, such as plastic sandwich boxes or small drink bottles instead of multiple single-use juice boxes. Inexpensive cutlery that returns home for washing and fun cloth napkins can also help reduce daily waste. Most importantly, involve your child in these choices—support their enthusiasm for “reduce, recycle, and reuse” by helping them make small, responsible decisions each day.

WHAT STUDENTS NEED FOR SCHOOL

Uniforms

Our uniform helps students feel a sense of pride and belonging, while also ensuring they are dressed appropriately for learning and play. As members of the ACS community and guests of the United Arab Emirates, students are expected to follow the school’s dress code each day. Families play an important role in helping children come to school ready and appropriately dressed.

Students should wear:

- An ACS-approved uniform top (t-shirt, polo, sweater, pullover, or cardigan).
- Beige or black pants in good condition, or shorts/dresses that reach at least to the knee.
- An ACS sweater or sweatshirt is recommended, as classrooms can feel chilly after outdoor play.
- Appropriate athletic footwear that children can put on and fasten themselves (choose velcro if your child is not yet able to tie laces).

Please note:

- Flip flops, Heelies/Street Gliders, and Crocs are not permitted.
- Hats are required for outdoor play in the sun.

Parents are ultimately responsible for ensuring their children come to school in uniform each day and for helping them learn to make responsible clothing choices.

How to Purchase Uniforms

The uniform shop is located on the Ground Floor of the MS/HS Building. Parents can either:

- **Book a fitting appointment** through www.trutex.ae to visit the school store with your child and ensure the correct size. (If you have more than one child, please book a separate appointment for each.)
- **Order online** for home delivery or school collection. A size guide is available to help with selection, and returns are easy—either in-store or by courier.

Backpack

Your child will need to bring a backpack to school. The backpack should be a regular size and without wheels to hang on a hook. Please check the contents of this every day for completed work and any important notes that come home from school.

- When packing bags with your child in the mornings please help your child follow our “Toys from home should stay home” agreement

Extra Items

- A change of clothing is also required for KG students in case of accidents or messy play.
- A spill-proof water bottle that your KG child can independently open and fill

Writing your child's name (first and last) on all personal items, like the backpack, water bottle, shoes, clothing etc. is important, as they do go missing occasionally.

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

At ACS, we emphasize the importance of all children learning in a safe, supportive, and connected environment. Please reference below more information about our Counseling Program in KG as we help support students to make positive choices. We know that young children are still learning and will not always make the right decisions—and that is a natural part of growing and developing. We approach behavior and/or safety situations with sensitivity and strive to balance individual growth and development with a sense of safety for the entire class. Our goal is to guide students toward understanding, responsibility, and empathy, helping them learn from their choices in a supportive environment.

COUNSELING PROGRAM

The KG1 and KG2 Counseling Program follows a preventative and embedded philosophy, rooted in the *International School Counselor Association* (ISCA) standards and the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) competencies.

Our belief is that young learners thrive when they feel safe, supported, and connected. To reflect the developmental needs of early childhood, counselors join KG classrooms during center and group time, engaging small groups in play-based, interactive activities. They also lead school-wide initiatives such as Kindness Week, Anti-Bullying Week, and Mental Health Awareness Week. This embedded model allows the counselor to build trust and relationships in natural classroom settings, while reinforcing social-emotional learning in meaningful and age-appropriate ways.

With classroom teachers consistently delivering the *Second Step* Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum, the counselor's role in KG is to enhance, individualize, and model strategies that support communication, cooperation, empathy, and self-regulation. By integrating SEL into real-life peer interactions, children have authentic opportunities to practice skills with guidance from both teachers and a trusted adult.

Counselors also partner with parents to extend social-emotional learning beyond the classroom, through regular communication, parent workshops, and strategy sharing.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Purpose

The goal of student support for our youngest learners is to assist students who are facing challenges in meeting behavioral, social, or emotional expectations that are observed to be outside the range of typical development. Support is tailored to help students thrive and more carefully understand what they need to reach their full potential. Support services for students who may need extra help in academics is only offered through early intervention groups in the second semester of KG2 as shown by internally gathered data.

Oversight and Collaboration

The Elementary Student Support Services department is managed by the Director of Student Support Services in collaboration with the Division Principal. Counselors and learning support teachers work closely with classroom teachers to consult or offer direct interventions with students.

Parental Communication

When concerns about your child's development arise, you will first hear about these through your child's homebase teacher or counselor. Oftentimes strategies will be discussed to more intentionally support these areas of lower development both at school and at home. This could include ideas such as structured play dates, mindfulness or relaxation strategies to try at home, games to practice taking turns, or other strategies. Families are key partners in the support process.

Additional Support

- In cases where students' development is significantly below expectations families may be advised to access external support outside of school. For our youngest learners this could include:
 - speech and language services
 - occupational therapy
 - behavioral or play therapy
 - a modified schedule that may include partial day attendance
 - 1:1 adult shadow for behavioral support
- The school may set limits on the number of students receiving additional support per grade level based on the capacity of the Learning Support Team.

Contact

For more information regarding K-12 Student Support Services, please contact the Director of Student Support Services [Dr. Ryan Bull-Beddows](#).

HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Weekly Newsletters

Staying connected is an important part of supporting your child's learning. Each Friday, families receive the **Principal's Newsletter**, which shares key updates about classroom activities, upcoming events, and the broader school community. Links to the **Grade Level Newsletters** are also included, making it easy to access everything in one place.

Grade Level Newsletters give you a window into your child's learning journey. They highlight classroom activities, celebrate accomplishments, and share what's coming up next. You will also find:

- Highlights of the week's learning and collaborative activities
- Conversation starters to help you talk with your child about their day
- Important announcements and reminders about upcoming events

Toddle

Toddle is one way we regularly communicate with parents about their children's growth. Teachers use *Toddle Announcements* to communicate with parents about the whole class learning journey. The *Toddle Portfolio* celebrates a child's growth and development. It highlights each child as a unique, capable, and competent child, sharing learning in all areas and reflecting ACS core values, Approaches to Learning, and Four Pillars. Teachers and students curate the learning stories together at school.

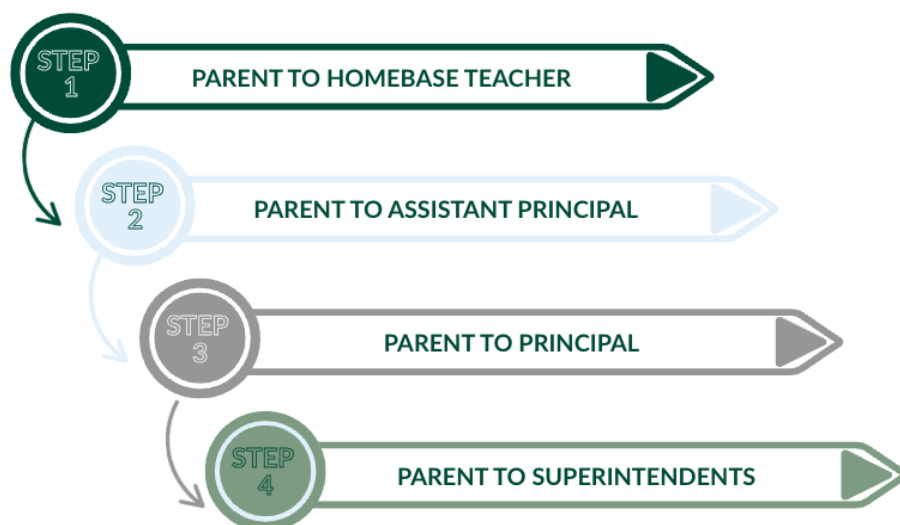
Together, *Toddle Portfolios* and *Announcements* support students and parents by creating connections between home and school. Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their children's learning by using Toddle to generate discussions and respond to their children's learning.

Contacting Teachers and Staff

Email is the preferred way to communicate with teachers or the ES Office. Responses are typically provided within **48 hours**, excluding weekends and holidays. Parents are responsible for checking the ACS Veracross Parent Portal frequently to ensure they receive all important communications.

Channels of Communication

To help us address questions or concerns quickly and effectively, please follow these recommended channels. Following these steps ensures that your questions reach the right person promptly, and that we can work together to support your child's success.



Parent Coffees

Several times throughout the year, ES parents are invited to join us for Parent Coffees, informal gatherings designed to connect our community and share valuable information. These morning sessions, lasting about an hour, provide a chance to learn more about important school topics such as curriculum, report cards, or technology, while also enjoying time to meet and engage with other parents. Parent Coffees are both social and informative, helping to strengthen the partnership between home and school.

Parent-Teacher or Student Led Conferences

Before the end of the Quarter 1 and 3, parents are invited to attend conferences with their child's Homebase, specialists, and Arabic teachers to discuss student performance, progress, and Approaches to Learning (ATLs). In the spring, students and parents participate in student-led conferences, providing an opportunity to reflect on students' growth and set goals. These conferences, held in conjunction with Progress Reports, are essential for building a strong partnership between home and school, ensuring a shared understanding of each child's strengths and areas for development.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Health Office

The Health Office is open Monday–Thursday from 7:45 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. and Friday from 7:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. It is staffed by two licensed School Nurses accredited by the Department of Health (DoH). They support the health and well-being of all students through the DoH School Health Program. Their work includes:

- Responding to minor injuries on campus
- Monitoring and preventing communicable diseases
- Conducting school health screenings (KG1–Grade 12)
- Managing childhood immunization programs (Grades 1, 8, and 11)
- Running health promotion campaigns

All services are delivered according to DoH standards to ensure student safety and well-being.

Medication

If a student requires medication during the school day, parents must complete [this consent form](#). The form is also available for download from our website.

Illness During the School Day

Students who feel unwell should report to the Health Office. Nurses will assess and document the situation and determine if the student should go home.

Return to School After Illness

Students with fever, diarrhea, or vomiting must be symptom-free for at least 24 hours without medication before returning to school, per DoH guidelines. This ensures the safety and health of the entire school community.

Head Lice Guidance for Families

From time to time, children may get head lice, and it is something most families experience at least once. While lice are not a health hazard, we know they can be unpleasant and inconvenient. If we suspect your child has

head lice, we will contact you so you can check and, if needed, treat your child at home. Our School Nurses are always available to provide advice, reassurance, and guidance on effective treatments.

To help prevent lice from spreading, we ask all parents to make weekly checks using a nit comb (widely available at local pharmacies). Regular detection combing is the most effective way to identify lice early and stop them from spreading. Please note: Children should only be treated if live lice are found and preventive use of treatments is not recommended, as it can cause resistance to the products.

Contact: For any questions, please email nurses@acs.sch.ae or call **02 508 4412**.

Air Quality Guidelines

Air pollution can cause both short and long term health effects. Children are particularly vulnerable because:

- They are more physically active outdoors.
- Their lungs are still developing.
- They are more likely to have asthma or acute respiratory conditions, which can worsen during high pollution levels.

ACS is committed to protecting the health and well-being of students and staff by monitoring air quality and adjusting activities as needed.

Monitoring

- ACS monitors PM2.5 (fine particulate matter) daily using an on-campus air quality monitoring device.
- PM2.5 refers to tiny airborne particles that can penetrate deep into the lungs and, in some cases, enter the bloodstream.
- Air quality levels are assessed using the Air Quality Index (AQI), developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Activity Guidelines by AQI Level

AQI 151–200 (Unhealthy):

- Children should avoid prolonged or heavy outdoor exertion.
- ES recess and ES PE classes will be moved indoors.

AQI 201–300 (Very Unhealthy):

- All PE classes and recess will be held indoors.
- Outdoor ACS staff, or staff from contracted companies must wear PM2.5-rated masks (provided by their employer).

AQI 301+ (Hazardous):

- All students and staff (except essential security personnel) will remain indoors.
- Movement between buildings is permitted.

Sensitive Groups

Certain individuals may experience health effects even at lower AQI levels. Sensitive groups include:

- Children with asthma or other respiratory conditions.
- Individuals with heart or lung disease.

Parents with concerns about their child's participation in outdoor activities should contact the Health Office or their child's Principal.

Heat Policy

Keeping students safe during outdoor activities in hot weather is a top priority. We monitor conditions four times a day using the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT), a comprehensive measure that accounts for temperature, humidity, wind, and sun exposure. Based on these readings, and the nature and duration of the activity, we decide whether it's safe for students to be outside or if activities should be moved indoors.

MINI-VIPERS: AFTER SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES

Mini Vipers gives students the chance to explore their interests, discover new passions, and connect with others outside the classroom. All activities are aligned with one or more of the ACS pillars: Academics, Arts, Athletics, and Service, with the goal of offering a balanced range of opportunities across grade levels. Activities will change throughout the year based on staff offerings and facility availability. Some activities are led by ACS staff and offered free of charge, while others may be provided by external partners for a fee.

Within each session, activities meet once a week for 45 minutes after school (3:45–4:30 pm) for **KG2–Grade 5 students**. At this stage, **KG1 students do not participate in Mini Vipers**. For our youngest learners, afternoons are best spent resting and recharging after a busy day of exploration at school. Some KG2 students are not ready at the beginning of the year for an extended day and we look forward to welcoming them into Mini Vipers when they are ready to fully enjoy and benefit from the program.

PARENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Room Parents

Each Homebase has a Room Parent who is confirmed at the beginning of the school year. Responsibilities include communicating with Homebase families about upcoming events, organizing events as requested by the school, and organizing classroom contributions to PTA events.

Parent Liaisons

The Elementary Parent Liaison Committee was created to strengthen communication between the Administration and the parent community. Each year, seven parent volunteers form the committee to act as a bridge between families and school leadership. Parent Liaisons help:

- Collaborate with Principals to advance the ACS mission, vision, and strategic plan
- Share and clarify information relevant to grade levels and divisional matters
- Provide practical support and assistance as needed

Library Volunteers

Library volunteers will be selected to help with daily library duties: book checkout, shelving, reading with students, special events organization. Specialized training is required to work as a library volunteer. Please contact our Elementary Librarian, [Robyn Gibson](#), for more information.

Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

All ACS parents are automatically members of the PTA, our parent volunteer organization that builds community and supports student life. The PTA is central to many of our most cherished traditions, from welcoming new families to organizing major events such as Fall Festival, Holiday Extravaganza, International Day, Used Book Sales, Snow Cone Sales, and Faculty & Staff Appreciation Week.

These events only happen with the support of our parents. We encourage you to get involved—whether by joining a committee, helping at an event, or volunteering your time in another way. Every contribution strengthens our community and enriches the school experience for our children.

To get involved or learn more, please contact the [PTA](#).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Birthdays

We celebrate birthdays on the first Friday of each month. Your child's Homebase Teacher will share details ahead of the celebration, which may include games, privileges, or snacks (see Healthy Snacks section for treat ideas). Party invitations for the entire class should be given to students at the end of the day. Invitations for only select students should not be distributed at school.

Books

The school provides instructional materials for classroom use. Students are responsible for the care of books and must pay for damaged or lost items. Parents should provide book bags to protect books.

Chewing Gum

Chewing gum is not permitted on campus.

Class Parties

Class parties are a special way for students to celebrate together and build community. Each year, three class parties are planned:

- December – Winter Holiday Celebration
- February – Friendship Party
- June – End-of-Year Celebration

To support these events, as well as teacher gifts given during PTA Teacher Appreciation Week, Homebase Parents will collect 100 AED from each family at the start of the year.

These celebrations are designed to be simple, joyful, and focused on the students. Parents are warmly invited to join, and we ask that families honor the spirit of these gatherings by keeping them relaxed and low-key, without the need for elaborate additions.

Community Service

We encourage students to be active, positive contributors to society. In the ES, students participate in hands-on community service projects at the individual, grade, or group level. Direct action that impacts students personally is emphasized. Soliciting money for causes is reserved for MS/HS students.

Field Trips

Students enjoy periodic field trips related to their curriculum. Students are expected to participate in all school trips because they are curriculum-based and are supported by classroom instruction and activities. If students are not able to go on a field trip, they will not come to school for the time the class is gone from ACS. Students on field trips must demonstrate the same integrity, compassion, courage, and curiosity that is expected of them while at school. While the focus of all field trips is on the learning experience, student safety is the most fundamental goal of any school-sponsored trip.

Gifts

ACS Board policy discourages elaborate or expensive gifts for staff. Instead, families contribute 100 AED per child at the start of the year, which covers class parties and teacher appreciation gifts. These gifts are organized by Homebase Parents and given during PTA Teacher Appreciation Week in the spring.

Guests and Visitors

Visitors are permitted on campus only with an appointment or official invitation from the school. Parents and guests are welcome throughout the year for opportunities such as volunteering, sharing expertise, or attending student showcases.

Lost and Found

Items left around the Elementary School are placed in the lost and found cart or cubbies next to the ES Office. Valuable items, such as wallets, jewelry, or money, are held by the ES administrative assistant. We encourage children to be responsible for their belongings and ask that all items be clearly labeled with the student's first and last name and current class.

Movies

Audio-visual materials are used for curriculum-related instruction only. Audio-visual materials used in KG1 or KG2 will be appropriate for early learners and rated G. The ES Principal may be consulted if content suitability is in question.

Nuisance Items

Items such as toys, electronic games, collector cards, toy weapons, fidget spinners, personal recorders, water pistols, skateboards, roller blades, or smart devices should not be brought to school unless requested for a specific program. Bicycles, scooters, and roller shoes may be used between home and school but are not permitted on campus; they must be parked inside Gate 2. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Phones and Smart Watches

Phones and Smart watches with data or SIM cards must remain off and stored in backpacks during the school day. Students may use them after school to communicate with caregivers. Inappropriate use during school hours will result in confiscation; parents will be asked to collect the device from the ES Office. Students may use phones in the ES Office if they need to contact a parent during the day.

Security

All students, parents, and staff must comply with ACS security procedures. Adults should carry campus access cards; visitors without a card must register at the gate and provide identification. Without a purpose or event, the ES campus is closed for general use past 5:00 p.m.

Smoking and Drug Use

ACS is a smoke-free and alcohol-free campus. Smoking and drug use, including stimulants, inhalants, and depressants, are illegal for minors in the UAE.

Valuables

Students are discouraged from bringing valuables to school. Each student has a non-locking cubby or desk for personal belongings. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Withdrawal

Parents who wish to withdraw a student must submit a written request to Jodi Lefort the Director of Admissions. Students must receive clearance from the library, cafeteria, accountant, and teacher before school records and transcripts can be released.

DIRECTORY

Elementary School Leadership Team

Jonathan Mueller	Principal	jmueller@acs.sch.ae
Jenna Murray	Assistant Principal - KG1-Gr 1	jmurray@acs.sch.ae
Evelyn Lucero	Assistant Principal - Gr 2-5	elucero@acs.sch.ae

Elementary School Counseling Team

Dana Allen	Counselor	dallen@acs.sch.ae
Farwa Devji	Counselor	fdevji@acs.sch.ae
Ghinwa Masri	Counselor	gmasri@acs.sch.ae
Kalen Bruce	K-12 School Psychologist	kbruce@acs.sch.ae

Elementary School Administrative Support

Lone Wennestad	Executive Assistant	lwennestad@acs.sch.ae
Nada Hani	Office Assistant	nhani@acs.sch.ae

Elementary School Teaching Faculty

Luckhardt, Sabine	KG 1A
Hirsch, Ami	KG 1B
Encalada, Gaby	KG 1C
Mani, Manila	IA - KG 1A
Kyzy, Nura	IA - KG 1B
Baltazar, Maureen	IA - KG 1C
Jalloul, Ghida	KG2A

Ackermann, Jennilee	KG2B
Abbott, Victoria	KG2C
Rana, Madhvi	KG2D
Samonte, Betsy	IA - KG2A
Dayang, Leonisa	IA - KG2B
Sud, Shipra	IA - KG2C
Reyes, Flora	IA - KG2D
Bohara, Ritu	Gr 1A
Weiner, Danica	Gr 1B
Weiner, Anin	Gr 1C
Odie, Patricia	Gr 1D
Dajani, Abeer	Gr 1E
Hossny, Rabab	IA - Gr 1A
Majewski, Charlotte	IA - Gr 1B
Surendra, Piumi	IA - Gr 1C
Sawant, Padmini	IA - Gr 1D
Negash, Menbere	IA - Gr 1E
Commodore, Peter	Gr 2A
Herron, Kristine	Gr 2B
Burt, Velma	Gr 2C
Evans, Danielle	Gr 2D
Saxena, Nandita	Gr 2E
Pereira, Jessica	IA - Gr 2A
Katdare, Riva	IA - Gr 2B
Thivianandan, Christine	IA - Gr 2C
Sabbour, Sally	IA - Gr 2D
Sharma, Charvi	IA - Gr 2E
Hitchcock, Laci	Gr 3A
Magee, Caoimhe	Gr 3B
Brannan, Nora	Gr 3C
Stykalo, Kayla	Gr 3D
Bruce, Sarah	Gr 3E
Reyes, Cathline	IA - Gr 3
Pizarro, Lili	IA - Gr 3
Bhatia, Tina	Gr 4A
Cheron, Ashley	Gr 4B
McTavish, Alison	Gr 4C
Hitchcock, James	Gr 4D
Tryon, Anouk	Gr 4E
Makarova, Nadia	IA - Gr 4
Nair, Ashwathi	Faculty Intern / IA - Gr 4
Kingsbury, Amalia	Gr 5A
Graham, Patrick	Gr 5B
Mulvihill, Amy	Gr 5C
Kriel, Tilani	Gr 5D

Lambert, Jordan	Gr 5E
Smith, Mako	IA - Gr 5
Tauro, Meera	IA - Gr 5
Taha, Anaila	IA

Elementary Learning Support and Special Subject Faculty

Abraham, Averì	Student Support
Ahmad, Fatima	Student Support
Winter, Krystle	Student Support
Boaitey, Roseline	Student Support
ElKathiri, Ahlam	IA - Student Support
Nonis, Daphni	IA - Student Support
John, Deepa	IA - Student Support
Gopalakrishnan, Suba	IA - Student Support
Sahel, Atheel	Arabic
Schulze, Corrie	Arabic
Sinno, Jamila	Arabic
Houdeib, Marwa	Arabic
Bayoumi, Mohamed	Arabic
Hammoud, Razzak	Arabic
Naffa, Suha	Arabic
Almansoori, Afra	IA - Arabic
Al Hattali, Buthaina	IA - Arabic
Alhosani, Hajer	IA - Arabic
Al Nahdi, Shama	IA - Arabic
Said, Safiya	IA - KG 1 Arabic
Baldwin, Scott	Art - Gr 1-5
Medin, Marielle	IA - Art - Gr 1-5
Ross, Jane	Design Tech and Innovation
Aljuneibi, Maitha	IA - Design Tech and Innovation
Libreros, Carolina	Creative Arts - KG
Krishnan, Uma	Faculty Intern / IA - Creative Arts - KG
AlMehairi, Salama	IA - Creative Arts - KG
Cheron, Rony	Music - Gr 1-5
Tabaday, Jenifer	IA - Music - Gr 1-5
Moog, Isaac	PE
Dean, Kelly	PE
Romera, Maria Angeles	PE
Ninala, Efraim	IA - PE
Dupay, Joy	IA - PE
Mathai, Reeja	IA - PE

Administrative Offices

Flickinger, Monique
Al-Tamimi, Waheeda
Greene, Amy
Rafai, Amber
King, Jacqueline
Mawlawi, Mona
Pradeep, Nija
Rajasree, Nimmi
Panwar, Abhisha
Bafagih, Mahmoud
Jama, Faiza
Salem, Saleh Ali
Al Hashemi, Omar
Philip-Jayendran, Marise
Ashley, Sarah
Lefort, Jodi
McColgan, Mia
Arellano, Frances
Bohara, Kapil
Donison, Bobbi
Thivianandan, Joy
Campbell, Yvette
Pineda, Yahaira
Manola, Anthi
Salloum, Monica
McIntyre, Brenda
Cooper, Tia
Alhefeiti, Reem
Stanicole, Adi
Wellborn, Erinn
Gietz, Preben
Moog, Jordan
Dreyer, Shaun
Shelby, Aaron
Pubil, Melisa
Zuhdi, Randa
Al Nobani, Karen
McMarrow, Grainne
Obraztsova, Anna
Muhammed, Ashiq
Devitt, Christina
Smith, Chris
Sfeirova, Sandra
Balakrishnan, Rajanish
Nelliyullathil, Suhail

Superintendent
Superintendent's Office Executive Assistant
Assistant Superintendent
Business Office Admin Assistant
Director of Finance
Accountant
Accountant
Accountant/Cashier
Financial Analyst
Director of Government Relations
Government Relations Admin Assistant
Government Relations Assistant
Government Relations Assistant
Director of Human Resources
Human Resources Assistant
Director of Admissions
Admissions Assistant
Admissions Assessment Coordinator
Campus Operations Coordinator
Director of Teaching and Learning
Executive Assistant in the Office of Learning
Director of Institutional Advancement
Director of Communications
Stewardship Manager
Alumni Relations Coordinator
Communications Specialist
Visual Content and Social Media Coordinator
Communications Assistant
Librarian
Technology Systems Analyst
Director of Athletics and Activities
Assistant Director of Athletics and Activities
Athletics and Activities Executive Assistant
Secondary Curriculum Coordinator
Service Learning / CAS Coordinator
Service Learning / CAS Coordinator Assistant
School Nurse
School Nurse
Health Office Administrative Assistant
Facilities Manager
Director of Learning Innovation and Technology
K12 Learning Innovation Coach
Data Systems Manager
Systems Administrator/Technician
Infrastructure Administration