

Middle and Upper School Student Handbook
(2023-2024)



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Introduction

Ahliah School is a private, independent, not-for-profit, inclusive school which aims to provide a quality educational program for students in K-12. Ahliah works at providing a distinctive learning experience as articulated by its definition of quality education.

Ahliah believes that both parents and school should work collaboratively to ensure better academic achievement and socio-emotional development of their children.

The purpose of this Handbook is to familiarize you with the school policies, expectations and procedures, and set guidelines that will provide for the efficient operation of the school and promote parent involvement. It is essential that parents and students read the Student Handbook. We are always available to answer any questions or concerns that you may have.

Mission Statement

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

Vision

Our vision is to achieve higher standards of quality education and transform the learning experience to offer our students a distinctive education, and also to exchange best practices with global peer institutions to serve, by example, other institutions of education in Lebanon.

Ahliah's Code of Ethics

Integrity
Respect to self and others
Diversity
Collaboration
Excellence
Growth mindset

Quality Education at Ahliah

Ahliah is committed to provide quality education through:

- providing a clearly documented curriculum, learning experiences, and teaching approaches that promote the acquisition of knowledge, critical thinking, creativity, problem solving, decision making, working collaboratively, and the appreciation of arts

- nurturing responsibility, respect, compassion, and collaboration
- nurturing citizenship and engagement in local, regional, and global issues
- promoting student-centered teaching to develop students' full potentials cognitively, emotionally, socially, physically, and aesthetically
- providing a healthy, safe, protective, and supportive learning environment
- promoting the continuous learning of the whole school community through effective and productive collaboration
- conducting results-driven assessment and evaluation that identifies students' needs
- strengthening home-school relationships to ensure parental and community involvement in school
- Leveraging the use of technology by the school community and in accordance with the International Society for Technology in Education standards.

Global Citizenship at Ahliah

Ahliah is committed to develop Global Citizenship and open-minded individuals through providing opportunities for:

- appreciating diversity and multiple perspectives
- communicating in more than one language
- fostering citizenship and engagement in local, regional, and global issues
- nurturing the values of respect, compassion, responsibility, collaboration and conflict resolution
- understanding and advocating human rights, social justice, and equity
- recognizing and appreciating different cultures including beliefs,

values, languages, heritage, environment, economic, social and political systems

- developing the ability to engage productively with all others in a diverse world

- recognizing and practicing the rights, responsibilities, and ethical behaviors of living, learning, and working in an interconnected digital world

Aims and Objectives

Ahliyah School aims at:

- creating a caring, safe, unbiased, and stimulating learning environment for all school members
- promoting a positive respectful self-image, self-confidence, and growth mindset in every student
- working cooperatively and collaboratively among all school community members
- fostering students’ self-discipline, self-confidence, autonomy, and interdependency
- fostering integrity and transparency in all communications
- promoting appreciation of diversity and open-mindedness
- considering each student’s needs in the learning and development processes
- acquiring the knowledge and skills of citizens able to be engaged in local, regional, and global issues

Academics

The academic year is divided into three Terms (Progress) and two summative evaluations.

Promotion

To be promoted students should,

1. accumulate a passing general average in order to be promoted, or graduate
 - Grade 7 - 11 students need to have a passing general average above 11.25 and a passing general average (above 11.25) in all main subjects. Students who do not get a passing average in Math, English, or Arabic will be assigned a mandatory summer school in order to complement their learning in these subjects.
 - Grade 12 students need to have a passing general average above 10 and a passing general average (above 10) in all main subjects.
2. attend a minimum of 90 % of school days

Probation

1. If students get promoted after completing make-up exams, they get promoted on academic probation.
2. If students collect a certain number of warnings that may or may not lead them to suspension, they get promoted but on behavioral probation.

Being on academic and behavioral probation means that students will not be given a second chance for the coming academic year in case they do not fulfill school requirements.

Follow-up

3. Teachers and academic administrators will constantly follow up on students' academic performance and take intervention measures when necessary.
4. Teachers and academic administrators might call for a parent conference if a student's academic performance or conduct is not up to expectation.

5. All information concerning material covered, homework, exam dates, students' exam grades and comments on conduct are uploaded and updated on the school's website and are only accessible by the student or parent concerned.

Honors and exemptions

1. High achievers in all classes will have the privilege of being included in the school's honors list and will be given awards of achievement by the end of each academic year.

<p><u>Honor Roll</u></p> <p>High honors (Average of > 17.5)</p> <p>Honors (Average of 15.5 – 17.4)</p>
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2. Students who achieve high during all three terms on a subject are eligible to be exempted from the final exams. (except for Grades 9 and 12 Lebanese Program students)
3. To be eligible for exemption from a final exam, a student must have a minimum cumulative average of
 - 16.5 in Arabic language
 - 18 in English language
 - 17.5 in Social Studies
 - 18 in Math and Sciences

A student not showing behavioral alignment with school policy and/or disciplinary probation might lose the privilege of exemption from final exams irrespective of his/her average.

Academic support and remedial programs

1. The school provides academic support and remedial programs when needed and appropriate.
2. Some programs are optional while others might be mandatory.

3. Parents will be notified of any support or remedial programs their child might be in need of.

Guidance and Advisory

Ahliah School guidance and counseling program aims at working collaboratively with students, parents, and school personnel to create an environment that promotes students' achievement and well-being.

1. Guidance and advisory programs and services may include:
 - Assistance in planning future education
 - Interpretation of rules and procedures
 - Career orientation
 - Help in improving study skills and other academic skills
 - Help with school or social concerns
 - Help with any emotional disturbances
2. Advisory activities may be embedded into the regular school day.

Field Trips

1. Field trips are an important extension of a school curriculum. In order for students to benefit from these activities, appropriate behavior from all students is necessary.
2. The school has the right to prohibit students from attending field trips because of disruptive behavior.
3. Parent permission slips will be signed in advance.

Library

1. All students are encouraged and entitled to use the library and to borrow books.
2. Books may be borrowed for a specified period of time.

3. A fine of 20000 L.L / school day is charged for each book returned late.
4. Damage to books beyond reasonable wear or computers and all lost books shall be paid for by the student.
5. No materials may be taken from the library unless they have been checked out.
6. Food and drinks are not permitted in the library or labs.
7. Students on a library pass from a teacher must first show their pass to the librarian, then work on their assigned task.
8. A student who has been asked to leave the library more than two times for disruptive activity might lose the privilege of using it.
9. Students using the Library should abide the school Library policies
10. Students using technology devices should abide by the “Bring your Own Device “(Ahliah BYOD) policy.
11. Respect and consideration for others using the library and other student facilities are necessary at all times.

Textbooks and Use of Online Learning Management Systems

1. Each student is responsible for his/her textbooks.
2. Students are expected to access their online learning platform account/s frequently, to maintain effective communication with their teachers, access resources and to keep track of assignments and deadlines.
3. The school provides every student from grade 7 to grade 12 with an Ahliah School Email account, with a @ahliahschool.edu.lb address. The account should be checked regularly.
4. Students should communicate with their teachers and other Ahliah members only through the online learning platform, and Ahliah email addresses.

5. Students should respect and protect the privacy of others. They should not post online or distribute private information about others or themselves.

Attendance

Attendance guidelines

1. Ahliyah Classes start at 8:00 am and end at 2:30 pm. Classes end at 1: 30 on Wednesdays. Students are expected to be present at school before 7:55. On Mondays, students are expected to be present at school before 7:45 for the weekly assembly.
2. Full Attendance of all classes is imperative.

Absence

1. If a student is absent from school, parents/guardians must call the school to advise of their child's absence prior to the student's absence or on the same day. Without this notification, the school will contact the parents by phone to inform them of the student's absence.
2. The following conditions may excuse a student from school attendance:
 - Personal illness or injury – a doctor's medical verification note is required by the school
 - Family emergency – an emergency situation requiring the student to be absent from school
 - Death of a relative, limited to 1 day unless reasonable cause can be shown for a longer absence
3. Students returning to school after all absences should bring a written note from their parent or guardian stating:
 - The dates of absences
 - The reason for the absences
 - The parent or guardian signature

4. The parent or medical verification note should be presented to the supervisor/HoD the day the student returns to school.

Unexcused Absences

Students who fail to bring a written excuse upon their return will lose the privilege of repeating tests and assessments done on the day of their absence. Students will still be responsible for completing homework and assignments which were scheduled during their absence.

Tardiness

1. After school begins, tardy students are required to report to the supervisor's/HoD's office upon their arrival to obtain an admission slip.
2. Students who are tardy should be accompanied by a written excuse from parents or a phone call explaining the reasons for tardiness. Otherwise, the school will contact the parents/guardians and notify them of the tardiness.
3. After the third unexcused tardiness students will be sent back home and the absence will be regarded as "unexcused absence".

Lateness to Class

1. Students should be in class when the class starts.
2. Any student who does not follow this procedure will be marked late.
3. Students who are late to class should report to the HoD's/supervisor's office and get an admission slip.
4. The recurrence of being late to class without permission of the teacher or an administrator will result in progressive measures.

Early Dismissal

1. Students must never leave the school building without a permission slip from the HoD.

2. Failure to follow this procedure may result in disciplinary measures.

Discipline and Code of Conduct

Code of conduct

The discipline and code of conduct at Ahliah stem from the belief that teachers are the sole and utmost authority in their classes and all disciplinary actions in the classroom are carried out upon their initiation and consent.

Floor supervisors, HoDs and the school principal also partake in taking disciplinary actions.

School rules apply while on school premises, school buses or any other school property, digital platforms, during school activities at or away from school and the school's surroundings.

- Parents/guardians will be notified of any measure taken and a parent conference may be called for.
- A warning slip will be given to notify parents and administrators of the infraction.
- Parents are notified by the supervisor/HoD of the incident via email or phone call, and the incident is documented on the online communication dashboard and in the student's record.

The reoccurrence of any violation or infraction will lead to any of the following measures:

3. Assigned work related to the infraction
4. In-School detention
5. Saturday or Wednesday after school detention
6. Out-of-School Suspension
7. Expulsion

8. Compensatory payment of damages
6. Loss of privileges

Any decision of student suspension that exceeds two days should be discussed by the Code of Ethics Committee after giving all involved parties the right to express their point of views.

Any of the disciplinary actions stated above might be applied for, but not limited to, any of the following:

- Disruption of the normal operation of the school
- Harassment: whether of racial, gender, ethnic or religious nature that are deemed offensive.
- Use of profanity and obscene Language / Materials / Actions / Gestures
- Attendance: in case a student fails to comply with attendance guidelines stated in this handbook
- Forgery: Students shall not misrepresent a signature on any document.
- Damage of Property: Students shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to school property.
- Assault: Students shall not act or threaten to act in such a way as to cause physical injury to other students, any school employee or other persons
- Failure to abide by classroom or school instructions
- Possession of dangerous instruments
- Narcotics, alcoholic beverages and drugs: Students shall not possess the aforementioned items
- Tobacco: Tobacco, in any form, shall not be carried or used by any student on school property or at school events
- Theft: Students shall respect the personal ownership rights of others. Students shall not take ownership of items of others.
- Inappropriate Display of Affection

- Specific cyber-violations are considered as a serious offense since they are in a relational framework with criminal offense, identity theft, and violation of privacy.
- Computers usage: (See Ahliah BYOD Policy)
- Violation of Bus Rules: Students must follow all bus rules as outlined in Code of Conduct/Discipline – Bus Rules.
- General Misconduct: Students shall refrain from throwing objects, or being abusive or disruptive in their behavior. Respect the rights, feeling and safety of others.
- Bullying is not tolerated at Ahliah School. Bullying is an unwanted, aggressive, and repetitive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Cyber- This means that the bully uses his/ her power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, popularity or authority—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. Bullying might happen between:

- a. Student-student
- b. Students - a group of students
- c. Group of students- one student

Verbal bullying is an intentional usage of offensive language. Verbal bullying includes:

- a. Teasing
- b. Name-calling
- c. Inappropriate comments
- d. Threatening to cause harm

Social bullying or relational bullying, it involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. It might occur on social platforms. Social bullying includes:

- a. Excluding someone on purpose
- b. Telling others not to be friends with someone
- c. Spreading rumors about someone
- d. Humiliating someone in public

Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes:

- a. Hitting/kicking/pinching
- b. Spitting
- c. Tripping/pushing
- d. Taking or breaking someone's things
- e. Making obscene or rude hand gestures

Cheating and Plagiarism

- Students are expected to complete and submit their own work. Copying work from other students or any source without proper acknowledgment is in contradiction with the principles of integrity, respect and responsibility.
- Such actions will not be tolerated and will lead students to severe loss of grades.

Online learning

Students are held accountable for synchronous and asynchronous learning. The attendance of virtual classes is mandatory.

Students are required to maintain the same professional boundaries with teachers online as they are required to maintain in person

Students are required to select an appropriate location to join a virtual classroom - a neutral location (i.e. not a bedroom or a bathroom) in a common area in the house.

Students are required to eliminate all backgrounds that provide information on students' personal lives and locations. A simple white or light-colored background is best.

Appropriate dress code when joining a virtual classroom.

The virtual classrooms are recorded however, in order to maintain confidentiality, counseling sessions are not recorded.

Student's communications/inquiries will be addressed by the relevant Head of Division/ Faculty within 24 hours over the week and 48 hours over the weekend.

For more details about online learning, please refer to the Virtual Learning Guidelines document.

Dress Code

Students should respect the school dress code:

- During warm days: students should wear the school polo shirt and dark or solid color pants or jeans. Pants or Jeans should be decent and not revealing, should not be torn. Leggings are not allowed.
- During cold days: students should wear the same but add: school sweater and a raincoat on rainy days.
- During P.E: students should wear the school P.E uniform (there is a summer uniform and a winter one)
- A violation of the dress code will compel the school to call parents for appropriate clothing. Students might not be allowed to attend classes until their attire is dress code compliant.

School's Right to Search

1. Storage places provided for student use are property of the school and therefore, are subject to a random search at any time.
2. Administrators are authorized to conduct reasonable inspection of school property or of students and their belongings when

there is reasonable cause to believe that a student may be in possession of non-permitted items.

Incident reporting

A student should report immediately to a teacher/HoD/supervisor/Child Protection Liaison Officer any incident which gives her/him any cause to feel threatened or uncomfortable.

All incident reports shall be addressed as per Ahliah's Child Protection Policy.

General policies

Child protection policy

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

Grievance Policy and procedure

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

- Improper implementation of a regulation or a procedure
- Unfair behavior or procedure used in arriving at a disciplinary action.

Students and parents have the right to follow the informal and formal procedures of the grievance policy.

Procedure:

- Student(s) or parent(s) will ask for a meeting with the head of division to follow the informal procedures of the grievance policy.
- Student(s) or parent(s) may directly go for the formal step and submit the grievance in writing to the school principal

in case the complaint is against the head of the division in which the student is enrolled.

- In the case when the complaint is with respect to a school employee, the student or parent filing the complaint should be aware that the employee will be given an opportunity to respond, in person and/or in writing, to the complaint. He/she might be present during any conference between the Head of division, principal, or board with the student(s) or parent(s). The student(s) or parent(s) has/ve the responsibility to provide evidence for a concern about the implementation of a procedure or regulation.

Student Council

1. The Student Council plans school activities, conducts community service projects, discusses recommendations from students, teachers and administrators and seeks to improve the school and its image. Elections will take place during the first semester.
2. Candidates should be Ahliyah students for at least one year.
3. Candidates must submit two teacher recommendation forms and complete a questionnaire.
4. Members are selected based on a combined score from previous academic performance, conduct, teacher recommendation and a candidate questionnaire.
5. The school has the right to remove a student from the council in case of misconduct or poor academic performance

Extra-curricular Program

Students may choose to enroll in any of the school clubs / athletic teams.

Extra-curricular activities may be scheduled outside the regular school hours.

The scope and variety of the extracurricular activities may vary from year to year

Valuable Personal Property / cellular phones

1. Personal devices including but not limited to cameras, music players, and electronic games, etc., are not allowed in school.
2. All such items should be turned in to the supervisor/HoD upon arrival to be picked up at the end of the school day.
3. In the case of smart phones, tables and other such devices please refer to the BYOD Policy.
4. Violation of this rule may result in disciplinary action and confiscation of the items. On the first violation, confiscated items will be returned to the owner at the end of the day. On a second violation, the items will be confiscated for a week and returned only to parents. On the third and subsequent violations items will not be returned until the end of the school year, students may also be assigned discipline measures.

Transportation

Parents must notify the school at the beginning of the school year of their children's mode of transportation to and from school in order for the school to ensure that proper safety measures are put in place .In case of any changes ,parents should inform the school ahead of time of the change .

Insurance

Ahliah students are insured on school premises and outside school during school trips and activities.

The school has an insurance policy that covers accidents within the school campus and field trips. The school insurance does not cover preexisting health diseases. However, if the nurse deems it necessary for the student's safety to be transferred to the hospital, she will accompany him/her after informing the parents.

Illness Policy

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

- Fever: a temperature of 37.5 degrees or higher that occurred at least within the previous 24 hours.
- Respiratory Symptoms: difficulty in breathing, severe coughing, croup with high-pitched whistling cough, with or without fever.
- Diarrhea: It is the result of an increased number of abnormally loose stools within the previous 24 hours. The student shall be observed for other symptoms such as fever, abdominal pain, or vomiting.
- Vomiting: eye/nose drainage, thick mucus or pus draining from the eye or nose.
- Sore throat.
- Skin Problems: skin rashes, undiagnosed or contagious.
- Persistent itching of body or scalp.
- Any change in the child's appearance/behavior: child looks or acts differently: unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, confused, irritable, and difficult to awaken.
- Swollen neck gland.

In case the student shows symptoms of a communicable disease, parents are asked to notify the school within 24 hours. The child can join the school once the family physician provide a written report stating that the child has recovered.

Student, who have the symptoms of communicable diseases, should be given time outside the classroom

Parents are requested to provide the school with a medical report clarifying that the case is nor more communicable

The school must obtain parental permission in order for a student to leave school due to illness.

Students are not permitted to use their cell phones to call home when sick. Only a school employee should call home if a student is ill.

Procedures in Case of Accidents

In case of student injury in class or on the playground, the following procedures will be followed:

- Parents will be notified of the incident and the procedures followed by the nurse.
- In incidents of an emergency that is beyond the capacity and facilities of the infirmary, the nurse will contact the parents for their approval before transferring the student to the hospital