



## Elementary School Student-Parent Handbook

### American International School Dhaka

12 United Nations Road, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh

T: +8802 984-2452 • F: +8802 984-3175 • [www.aisdhaka.org](http://www.aisdhaka.org)



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## **Welcome**

The American International School Dhaka (AISD) is a Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 college preparatory institution. It is committed to the realization of students' potential through a holistic program, instructional differentiation, and recognized international standards of achievement. During the admissions process, the school attempts to verify that AISD is an appropriate educational environment for each new student through testing and one-on-one meetings between an Admissions representative, counselor, and, where possible, the principal and the potential students and parents.

As a school, we work in partnership with our diverse local and international community. Our academic programs and facilities are guided by the philosophical principles of an American education. The board, administration, and faculty strive to offer an exemplary educational experience to all the students we serve, and hold a strong belief in fulfilling our stated mission and vision.

## **Mission Statement**

AISD creates an academic and social environment based on American educational principles. We challenge students from an international community to achieve their potential, become lifelong learners and contribute to a changing global society.

## **Vision**

Preparing students to become stewards of a just and sustainable world.

## **Core Values**

- We are a compassionate, caring and diverse community.
- We act with integrity and respect.
- We embrace creativity and balance.
- We are proud of our diversity and willingness to collaborate.
- We hold each other accountable to these values.

# History and Governance

## History

The American International School Dhaka (AISD) has existed in the nation of Bangladesh since 1972, but its history goes back as far as 1963, when, in the former East Pakistan, it was known as the Dhaka American Society School. Over the years, this educational institution has gone through various changes.

The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSACS) first accredited AISD in 1984 for kindergarten to Grade 8. The high school program (Grades 9 to 12) was added in 1988, and the first class of seniors graduated from AISD in 1991. The Pre-Kindergarten program was added the following year.

AISD was re-accredited in 1994 by the MSACS and the European Council of International Schools (ECIS) for kindergarten to Grade 12. AISD received new accreditation in 2004 by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) and the Council of International Schools (CIS) for Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12.

## Governance

The AISD School Board has been authorized by the *Articles of Association* and the *By-Laws* to govern the school. The main functions of the School Board are to hire a Superintendent to oversee the day-to-day running of the school; to create, approve and maintain School Board Policy; and to see that the school is adequately financed to carry out its stated Mission and Objectives.

The School Board is comprised of nine voting members: five Americans, at least three of whom are direct hires of the US Embassy, and four open to all nationalities. There is one non-voting member who is the representative of the US Ambassador.

A School Board member must be a parent of a student enrolled at AISD. They are elected to serve an initial two-year term at the spring meeting of the Parents' Association, usually held in March of each year, and may be extended to serve to a total of five years by invitation from the Board.

Board meetings are held six times throughout the school year. Meetings are open and members of the association are invited to attend. Agendas and minutes are posted on the school's website. The *School Board Policy Statement*, as well as supporting documents which include *The Articles of Association* and the *By-Laws*, are also available online and in the library.

Official publications include the *Brochure* and *Fact Sheets* given to new students during the admissions process, the *Parent-Student Handbook* (available online) and the AISD Calendar handed out at the beginning of the school year.

## **On Being an Inclusive School**

Our educational community serves students who meet admissions criteria and can be supported by our inclusionary model given the services available. Support is provided within each division in order to meet a variety of needs.

All three divisions at AISD use a collaborative approach when identifying and meeting the needs of students. We have the training and resources to address the needs of students requiring English as an Additional Language, counseling services and learning support services for learning difficulties. We promote curricular integration and student engagement, and hold ourselves accountable for differentiating instruction and collaborating with colleagues to best address each child's learning needs.

We believe:

- A diverse student population contributes positively to the school community.
- Each of our students has unique learning characteristics and interests.
- Providing support for students within their regular classrooms is an effective means of creating a welcoming community and successful educational experience.
- A strong partnership between school and home is essential to a child's success.

# Learning Principles

We support learning at AISD through the following research-based principles. All members of the school community - students, teachers, parents and administrators - play an active role in learning.

1. The learning environment is supportive. Therefore, we...
  - build positive relationships by knowing and valuing each other.
  - support and show respect for individuals and our communities.
  - encourage and help each other to take risks to learn.
  - help each person achieve their potential through structured support, appreciation of effort, and recognition of work.
  
2. The learning environment supports lifelong learning through independence, collaboration and self-motivation. Therefore, we...
  - take active responsibility for our own learning.
  - collaborate and communicate with others to learn.
  - use strategies to stay engaged as we learn.
  
3. Learners' needs, backgrounds, perspectives and interests are reflected in the learning program. Therefore, we...
  - use learning strategies that match the needs, perspectives and interests of individual learners.
  - build on prior experiences, knowledge and skills.
  - use a range of appropriate learning tools, resources and technology.
  
4. Learners are challenged and supported to develop deep levels of thinking and application. Therefore, we...
  - create experiences to sustain learning over time and to focus on connections between ideas.
  - have high expectations that are reachable and improve the quality of learning.
  - use different strategies that support different ways of thinking and learning.
  - develop inquiry skills, problem-solving skills and thinking skills.
  - use strategies to develop adaptability, imagination, innovation and creativity.
  
5. Effective assessment practices are an essential part of learning. Therefore, assessment practices...
  - are designed to reflect the full range of learning objectives.
  - make assessment criteria easy to understand.
  - make progress toward learning objectives clear.
  - ensure that learners receive frequent, useful feedback that encourages reflection and self-assessment.
  - use evidence from assessments to support further learning.

6. Learning connects meaningfully across subject areas and with communities beyond the classroom.

Therefore, we...

- try to interact with and apply our learning to local and broader communities.
- use what we learn in new situations.

## **Parental Involvement**

The research overwhelmingly demonstrates that parental involvement in their child's learning is positively related to achievement. The research shows that, the more involved parents are in their child's learning, the more a child achieves and works to his/her potential. Furthermore, parental involvement is positively related to benefits other than student achievement. These benefits include attitude toward school or toward particular subject areas, self-concept, motivation, classroom behavior, time spent on homework, and expectations for one's future.

Given the importance of parental involvement, the American International School Dhaka expects parents to support their child's education in the following ways:

### **To Support the Developmental Needs of Your Child**

- Be patient and supportive.
- Make sure your child gets enough sleep (8-10 hours per night) and eats nutritious, balanced meals, especially breakfast.
- Do not compare your child with others. Each child is unique and learns differently.
- Be open to discussion of your child's academic, as well as social, and personal successes and challenges.
- Communicate to your child that his or her effort, progress, and achievement are equally valued. Students will do their best by doing their own work.

### **Establish a Family Culture of Learning**

- Ask your child about his/her school day. Ask about the day's lessons and what your child learned. Show an interest as your child describes the school day. Share your own learning experiences and show your child resources that you may have in your own home that relate to your child's learning experiences.
- Ask your child what homework s/he has to do each evening and offer your help and support.
- Provide a quiet and comfortable space and time for your child to do homework.
- Encourage your child to bring home books to read from the school library.
- Set aside at least 20 minutes a night for the whole family to read together or independently, in English or in your native language. Take some time to discuss what you are reading.
- Encourage your child to write letters or emails to family and friends.
- Communicate the importance of education and school attendance to your child. Arrange family holidays around the school calendar.

## **International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP)**

AISD is an authorized PYP School. The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP) is an international curriculum framework designed for students aged 3 to 12. The PYP provides schools with a curriculum framework of essential elements — the knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes, and action that young students need to equip them for successful lives, both now and in the future (<http://www.ibo.org>). AISD works with these five elements to construct a rigorous and challenging primary curriculum for international education. The curriculum is transdisciplinary, meaning that it focuses on issues that go across subject areas.

With a focus on international-mindedness and strong personal values, AISD centers on the total growth of the developing child, encompassing social, physical, emotional and cultural needs in addition to academic development. The PYP nurtures independent learning skills, encouraging every student to take responsibility for their learning. The PYP believes students learn best when they explore big ideas from a variety of perspectives.

Teachers work collaboratively to plan **Units of Inquiry** to help students make links across subject areas. Students are encouraged to share their knowledge and understanding with others. Teachers help students build on their current knowledge, rather than assuming that all students are starting at the same place. Students are taught to take risks in their learning and to reflect on their work to learn from their successes as well as their mistakes.

As a school, we use standards and benchmarks to create units using the PYP framework. The PYP draws on research and best practice from a range of national systems with a wealth of knowledge and experience from international schools to create a relevant, engaging, challenging and significant educational framework for all children.

There are currently over 1,440 authorized PYP schools worldwide (<http://www.ibo.org/facts/>). To help parents learn about the program, workshops are offered throughout the year and articles relating to the curriculum are published in AISD's weekly newsletter, the *Shamachar*, on a regular basis.

## The IB Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programs is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. This aim supports the AISD vision, “Preparing students to become stewards for a just and sustainable world.” The IB Learner Profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

Teachers nurture and encourage the development of the attributes of the Learner Profile throughout the elementary school and encourage parents to do the same at home. The following is a description of the IB Learner Profile:

<b>IB Learner Profile</b>
<b>IB programs aim to develop internationally minded people who are striving to become:</b>
<b>Inquirers</b> We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life
<b>Knowledgeable</b> We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.
<b>Thinkers</b> We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.
<b>Communicators</b> We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.
<b>Principled</b> We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

**Open-minded**

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

**Caring**

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

**Risk-takers**

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

**Balanced**

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

**Reflective**

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

To learn more about the Learner Profile attributes, click [here](#).

# The Elementary School Program

## Introduction

The Elementary School program is driven and guided by both the school's Mission and Vision Statements with the curriculum designed to prepare students to become stewards of a just and sustainable world. We are committed to the development of the whole child, providing a balanced program that addresses children's social, emotional, and academic development. As an International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years' Program (PYP) school, we use the IB Learner Profile to teach our children what it means to be internationally-minded, lifelong learners. The attributes are achievable by all elementary school students and our program ensures that children are given many opportunities to understand and demonstrate these behaviours in real-life settings. The attributes of the Learner Profile serve not only as a guide for the kind of student we hope will graduate from our school, but for all learners in our school community - students, teachers, staff, and parents alike.

Teaching and learning at AISD celebrates the many ways people work together to construct meaning and make sense of the world. Through an inquiry approach, students are able to ask questions, explore, wonder, collect data, seek information and solve problems in a variety of ways, thus actively engaging students in their effort to make sense of the world. Inquiry involves the synthesis, analysis, and manipulation of knowledge through play and guided learning as well. Our faculty is experienced and committed to providing a world-class education for the students at AISD. We believe that student success at school is fostered through strong home-school communication, parental involvement, and support of their child's education.

## Academic Program

The Elementary School at AISD utilizes the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP). This international curriculum framework, designed for students aged 3 to 12, focuses on the total growth of the developing child encompassing social, physical, and emotional needs in addition to academic development. The PYP believes that students learn best when they explore big ideas from a variety of perspectives. Teachers work collaboratively, planning units of study that integrate subjects through concepts or content to help students make links across subject areas.

We are dedicated to a student-centered education in which students are encouraged to celebrate cultural diversity, share their knowledge and understanding with others, pursue personal aspirations, and set challenging goals. Our teachers empower students to develop confidence and personal responsibility. Students are encouraged to take risks in their learning, to reflect on their work, and to develop the imagination and motivation to meet their own needs to be global citizens.

At AISD, we use standards and benchmarks to create units that are challenging, relevant, and engaging. We emphasize learning how to learn, thus preparing students for a lifetime of learning, independently and in collaboration with others.

### **Prekindergarten Program**

Prekindergarten 3 students attend school from 8:00 - 12:15 all days except Tuesday. On Tuesday, PreK 3 students attend school from 9:15 - 12:15. Prekindergarten 4 students attend from 8:00 - 1:40 all days except Tuesday. On Tuesday, PreK 4 students attend from 9:15 - 1:40. This is developmentally appropriate practice, providing students with the opportunity to gradually have a longer day each year they are at school.

Preschool children learn best when they have positive and caring relationships with adults and other children; when they receive carefully planned, intentional guidance and assistance; and when they can safely encounter and explore many interesting things in their environment. Prekindergarten teachers maintain appropriate expectations, and provide each child with the right mix of challenge, support, sensitivity, and stimulation. With their knowledge, skill, and training, teachers ensure that our program promotes and enhances every child's learning. Our full PreK Programme Guide can be found [here](#).

Our Prekindergarten teachers develop our **Program of Inquiry** to ensure that developmentally appropriate early learning standards are addressed. AISD has adapted the New Jersey State Department of Education Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards. These standards indicate what we expect children to know, understand, and be able to do by the end of Prekindergarten 4, and include: Approaches to Learning; English Language Arts; Health, Safety, and Physical Education; Social and Emotional Development; Mathematics; Science; Social Studies, Family, and Life Skills, and Visual and Performing Arts.

### **Language Arts**

Throughout the elementary curriculum, language beliefs and practices are guided by a shared philosophy. The development of language is fundamental to our need to communicate and supports students' thinking and understanding. Language plays a vital role in the construction of meaning and empowers the learner with an intellectual framework to support conceptual development and critical thinking. AISD believes that a balanced literacy program provides the best opportunity for students to learn effective language skills, and we value the following:

- Skill and strategy instruction embedded in the context of meaningful text
- The use of authentic literature - both text and illustration
- Phonemic awareness instruction
- Word work exploration focusing on its authentic use through writing applications
- The development of strategies to support independent application
- Ongoing assessment and evaluation to monitor student progress

Shared teaching strategies, which support children’s language development, are used across grade levels and in developmentally appropriate contexts:

- Reading aloud, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading
- Writing workshop, shared writing, independent writing
- Listening, speaking, viewing, and presenting learning engagements

The Elementary School has a range of language development resources to meet the diverse needs of students.

### **Mathematics**

The goal of the Elementary Mathematics Program is for all students to achieve mathematical proficiency by developing both conceptual understanding and procedural fluency. The end result is the ability to think and reason mathematically and to use math to solve problems.

It is important that learners acquire mathematical understanding by constructing their own meaning through ever-increasing levels of abstraction, starting with exploring their own personal experience, understandings and knowledge. It is important that Mathematics be taught in relevant, realistic contexts, rather than by attempting to impart a fixed body of knowledge directly to the students.

Mathematics at AISD is comprised of the following strands which encompass what students should know:

- Counting (PreK - G2)
- Number and Operations in Base 10
- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
- Numbers and Operations - Fractions (G3 - G5)
- Measurement and Data
- Geometry
- Mathematical Practices

### **Units of Inquiry**

In the Elementary School, each of our **Units of Inquiry** are transdisciplinary in nature, concept-driven, and are developed around Transdisciplinary Themes. Each theme has global significance and is supported by knowledge, concepts and skills from the traditional subject areas, but utilize them in ways that transcend the confines of these subjects. Social Studies and Science are taught through the **Units of Inquiry** and as much as authentically appropriate, Language and Math are taught through these units as well. These six Transdisciplinary Themes contribute to the common ground that unifies the curriculums in all PYP schools, and promote an awareness of the human condition and an understanding that there is a commonality of human experience. This allows the Elementary School to offer a program that is international in its scope, while providing a way to monitor which concepts in Social Studies and Science are taught throughout the grades.

Each unit is approximately six weeks in length (eight weeks in PK) and gives students the opportunity for an in-depth inquiry that includes the five essential elements of the PYP: Knowledge, Concepts, Skills, Attitudes and Action. Wherever possible and appropriate, single subject teachers work collaboratively with the class teachers to integrate their subject content through the **Unit of Inquiry**. When that is not possible or appropriate, single subject teachers integrate through the key concepts of the unit. Each unit focuses on a central idea to help students develop conceptual understanding, learn new skills and knowledge, and develop attitudes to help them become lifelong learners using inquiry as the vehicle for learning. The lively process of inquiry appears differently within different age ranges and involves an active engagement with the environment, whether through play or through more structured learning.

Teachers develop ways to assess prior knowledge and skills in order to plan the inquiry, ensure the summative assessment tasks are linked to the central idea, and provide learners with the opportunity to show their conceptual understanding and utilize continuous assessment in the context of the lines of inquiry.

Learners are actively engaged in planning, leading and assessing their own learning. Within the **Program of Inquiry**, they are empowered to do their best, for themselves, and in order to contribute to the learning and well-being of others.

## **Single Subject Programs**

### **Physical Education**

The Physical Education (PE) program is designed around the philosophy of developing students who value living a healthy active lifestyle. Students are given the opportunity to experience a variety of activities, allowing them to build their fundamental and sport-specific motor skills. The PE curriculum includes units in health related fitness, adventure challenge, swimming, track and field, net games, invasion games, and movement composition. Swimming is a required part of the ES curriculum and the expectation is that if your child is at school he/she will participate in the swimming curriculum. If your child is unable to attend swimming due to extenuating circumstances (non-contagious illness or injury), a letter from the child's doctor is required to attend school without attending swimming.

Throughout the year students are introduced to components of personal and social responsibility where they have opportunities to work on their communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution skills. They engage in many different cooperative activities and have to work together to solve problems. Students also have opportunities to be creative and express themselves by designing gymnastics and circus routines. The overall goal of the program is to develop confident students, who understand the importance of living a healthy active lifestyle.

## **Visual Arts**

The primary goal of Visual Arts at AISD is for students to express themselves through a variety of mediums. The program provides many opportunities for learners to deeply explore mediums of their choice, try new mediums and techniques, and achieve success through trial, error, reflection and class critiques. The art room is divided into five centers: drawing, printmaking, painting, sculpture and collage. At the beginning of each lesson, a concept is introduced and techniques are demonstrated in a particular medium. The students then choose how they want to “solve” the art problem presented to them and express their understanding of the concept being taught. The lesson, “*A Building That Shows Emotion*,” for example, could be drawn, painted, sculpted, collaged, etc., as long as the student can communicate through their art and explain how artists show emotion through their creations.

## **Library**

The purpose of the AISD ES Library Program is to help children become lifelong readers and users of information. All classes visit the library during each ES cycle for story time, book selection/check out, and library skill development and enrichment. Drop-ins are always welcome for browsing, check-out, reading, viewing, small group meetings and tutoring. The emphasis in Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten is on listening skills and responsible library behaviors. Beginning in Grade One and continuing through Grade Five, selection and location skills are refined and all students are guided in evaluating, synthesizing, producing and presenting information efficiently, effectively and ethically. Literature appreciation is stressed at all levels.

ES Library Hours:

- Sunday-Thursday, 7:15-4:00
- Friday-CLOSED
- Saturday, 10:00-2:00 (once per month- see school calendar)

## **Information Technology (IT)**

At AISD, we believe students need to be digitally literate members of society in the workplace and in the social environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Therefore, students need to learn to use the tools of technology to navigate and be successful in a digitally literate world.

Technology at AISD is integrated and taught through the homeroom teacher. Students at AISD have access to a diverse range of 21<sup>st</sup> century technology devices. Importantly, our use of technology is mindfully integrated through the written and assessed curriculum to ensure the learning purposes drive the choice of technology tools to be used. In turn, through meaningful real life learning experiences, students’ acquisition of technology skills develops contextually.

We prepare students to be ethical and responsible consumers of technology by using IT to help students develop the attributes and skills associated with the Learner Profile. Through their learning, students strengthen meaningful connections within the school community, to safely interact with people outside the school community, to study real-world issues in real time and to take action in local and global

communities.

### **Music**

Through music at AISD, students are given the opportunity to learn, communicate and expressive themselves in alternate ways from their homeroom classrooms. Students sing, move, create, play, inquire and perform within the music classroom using standard notation, invented symbols, songs, games, and other activities. In addition to a focus on music, drama and dance are interwoven. Students demonstrate and perform for peers and parents at various times throughout the year.

### **Bangla Language**

All students from KG to Grade 5 take Bangla language. Our program challenges students to aspire to and understand the values of international mindedness by learning to appreciate and understand Bangladeshi language and culture. Some of the units in this program are directly linked to the **Units of Inquiry** and give students an opportunity to make authentic and meaningful connections to the local community. We foster capacity for linguistic and cultural expression by embracing the languages spoken by our students. Where possible, mother tongue languages are used to find common connections with the host culture. Our program strives to develop creative, critical, empathetic thinkers who can apply their knowledge to the interconnectedness of a globalized world. Students develop their knowledge and awareness of the host culture by comparing and contrasting diverse ways of thinking, and developing deep understanding. In turn, our program provides the opportunity for students to become more culturally aware through the growth and integration of the Learner Profile attributes and attitudes.

Students are regularly assessed and learn Bangla at their level. In learning the conventions and vocabulary of Bangla, a communicative approach is used, where students interact with the language using games, songs, stories and drama. Students are also given real life contexts in which to practice their Bangla speaking skills. For example, in Grade 5 students learn the language associated with eating out and, for the culminating learning experience, students are taken to a restaurant where they each have the opportunity to read the menu and/or order their own meal using their Bangla language skills.

### **Life Skills**

The Elementary Counselors provide lessons in each class aimed at strengthening the children's social skills and emotional well-being. These classes take place once every eight-day cycle across the Elementary School. Whenever possible the topics complement the **Unit of Inquiry** the class is studying at the time. Teachers may also ask the counselor to discuss topics that are specific to the needs of the group/class. Some examples of topics are identifying emotions, making and keeping friends, working with others, resolving conflicts, personal strengths, bullying prevention, personal safety, study skills, test taking strategies, transitions, how thinking influences feelings, relationships, and careers. Topics are explored through developmentally appropriate activities.

## Student Leadership

The Elementary School Student Council is a representative structure for students only, through which they can become involved in the affairs of the school, working in partnership with school management, staff and parents for the benefit of the school and its students. It is the recognized voice of the Elementary School students. Students in Grades 2 through 5 elect their President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Press (Grades 4 and 5). Class representatives are then selected by each Grade 2 through 5 class to sit on the Student Council. The elections take place in September. The Elementary Student Council allows for students to engage in the decision-making process at their school. This empowerment comes in the form of organizing and facilitating programs, assemblies, and events such as various fundraisers, school spirit days, community outreach efforts, and school health and safety programs.

## Action/Service Learning

Action is one of the five essential elements of the written curriculum in the PYP. Our goal is for students to demonstrate deeper learning through socially responsible attitudes and thoughtful and appropriate student-initiated action. Built into every **Unit of Inquiry** is the opportunity and the power for students to choose to act, to decide on their actions, and to reflect on these actions. Action looks different at each grade level, and requires varying levels of adult support. It begins at the most immediate and basic level: with the self, within the family, within the classroom and school. When students choose to act with a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves, others, and the environment, they are demonstrating Action in the PYP.

In addition to student-initiated action, Service Learning projects are another important component of the Elementary School program. They help to develop international citizens, who are able to contribute to issues related to local and global communities through intercultural awareness and understanding. It is our belief that we share a responsibility for helping to make the world a better place for everyone.

Service Learning in the Elementary School program:

- Has a learning component through active participation providing opportunities to use skills and knowledge in real-life situations.
- Allows a student to develop an awareness of local and global issues and to foster a sense of caring for others.
- Is an integral part of the curriculum – usually a **Unit of Inquiry**.
- Provides structured time for students to reflect.

## **ES After School and Sports Teams**

### **Elementary After School Activities**

AISD offers an After School Activities Program that is designed to reflect and support the school's mission and core values. We strive for full participation by offering a range of opportunities and experiences outside the school curriculum to encourage learning and growth of the individual. The cost of the activities is included in the school fees. The ASA program organizes a variety of activities in which students from Kindergarten through Grade Five may choose to participate. These classes are scheduled for one hour each day after school. The six-week sessions are offered each quarter. Activities vary from session to session depending on the availability of qualified instructors. If a student is not in attendance at school, they may not attend the ASA that day.

Students who participate in after school activities are expected to exhibit the IB Learner Profile attributes just like they do during the school day. Students who choose not to observe these expectations during ASAs are subject to a two-step disciplinary process. The first step, a warning, will result from a first violation of unacceptable behavior. In the warning step, the After School Activities Office submits a notice of the problem to the Elementary Vice Principal. A copy of the notice is provided to the student's parents. The second step, suspension from the activity, may result from a second violation. In the suspension step, the Activities Office notifies the student, parents and the Elementary Vice Principal of the behavior. In consultation with the Vice Principal, Activities Coordinator and the activity teacher, the student consequences, which may include suspension from the activity, will result. Only when the Vice Principal, in consultation with the Activities Coordinator, clears the suspension will the student be allowed to resume the activity. The parent should contact the Activities Coordinator for next steps to allow reinstatement.

For questions regarding this program, call the ASA office at AISD, rather than the Elementary School office.

Please visit Students' Activities on our website

<http://www.aisdhaka.org/extra-curricular/es-after-school-activities> to learn more about the program.

### **Elementary Tiger Sports Program**

In addition to the After School Activities (ASA) program, AISD also offers a competitive, interscholastic sports program for Elementary students in Grades 2-5. The goal of this program is to give students a non-threatening, active and fun introduction to a competitive sports environment. Coaches will be teaching the values of teamwork, sportsmanship and responsibility.

The Elementary Tigers Sports program follows the same four quarter schedule as regular ES ASAs. There is a new team/sport every quarter, with the swim team being a team that runs quarters 1,2 and 4. Team placement for all ES Tiger teams will be determined by attendance and/or by random placement with the goal of each team being equitable. Any student who commits to attending all practices, regardless of talent, will be part of one of the tournament teams. The emphasis of the ES Tiger Sports is

on building self-confidence, skill development and growing a love of sport - we believe winning games is a byproduct of those developments.. All ES Tiger Sports teams have mandatory practice 2 times a week.

**Elementary Tiger Teams Seasonal Calendar**

Season 1 Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball

Season 2 Boys and Girls Track and Field

Season 3 Boys and Girls Badminton

Season 4 Boys and Girls Soccer

All Year: Seasons 1, 2, and 4

**Elementary Participation in SAISA or DISA Events**

Elementary School Students are not eligible for MS/HS SAISA sports teams. Exceptions to this rule may occur when a SAISA team is unable to fill the lowest age band (10-12 years old) with MS students. In this instance the age band would be opened to the next grade level (Grade 5). This would only occur at the agreement of the coach, the athletic director and the elementary school principal. This decision would be based on age, maturity, socialization skills, current school performance, perceived performance ability along with the ability of parents to acknowledge that this is a high school event and accommodations are not made for younger aged participants.

# Student Support Services

## Introduction

Student Support Services consist of three programs: English as an Additional Language (EAL), Learning Support, and Counseling. These programs play a key role in ensuring that all AISD students have a fair opportunity to succeed to their full developmental and academic capacity. AISD's Student Support Services are guided by inclusionary principles. Thus, services are implemented in collaboration with classroom teachers and aligned with the student's regular classroom environment.

## English as an Additional Language – EAL

The EAL program in the Elementary School focuses on both social and academic language skills. EAL teachers work collaboratively with class teachers to scaffold content area instruction to the level needed for understanding. We believe that very young children learn English best by being immersed in a language-rich environment. Therefore, in Grades Pre-Kindergarten 3 and Pre-Kindergarten 4, EAL development occurs in the classroom. Starting in Kindergarten, beginning level students receive a combination of in-class and pull-out support. Advanced level EAL students generally receive in-class support only, but this varies according to the individual student. The amount of EAL support a student receives also depends on availability, scheduling, and mutual agreement between the EAL and classroom teacher.

Upon enrollment, potential EAL students will be assessed by one of the EAL teachers. By looking at the results of the assessment and by reviewing the student's school records, a decision may be made to place the student in the EAL program. A student will be placed in the EAL program if he/she does not have the English language skills to function effectively in the regular classroom.

## Learning Support Services

Learning Support Services are available to students who may require supplemental support in the areas of academic, social, and/or emotional development. The goal of the program is to ensure that each student is acknowledged as a learner, and given opportunities to achieve his or her full potential. This is achieved by identifying a student's areas of strengths and weaknesses, and providing appropriate interventions to either support or extend learning and personal progress. On an ongoing basis, the Student Support Team, which includes principals, teachers and support specialists, determines the design, scope and intensity of services a student requires in order to meet his or her unique goals. Parents are looked upon as partners with the school in supporting the education of their child.

*The Learning Support Teacher's role is to:*

- Identify and refer students in conjunction with classroom teacher and consulted school specialists
- Provide service to identified students both in the classroom and in small group pull-out instruction
- Support differentiated instruction in the classroom to targeted learners
- Work in the classroom in collaboration with the classroom teacher
- Provide and suggest accommodations/modifications of materials and related areas
- Monitor the student's progress
- Ensure that curriculum alignment is maintained as closely as possible
- Coordinate the development, distribution and utilization of the individual support plans to increase communication in regard to the student's Learner Profile
- Provide inservice and consultation to classroom teachers, other support teachers, administrators, and parents regarding best practices for students with unique learning styles.

During the admissions process, the school attempts to verify that AISD is an appropriate educational environment for each new student through admissions testing and one-on-one meetings between the counselor, principal (when possible), and the potential student and parents. When further specific academic or language information is required, the student may be requested to meet with the school psychologist or EAL specialist for screening.

## **Counseling Program**

The Elementary School counseling program is designed to support students in their social, emotional and academic development. Often this assistance is in the form of support for teachers, parents and families so that the needs of the student are best met. Student support may be addressed through the following ways:

- Individual counseling for students
- Group sessions with peers
- Classroom and playground observations
- Life-skills lessons (please refer to the Specialist Programs for details)
- Parent consultation
- Consultation with teachers, support staff and/or principal
- Assistance with providing referrals for tutors
- Crisis intervention

Students can initiate seeing the counselor on their own, or they can be referred by teachers, parents or principal. The counselor will contact parents if there appears to be a need for the student to meet with the counselor over a period of time.

## **Psychologist**

The School Psychologist provides a range of services to support the the success of students within the school community. This may include administering cognitive, educational, and social-emotional consultations or evaluations to identify individual student strengths and weaknesses. The goal of every interaction is to provide information to support each unique learner. The School Psychologist may also provide focused counseling services to students, parents, and colleagues on an "as needed" basis. The School Psychologist provides services and is a member of the Student Support Team across all three school divisions.

# Academic Expectations

Quality education at AISD means providing a safe and secure learning environment where children:

- Take risks and take responsibility for their own actions
- Become enthusiastic and happy learners
- Have the courage to explore new ideas, and to think their own thoughts
- Become independent, self-confident, inquisitive individuals
- Learn at their own pace and in the ways that are best for them
- Develop good habits and positive attitudes

If, at any time, you, as parents, feel that you need support in understanding the school's expectations, please do not hesitate to contact your child's classroom teacher or the principal. We realize that we are serving many people who bring with them various school practices and procedures. We often may not know that you need further advice or support, so please ask!

## Homework

### The Purpose of Homework

At AISD, we recognize the importance for students to be involved in after school activities, play with friends, and spend time with their family after school hours. Therefore, we have developed our homework expectations with this in mind.

Homework is assigned for many reasons. Most importantly, homework is practice, preparation, and an extension of student learning. Homework can also help children develop good habits and attitudes. It encourages students to work independently, to develop self-discipline, to be responsible, and to love learning. It also is a valuable tool that provides both students and teachers the opportunity for feedback.

### What to Expect

Regardless of the homework given, we strive to:

- Assign quality learning experiences that are authentic
- Focus on the quality of the assignment, and not the quantity of time spent.
- Differentiate tasks depending on the needs of individual students
- Provide students an opportunity of choice

Reading, and the sharing of books, is valued at AISD. It encourages and develops the knowledge and love of language and is therefore included in some way as homework at each grade level. In KG-G2, homework consists of daily reading of approximately 10-20 minutes.

In grades G3-G5, the frequency of homework assigned varies by grade level. The time spent by the student on homework should typically not exceed the amounts outlined below. If your child regularly exceeds these amounts, please contact his/her teacher.

- Grade 3 Daily reading and other tasks, up to 30-40 minutes
- Grade 4 Daily reading and other tasks, up to 30-40 minutes
- Grade 5 Daily reading and other tasks, up to 45-60 minutes

At all grade levels homework is minimized on the weekends, and it is not given over the holidays. Students in the upper elementary grades may have homework assigned in order to meet project deadlines. This could cause homework during these times, depending on how the student manages his/her time.

Homework should be seen as a way of bringing parents and teachers closer together over children's learning. It should be a positive experience for you and your child. If your child, for any reason, is having problems completing homework, please make sure the teacher knows this. If it has taken your child much longer than the expected amount of time to do the homework, then please also let the teacher know. Parents are encouraged to use the planner (Grades 3 - 5) or folder (younger students) to communicate messages to the teacher.

### **Homework due to Illness or Extended Absence**

When students miss school because of illness or an extended absence, teachers will do everything they can to ensure the child is given the opportunity to make up the learning they missed.

Because of the inquiry-based nature of the elementary program, it is not always possible to replicate classroom learning. This can make it challenging for the teacher to give the appropriate homework for absences. Make-up work does not always easily link to the type of work that takes place in the class and cannot be made up outside of the classroom.

If you are planning to be away from school for an extended absence, please contact teachers at least a week in advance so that they can know and can prepare for this absence.

# Reading

## Help Your Child Become a Reader

Parents often ask teachers, “How can I help my child become a better reader?” Learning does not start or end at school. The patterns established at home directly influence a child’s ability to succeed in school. What can parents do to help?

### *Make time for your child.*

It sounds obvious. But studies show that mothers on average spend less than half an hour a day talking, explaining, or reading with their children. Fathers spend less than 15 minutes a day in these activities. Yet, it is precisely these activities that increase a child’s ability to learn to read. Set aside time each day in your busy schedule to communicate with your child.

### *Read to your children.*

The best way for parents to help children become better readers is to read to them at home, even when they are very young. The more children read, or are read to, the better. The conversation that goes along with reading is as important as the reading itself. Ask your child questions about what has been read. Relate stories to events the child may know about. Also, point out letters and words on signs, food containers, and magazines. If English is not your child’s mother tongue, continue to read to them in your home language. It is important that children continue to develop their mother tongue as this will help them in their acquisition of English.

### *Encourage writing.*

Young children also learn to read by learning to write. Keep pencils and paper or chalk and chalkboard handy so your children can learn how to form letters and words. Writing gives children a chance to practice letter-sound relationships. Young children can dictate their stories. Encourage older children to write stories using their imagination or relating everyday events. Have children write letters or emails to friends or relatives.

### *Provide a place to study.*

Homework reinforces what has been taught at school and gives students time for drill and practice. It is important to set aside time for homework and provide a place where children can study. Keep track of your child’s assignments and stay in touch with your child’s teacher.

### *Promote independent reading.*

Research shows that the average fifth grader only spends four minutes a day at home reading and 130 minutes a day watching television. Limit the time children watch TV; replace some of it with reading a good book. A good time to read is before bedtime. Help your children find books to read for pleasure. Make books and magazines a part of your home. Make sure your children see parents engaged as readers! Visit our library often.

## Attendance

Due to the rigorous nature of AISD programs, the high instructional expectations of the school, and the many ancillary classes that the school provides, consistent attendance is crucial to successful learning. The school's goal is to give ample time for families to take holidays during the school year. We realize that there are times when families need to make arrangements that take them away from the school session, but these need to be kept to a minimum and parents need to know that being absent from school may affect a student's ability to meet grade level standards.

Students who are absent from school more than SIXTEEN (16) days of instruction will be considered to have 'excessive absences' for the school year regardless of the reason for the absences – sickness, family related business, or extended holidays.–The principal will notify any parent whose child has surpassed SIXTEEN (16) days absent from school. A conference will be held with the parents and principal, and the student may be placed on an attendance contract for the remainder of the school year. Continued absence after being placed on an attendance contract, may result in the child being asked to withdraw from AISD.

Any student on an attendance contract for three years during their time at AISD, may be asked to leave.

If students have missed school and teachers do not have enough assessment information to effectively evaluate his/her progress, the report card will not be completed. This will result in important class documents used as transcripts for other schools to be incomplete.

For information on how the Elementary School deals with make-up work for missed learning due to an absence, please see the section *Homework for Illness or Extended Absence* on page 25.

It will be the parents' responsibility to work with the teacher to meet all the needs of that student in order to make up the work or get additional support if necessary. On the school's part, every effort will continue to be made to support the need of students who miss school due to an illness, an emergency or a situation beyond the family's control.

As a matter of record

- Students who arrive at the beginning of a school day, but leave before 10:00 AM will be considered absent for that day.
- Students who arrive after 12:00 Noon will be considered absent for that day.
- Students who arrive after 8:05 but before 10:00 AM will be considered "tardy".

# Assessment and Reporting on Student Performance

Assessment is the gathering and analysis of information about student performance.

It is vital that assessment is seen as integral part of all teaching and learning and not viewed as an isolated activity. Effective assessment can improve student learning, provide significant information about student learning and help to monitor the effectiveness of the academic program.

## Principles of Assessment

### Effective assessment:

- Improves student learning
- Is ongoing
- Has criteria that are known and understood by students in advance
- Recognizes learning differences
- Measures what is truly valued
- Influences student motivation and learning
- Enhances instruction
- Is fair and ethical
- Uses multiple methods
- Allows and encourages the student to demonstrate personal (individual) development of understanding, knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and processes
- Is authentic- as much as possible having a real life application that can lead to other questions to ask or problems to solve
- Captures what is most essential to be learned
- Promotes reflection, self and peer evaluation
- Promotes independent learning
- Assesses what is taught
- Involves students in their own assessment

## Purposes of Assessment

### Effective assessment gives students:

- The opportunity to demonstrate what they have understood
- The opportunity to understand their own progress and plan the next stages of their own learning
- The opportunity to understand learning goals and criteria for success
- The opportunity to share reflections with peers
- The opportunity to build confidence and self esteem
- The motivation to set and achieve realistic goals

**Effective assessment enables teachers:**

- To determine degrees of prior knowledge before connecting new learning
- To ascertain degrees of understanding at various stages of the learning process To identify and support learning differences and learning styles
- To plan the next stages in learning process
- To monitor and modify our curriculum, our teaching and our assessment practices
- To collect evidence of student learning

**Effective assessment provides parents:**

- The opportunity to be partners in the learning process
- Accurate information on their children's progress
- Accurate information on their children's strengths and areas in need of support
- Information to assist their children in planning for the future, both immediate and longer term.

**For Curriculum/ Instructional Leaders Effective assessment provides curriculum/ instructional leaders:**

- The data necessary for effective curriculum evaluation and revision

**Effective assessment provides other schools:**

- The data necessary for admissions and grade/year placement decisions
- The opportunity to place students effectively within a learning continuum

## **Internal Assessments**

Teachers assess student performance and understanding in relation to standards and benchmarks that apply to what they are teaching. They are committed to collecting evidence of student understanding by administering a variety of assessment tools. The assessment tools that teachers administer fall under the following seven categories.

1. Selected Response (e.g. multiple choice, matching, etc.)
2. Constructed Response (e.g. short answer, fill in the blank, etc.)
3. School Related Performance (e.g. oral presentation, poster, performance, experiment, role play, etc.)
4. Observation (e.g. anecdotal notes, peer assessment, etc.)
5. Essay (e.g. report, narrative, expository, etc.)
6. Contextually Based Performance (e.g. recommendation to the School Board, published article in the *Shamachar*, etc.)
7. Peer/Self Assessment

## **Assessment Process and Reporting**

Monitoring learning and assessing students' progress is an important part of the educational program. Teachers utilize a variety of methods to evaluate students' learning. Age appropriate testing, projects, participation in discussions and group activities, and completion of daily assignments are examples of ways teachers assess students.

Each student has a growth portfolio of ongoing work samples selected (with guidance from the teacher) and reflected on by the student. This is the student's to keep at the end of the school year. Teachers also keep a student work file with common grade level assessments linked to benchmarked standards. These can be viewed at any time as evidence of the progress students are making. These files are passed on to the student's teacher from one year to the next to help guide instruction.

The Elementary School year is divided into four reporting periods. Formal student-parent-teacher conferences are held in October/November and Student Led Conferences are held in April. Report cards are sent home twice each year, in January and June. The first conference scheduled by the teacher is a three way conference, student-teacher-parent conference. The second conference that takes place mid-year will be a student-led conference that will be led by your child. A student-led conference brings the student into the process of what is being learned. There is lots of research that says student led conferences empowers the student to take ownership with their learning. It allows the student to take ownership in their learning. This form of student reflection fits in with the learning that takes place in the classrooms. Of course the student led conference will look a little different in each grade. As the students mature in their knowledge and understanding of learning they are able to provide more information.

## **Standardized Testing**

Students in Grades 2 through 5 take the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments twice a year. The dates are noted on the school calendar. These are standardized adaptive assessments that give students and teachers feedback on the students' understanding of math, language and reading concepts. The assessments are done online and the results are available within a few days. These are used to inform instruction.

Teachers use scores to enhance students' strengths and to more adequately identify and provide support for students' academic challenges. The administration and School Board utilize the scores to study how our students achieve compared to other international schools. This is one way of making sure quality education and high academic standards are maintained at AISD.

## **Repeating a Grade**

Occasionally a child will be identified by his/her teacher as needing another year in a particular grade level to allow for a stronger foundation or increased maturity. Repeating a grade usually takes place and is most beneficial between Prekindergarten and Second Grade when students are young and in key developmental years. The decision to have a child repeat a grade is made jointly with parents. Discussions about this possibility begin no later than March.

# Communication

Strong communication links between home and school are a vital aspect of an effective school. At AISD, we strive to maintain open channels of communication about our students, their programs, and issues of importance to the school and parents. Effective communications are the responsibility of every member of the school community.

## ***A Personal Welcome***

All students and families receive a personal orientation from a counselor prior to their first day of school. The purpose is to help them feel comfortable in their new surroundings prior to their first day and give both students and parents the opportunity to ask questions.

## ***Parent Teacher Association***

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) designates representatives by country/region, classroom and grade level who serve as vital links in communicating both PTA business (identifying volunteers, organizing events, etc.), as well as valuable resources to answer newcomers' questions about life in the AISD and greater Dhaka community.

## ***Back to School Night***

In August, we host Back to School Night for parents to come to meet their children's teachers and hear their plans for the upcoming school year. Parents are encouraged to learn as much as possible about the learning process and types of activities that will engage their children throughout the year.

## ***Buddy Assignment***

New students arriving during the school year are assigned a "buddy" who can help ease the transition of those first few days and serve as an excellent communication link during a time when there are so many questions to be answered.

## ***Official Publications***

AISD publishes several documents to communicate information about the school. The Student-Parent Handbook, School Brochures, Fact Sheets, the *Shamachar* and the Calendar are all available to parents in print form and electronically on the school website, [www.aisdhaka.org](http://www.aisdhaka.org).

## ***Class Sites***

All of our teachers maintain an online class site as a tool to communicate classroom happenings to parents.

## ***Weekly Newsletter***

The centerpiece of the AISD communication system is the weekly newsletter, the *Shamachar*, which is full of information about upcoming events, special accomplishments, and ongoing work school-wide. Each Wednesday afternoon the school posts the newsletter on the school website and sends out electronic versions to school families.

### ***Report Cards***

Report cards are sent home twice a year (January and June) to the parents of students in PreKindergarten through Grade 5. They can also be accessed online through Powerschool.

### ***Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences***

All parents are scheduled for a conference with their children's teachers twice per year (September and March). This is the best communication link for forging strong collaborative efforts between parents and teachers in support of student learning. The student will participate in both conferences and lead the spring conference. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher at any time during the year if they have any questions or concerns.

### ***Ad Hoc Notes and Telephone Calls***

Teachers will notify the parents if a student's progress or behavior warrants such communication. If necessary, a meeting can be scheduled to plan effective strategies, although generally, knowing that parents are informed is sufficient incentive to keep students on track.

### ***Parent Classroom Visits***

Parents are always welcome to visit our classrooms or teachers. They are encouraged to make an appointment for such visits with the Elementary School Office Manager (kzahid@aisdhaka.org) to avoid interrupting classroom instruction.

### ***Homework Planner***

Students in Grades 3-5 are issued AISD planners for the purpose of recording daily assignments, homework and project information. Students are expected to have their planner at school every day and to take it home in the evenings.

### ***Performances***

AISD has many opportunities for student performances and productions. Be it through a concert, play, display, informance, festival, etc., students take advantage of a variety of opportunities to express their talents to their parents and members of the school community. Frequently, parents are invited to attend presentations, exhibits and classroom learning celebrations, as well as other sharing opportunities. These functions are an important part of the curriculum and we encourage parents to make every effort to attend.

### ***Open-Door Policy***

Inevitably, situations will arise when parents need to be heard, be it positive feedback, a complaint, a question, or a suggestion. It is important to us that your thoughts are heard, and we have therefore adopted an Open-Door Policy. Literally and figuratively, our doors are open to you. Sometimes a quick chat in the hallway or at a school event can resolve a concern before it becomes a problem. The principals want parents to feel that they can drop in at any time to share a concern or comment. As busy schedules often prevail, therefore we cannot always guarantee a drop-in meeting, we encourage parents to make an appointment with the desired parties through the divisional administrative assistants.

### ***Communication Protocol***

Parents are encouraged to use the following Communication Protocol Directory when specific problems arise. These are best addressed directly by the person below who can answer questions or solve problems. The following is a list of common areas of concern and the title of the person to approach, either in person, by phone, or via email

Classroom matters	Teacher
Personal matters	Counselor
Curricular matters	Principal
Clubs or sports Activities Club sponsor or coach	Activities office
Accounts and fees	Chief accounts officer
Transportation	Transportation officer
Medical issues	School nurse
Volunteering opportunities	PTA
Address changes and withdrawals	School Receptionist (Main Rotunda)
Transcripts	Elementary Office Manager
Withdrawals	Admissions office
Elementary School issues	Elementary school office
All other concerns	Superintendent's office

If you feel that the above-mentioned person has not resolved the issue, contact the principal to discuss your concerns. The superintendent is also a person to turn to if you are not satisfied with the response given by the persons listed above.

# STUDENT LIFE AND SCHOOL ROUTINES

## (A-Z)

### **After School Activities (ASA)**

See *ES After School Activities and Sports Teams* on p. 18.

### **After School Facility Use**

Parents are automatic campus members, and have access to the Library, pool, and fields after school hours, as long as there are no scheduled classes or events. Please check the weekly newsletter for library and pool hours. Elementary students are permitted on school grounds after school hours only if they are in a supervised activity or are escorted by parents. Aunts or bearers may not supervise children.

### **After School Hours**

Elementary students are not to remain on campus after school unless they are accompanied by a teacher, involved in an after school activity, or they are with their parents. After 2:40 p.m. (1:40 on Tuesdays) there is no scheduled supervision on campus except for those students enrolled in the after school activities program.

### **Appointments**

Appointments to talk with teachers may be made through the Elementary School office or by communicating with the class teacher directly. It is helpful, when appropriate, to offer the reason for the call when asking for the meeting. In this way, teachers can prepare the needed information when he/she returns the call.

### **Assemblies**

Assemblies are held for elementary students periodically throughout the year. They are typically held on Thursday mornings and start at 8:05, but please see the school calendar for the exact dates and times. General announcements, songs, class presentations, individual student presentations, and birthday acknowledgements are just a few of the things that happen during this time. Students generally host assemblies, and parents are always welcome to attend.

### **Birthday Parties and Celebrations**

If all children in a class are invited to after school/weekend birthday parties, then invitations may be sent to school and the birthday child may hand them out in school. If some children in the class are excluded from the party, invitations will need to be delivered outside of school. Children may bring small birthday treats to school on their birthdays. This must be coordinated with the classroom teacher, and we would like to keep the celebration at the end of the day when children are ready to go home so as not to disrupt learning. We ask that you plan the snack carefully. You may want to bring in a cake, but please keep the snack simple. Too many sugary foods can have a very negative impact on the student's learning potential.

All grade levels host Learning Celebrations throughout the year which are a wonderful way for parents to experience what their children are engaging in during a unit. Grade levels are also able to celebrate cultural celebrations throughout the year, but it is important that these are diverse and not limited to a single culture.

### **Cafeteria**

A hot lunch is offered daily to all students. Elementary School students have a choice of a vegetarian and non-vegetarian option. At the beginning of the year the school will provide parents with a list of items and meals that will be on offer this year, along with prices.

All purchases in the cafeteria are paid from funds on the student's Campus ID card. Elementary School students' cards are kept with their homeroom teachers. When the student purchases lunch in the cafeteria, the amount will be subtracted from the balance on their card each day. Parents are asked to ensure that their children have a sufficient amount of money on their card to cover their meal purchases. If the balance on their card drops below Taka 1000, you will receive an automatic email low balance notice. If the balance drops below zero, you will receive a notice from the Business Office asking you to immediately top up your student's card. We appreciate your cooperation.

Please contact Casey Wick ([cwick@aisdhaka.org](mailto:cwick@aisdhaka.org)) directly for any questions related to the cafeteria.

### **Campus Security**

Parents receive photo identification cards at the beginning of the school year. Parents need their Photo ID's to obtain entry onto the campus. Campus guards enforce this rule strictly, and you should wear your ID card at all times while on campus. Elementary School students must be accompanied by a parent while on campus for any other reason than for a supervised activity such as Scouts, Saturday Sports, or participation in the after school activity program.

During school hours students must have a gate pass from the Elementary Office or Nurse's office to leave school with their parents. No child will leave school unless accompanied by their parent. An exception will be made if parents give a written request or phone the ES office for another adult to take their child from school.

### **Change of Address**

Please contact the Registrar or Elementary School office with a change of address, telephone number or email address. It is important to keep the school informed of any changes in case parents need to be contacted for emergency or business reasons.

## **Dress Code**

Students are expected to dress appropriately for school and to be considerate of the Bangladeshi culture. Students should come to school in clothing that allows them to actively participate in a range of activities. Children should wear shoes or sandals that strap to their feet and that they can run in (not flip flops, slip on shoes, or high heels), and comfortable clothing.

Many girls find it more comfortable and practical to wear shorts rather than dresses or skirts. Students need to dress properly for the days when they have Physical Education. Swimsuits and towels are necessary for swimming. T-shirts (without buttons and with sleeves), shorts, socks and sneakers must be worn for Physical Education classes.

Students should wear a hat to protect them from the sun when they are playing outside.

## **Emergency Drills**

Emergency drills, such as fire and earthquake drills, are conducted periodically. The teacher will facilitate the procedures in the classroom and indicate the route the class should take to the Athletic Field or other designated areas if an evacuation is necessary. Students are required to walk in orderly manner along the designated route.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are an important part of the AISD educational experience. School vehicles are used for transportation. Teachers, other staff and parents accompany every student group. The sponsoring teacher will give parents the details of the trip in advance. A field trip may also mean an off-campus activity in the Gulshan/Baridhara area, such as a walk across the street to Gulshan Lake. Teachers and the school take careful precautions when organizing and carrying out field trips.

## **Gate Pass**

For their safety and security, Elementary School students are only allowed to leave the campus during school hours if accompanied by their parents or by another adult (with a note). All adults must sign in and out at the gate and wear a Photo I.D. or guest pass while on campus.

## **Guardianship & Parental Absence**

Should a business trip or family emergency take both parents out of the country, we request that the school be notified as soon as possible. A formal letter or email to the school indicating the following information is needed:

- The name of the guardian (and how that person can be reached during the school day) who will stay with the child(ren) and have primary responsibility for the care of the child(ren).
- Contact information: where can parents be reached in case of emergency i.e. telephone number, fax number, email.
- Any special information that may be helpful for teachers to know so they can assist the child(ren) during the time of separation.

## **Hartals and Curfews**

During times of political unrest, hartals will sometimes be called by different political parties. Although much of Dhaka can be immobilized, school remains open during the hartals and buses continue to run in ONLY the Baridhara, Gulshan, and Banani areas. For a dawn to dusk Hartal, AISD will conduct activities according to the following guidelines:

1. Regular Bus Routes: Only in the Gulshan/Baridhara/Banani routes will be operated
2. Field Trips: All field trips will be cancelled
3. After School Events: All After School Events will run.

## **Illness**

The school understands that students may be ill from time to time. Please also see the section entitled *Attendance*). If your child is unwell and must stay home, please email the ES Office Manager ([kzahid@aisdhaka.org](mailto:kzahid@aisdhaka.org)) and the Class Teacher before 8 am that your child will be absent.

**Students must be free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for at least 24 hours before returning to school** to ensure the child adequately recovers and is no longer contagious to others.

For information on returning to school and swimming, please refer to the section on Physical Education or Swimming.

## **Lost Books**

Fees will be charged for lost textbooks and/or library books. Payment for the books must be made (or the books returned) before reports are issued.

## **Lost and Found**

Unidentified/unclaimed items left on school grounds are taken to the lost and found located between the playground and the swimming pool. Smaller items found in the Elementary School area, such as rings and lockets, are taken to the Elementary office. Periodically, all items remaining in the lost and found are given to a local charity.

## **Lunches, Snacks & Drinking Water**

Parents are asked to send a healthy snack with children, e.g., fruit, cheese, proteins, etc. Snacks are eaten at mid-morning break. Children should not bring less nutritious foods like candy, sweets, chips, fizzy drinks, etc. This applies to packed lunches from home as well. Unhealthy foods will be returned home uneaten. Parents of students who consistently bring unhealthy foods will be contacted by the Vice Principal.

AISD has a filter system that purifies the water in the school's drinking fountains. This water is tested every month to ensure that it contains no impurities. Fountains are located in hallways and in the athletic areas. Because of all the outdoor activity, children are encouraged to drink water throughout the day so they keep hydrated. As AISD is now a "Plastic Bottle Free Zone" Children must bring their own reusable water bottle to keep at school.

### **Parent Teacher Association (PTA)**

Parents and teachers work together to sponsor and organize a variety of events and activities throughout the year. Meetings are held normally each month in the Community Hall. Parents are encouraged to attend and are invited to participate in all scheduled events.

### **PTA Shop**

The PTA runs a small store on campus where children can buy pencils, notebooks, T-shirts and small toys. Based on parent feedback, we have set guidelines for Elementary shopping at the PTA Store. We want to support the PTA efforts and we also want to make sure that young students are not bringing too much money to school, which can be a distraction for them.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Suggested Amount</b>
K	Does not go to PTA store
1	50 taka
2	100 taka
3	150-200 taka
4	200 taka
5	200 taka

### **Recess**

Children choose from a variety of activities during daily recess times. Children stay in the playground area, which is supervised by a full time playground supervisor, teachers, and teaching assistants. When available, the large field is also used for students to play on.

### **School and Office Hours**

- Pre K 3 school hours: 8:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. (Tuesday 9:15 am - 12:15 pm)
- Pre K 4 school hours: 8:00 a.m. to 1:40 p.m. (Tuesday 9:15 am - 1:40 pm)
- Kindergarten - Grade 5 school hours: 8:00 a.m. to 2:40 p.m. (Tuesday 9:15 am - 3:15 pm)
- Each Tuesday has a late start to allow for teachers to plan and be involved in professional development.
- Elementary School office hours: 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Sunday through Thursday

### **School Photographs**

Individual portraits will be taken in November. Class photos will be taken in February. These photographs are used for the yearbook. Parents have the opportunity to purchase photo “packages” and class photographs shortly after the pictures have been taken. Notifications of purchase dates appear in the *Shamachar*.

### **Scouts**

Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts are active in Dhaka. Parents are always needed to volunteer as leaders and helpers. Information regarding the Scouts can be found in the August and September newsletters.

### **Student Health & Illness or Injury**

The School Nurse is on duty from 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. every day to provide first-aid. Frequently, students must take prescribed medication during the school day. We are happy to comply and will make an effort to see that the medication is administered as directed. School policy requires all medication sent to school be accompanied by your doctor's written instructions, e.g., doctor's prescription. This can be returned to you immediately. The only exception to this policy is if medical reasons warrant non-participation.

### **Swimming**

Swimming is a required part of the ES Curriculum. It is expected that if a child attends school, he/she will participate in all aspects of the curriculum, including swimming. Please ensure your child has his/her swim kit on all swimming days. A student must be seen by a doctor and have a written recommendation from the doctor not to swim in order to attend school without attending swimming. Alternatively, the school nurse may recommend a student not attend swimming in some cases.

### **Telephones**

The school receptionist forwards all incoming calls to the appropriate persons. Students are generally not permitted to make phone calls from the office. Exceptions are made to this if the student has written permission from a teacher. There is no need for students to bring cell phones to school. Please ask your child to leave theirs at home.

### **Toys on Campus**

We ask that students leave all toys and games (including computer games and ipods) at home and not bring them to school. If students bring toys to school, students will be encouraged to leave them in their backpack; however, the school will not be responsible for the toys and games.

### **Transportation**

AISD owns its own fleet of buses, and hires its own drivers. Each bus has an adult bus monitor who rides on all regular bus trips. There is no separate charge for transportation and it is included in the regular annual tuition fee. All students who choose to ride a bus to school are assigned a bus number, which relates to their bus route.

AISD provides transportation to and from the school for the students within the local area. Bus service beyond the local area is provided to the extent that is deemed practical by the school administration. Currently, the local area covers the Gulshan, Banani and Baridhara locations. Please note that some routes are impassable in the designated areas, making it impossible for the buses to go there.

The pick-up and drop-off points, as far as it is feasible, are at Gate 1. The time scheduled for the bus run is tentative and may vary depending on the road situation. The student is expected to be ready at the pick-up point at least 5 minutes before the assigned time. If a student is not found at the pick-up point, the bus cannot wait. Exceptions may be tolerated occasionally and for a few seconds only. If a student misses the bus, the parent needs to arrange transportation to the school and the Transport Manager

should be informed in order to ensure the return trip home by the school bus.

Elementary School students are not allowed to be dropped off at any place other than their designated house address. For exceptions to this policy due to family circumstances, or due to emergency, a parent may request a different drop off location by contacting in writing the Transportation Manager at [transport@aisdhaka.org](mailto:transport@aisdhaka.org). However, the school's Transportation Manager will not entertain requests to make drop-off changes due to "play dates", birthday parties, or other social activities.

For the drop-off of Elementary School students, a designated person needs to be present at the gate to receive the student. The bus may arrive at the designated point five minutes early or late from the scheduled time. If the bus monitor does not find anyone at home, or faces any situation that is not congenial to dropping off the child, then the student will be brought back to the school. The school will contact the parent.

Buses will be provided for regularly scheduled extracurricular activities (After School Programs and Physical Education Activities), which immediately follow the regular school day.

Buses will run on hartal days in the local area (Gulshan, Banani and Baridhara) only. As per school policy, if this is not possible, school will not be in session.

The following are our Bus Essential Agreements for bus passengers:

We will:

- wear our seatbelts at all times.
- be Principled and Caring.
- use courteous, respectful language.
- treat others kindly.
- leave food at home or in our lunchbox.
- leave cycles, scooters, skateboards, etc at home.
- leave musical instruments in their case.
- cooperate with the bus monitor and driver at all times.
- remain seated when the bus is in motion.

Students failing to adhere to these agreements will lose the right to bus transportation. For concerns regarding transportation, please contact the transportation manager.

### **Tutoring**

The classroom teacher needs to be consulted if parents are considering tutoring for their child. It is important that tutors and teachers work together to provide a comprehensive program for the child. The school counselors maintain a list of private tutors available in the community. Please contact them directly if you would like more details.

**Vacations**

The October break, Winter break, and Spring break are the major scheduled school vacations (Eid breaks may occur during the year, as well). The dates of these breaks are indicated on the annual school calendar. The school has very generous school holidays and while we do understand the need at times to take a few days, we ask that you keep extra days to a minimum. It does impact on student performance (see *homework for illness and extended absence* on p. 25 and *attendance* on p. 27).

**Withdrawal from School**

In order to process student records for students to take with them at departure, we request that parents inform the school, in writing, at least two weeks before leaving. When families leave AISD for another posting, children have the opportunity to attend transition sessions with the Elementary School Counselor if they choose to do so. Furthermore, they are recognized in their last school assembly and given a specially designed “farewell” t-shirt.

**Yearbooks**

Yearbooks are distributed to each child at the end of every school year. The cost of the yearbook is included in the tuition fee.

# Behavioral Expectations

The Elementary School disciplinary process is based on respect for the individual and for the learning environment. We emphasize the need for children to learn from their mistakes, to make things right when they have made a mistake and to experience logical consequences for the choices they make. We recognize that self-discipline and the development of responsibility and judgment is a continuous process. We require adults to structure a consistent and safe environment for children. Appropriate role modeling and respectful and consistent interactions are keys to raising capable, self-reliant children. Every class uses the Learner Profile attributes to develop and implement their own classroom essential agreements.

As a PYP school, we strive to promote international-mindedness through the **IB Learner Profile** attributes as expected behavior for students. Through the challenge to establish this personal set of values we will lay the foundation for students to develop and flourish. Additionally, the descriptors of these Learner Profile attributes promote of a particular set of attitudes- **appreciation, commitment, confidence, cooperation, creativity, curiosity, empathy, enthusiasm, independence, integrity, respect and tolerance**. The Learner Profile attributes and the attitudes are interwoven into the curriculum as well as explicitly shared with students at their developmental level.

All AISD employees want to make sure that your child is feeling safe and comfortable in the school environment. If you feel there are any issues infringing on your child's safety or comfort at school, please bring it to the attention of a teacher, counselor or administrator.

## Technology Use Guidelines

Students (and their parents) are expected to read and sign a copy of the following agreement which is sent home at the beginning of the year. Teachers spend a considerable amount of time discussing this with the students to ensure they understand it. Parents are asked to reinforce these guidelines at home and monitor children's use of technology at home.

### **AISD Elementary School Digital Citizen Guidelines**

Access to technology is a privilege available to students at AISD. Our goal in providing this service is to enhance student learning. With privilege comes responsibility. Students are expected to be principled, following the guidelines below. Please read this document carefully and sign at the bottom.

**Personal Responsibility:** I will accept responsibility for proper use of school technology and for reporting any misuse of technology

- I will respect the privacy and dignity of students and teachers at all times
- I will not use, copy, or delete another user's files, folders, or passwords.

- I will keep my own passwords private, and I will not share passwords with a friend.
- I will use appropriate language and refrain from the use of profanity.
- I will not remove any AISD software or modify any AISD network configuration without the knowledge and approval of the AISD Technology Department.
- I will respect school equipment and not vandalize it.
- I will not spread computer viruses or malicious software of any kind.

**Internet Safety:** I will follow the guidelines below

- I will not correspond or meet with someone through the Internet without the pre-approval of a teacher.
- I will immediately report any technology use that makes me uncomfortable or violates school expectations to my teacher, advisor, or counselor.
- I will respect and follow the AISD content filter for Internet access and browsing.
- I will only download materials appropriate for school classes or activities.
- I understand that the school may filter and monitor student's web browsing history to ensure that they are used responsibly.
- I will not give out on the Internet personal information about myself OR others such as my full name, phone number, or address or anyone else's.

**E-Mail / Communication Safety:** I will follow the guidelines below when using school computers/accounts

- I will check my AISD email at least once a day.
- I will not use other programs to Instant Message or Chat without permission from my teacher.
- I understand that the school may filter and monitor student's email accounts to ensure that they are used responsibly.

**Parent Responsibilities:** Parents are expected to help their child follow these guidelines by monitoring their child's use of technology at home.

- We understand and agree to these guidelines. If a student chooses to violate these guidelines, then s/he is subject to disciplinary consequences. S/ he may no longer be able to use technology at school, and other disciplinary action may occur as well.

The student and parent must sign and return this form to the **student's homeroom teacher** in order to use technology at AISD Elementary School.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_