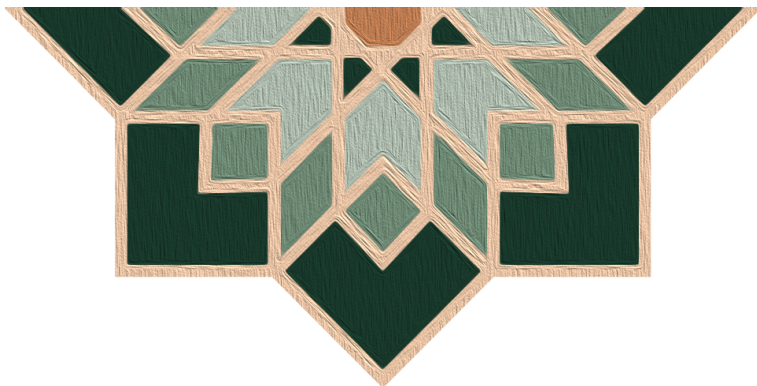


AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL OF ABU DHABI

MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT - PARENT HANDBOOK

2019-2020



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

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WEBSITE: WWW.ACS.SCH.AE

ACS Mission

The American Community School of Abu Dhabi provides a balanced learning program to foster excellence in academics, the arts, and athletics. In partnership with parents, we empower all students to define and shape their futures. Our dynamic and challenging educational program prepares a culturally diverse student body for learning, service, and global citizenship.

ACS Core Values

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

Core Beliefs

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

Profile of Learners

ACS engages, prepares, and inspires its community to be:

Collaborative team members who...

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

Responsible people who...

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

Self-directed learners who...

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

Global citizens who...

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

Contact Us:

American Community School of Abu Dhabi

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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Middle School community members,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year at the American Community School. There are so many opportunities to grab onto here at ACS and we hope that the things that you choose to do this year will help you become better physically, socially, and better in others ways too. You have the power to make your year the very best it can be. Along the way, stay true to our community's core values. Choose to be curious, and wonder about more. Be compassionate to those in our community and extend your compassion to those well beyond it. Show integrity by ensuring that your actions match your words and intentions. Be courageous and take a risk, find your voice, collaborate with others, embrace challenges and get involved. It takes honest reflection, thoughtful intention, and respectful action. This is a safe place to do this and there is a lot of support for you.

Please take the time to read through our Middle School handbook. It is written for all those in our community – students, teachers and, parents. It is a guide to help you successfully navigate the dynamics of our time together this year. Within these pages, you will learn about all that we have to offer, as well as the expectations and responsibilities for behaviors and for learning. It describes our community beliefs, our commitments, our systems, our policies, and practices. As it is a living document, updates will occur from time to time. We will ensure that any changes are communicated in a timely manner.

More than anything, your task again this year is to engage and connect – not only with your academics but with those around you. Relationships are key in your education, so choose to be respectful, responsible, balanced and inclusive. On behalf of your teachers, we wish you a successful year full of engagement, connections, inspirations, and growth.

Sincerely,

Karl Poulin
Middle School Principal
karlpoulin@acs.sch.ae

MIDDLE SCHOOL BELIEFS

Our ACS Middle School Beliefs stem from our school's mission statement and core values and are formulated with an understanding of the educational needs of young adolescents. We believe that our MS should be firmly grounded in the reality of today's students. We endeavor to role model risk-taking while at the same time creating an inviting, safe environment for learning. We recognize that working with MS adolescents requires hard work and a good sense of humor.

Our Beliefs can be summarized as follows:

Balanced Education for the Whole Child

We believe in assisting students to develop:

- healthy habits of the mind and body
- an appreciation of the arts
- a love of learning
- strategies for individual learning styles
- the skills necessary for success across curricular and co-curricular areas
- a positive sense of self-confidence, self-esteem and self-awareness

Importance of Environment

We believe that children thrive in an environment in which:

- people celebrate the diversity of our international community
- learning is made exciting
- safe, caring and nurturing behaviors are modeled
- positive attitudes and consistency in behavior are encouraged
- cooperation builds connections among students, parents, and teachers
- people demonstrate concern for others

Responsibility

We believe in assisting students to:

- understand and accept responsibility and accountability for their actions
- move towards greater independence as learners
- model our school's core values

Scholarship

We believe in assisting students to:

- commit to a high standard of learning and academic achievement
- achieve their highest potential by establishing meaningful and challenging goals
- think analytically, critically and creatively
- make informed and reasoned judgments
- take risks and experiment with new skills

PARENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Established in 1972, the American Community School of Abu Dhabi is a nonprofit, U.S. accredited college preparatory school serving a culturally diverse student body. Our American, standards-based curriculum provides a dynamic and challenging educational program encompassing excellence in academics, the arts, athletics, and service.

The goal of the Parent Partnership Agreement is to ensure a positive relationship between parents and school in support of every student. By signing this document, I understand and agree to the following commitments:

The School's Commitment:

- To do everything possible to fulfill the mission of the school and live the school's values.
- To commit to providing a safe and secure place of learning for all our students, staff and community members.
- We are cognizant of child development as we provide instruction and learning experiences for our students. We look to foster growth in the whole child. We make every effort to provide support for all students, including remediation and extension when necessary. We do not place students beyond their age-appropriate grade level. Our focus is on development and growth.
- In the spirit of true partnership, all staff members of the school - most notably the teachers who work directly with your child - share responsibility with you for your child's success.

The Parent's Commitment:

- To support our standards-based American system including curriculum, assessment and reporting.
- To practice and model positive and productive, face-to-face and digital communication by handling concerns appropriately, directly, and honestly, only with those involved.
- To volunteer for school events suited to my schedule and interest. My involvement is critical to our success as a community school.
- To talk to my child often about school life, demonstrating my interest in helping the school equip my child with the ability to inquire, interact, and accept constructive criticism.
- To help my child learn from mistakes and to benefit from suggestions for improvement.
- To ensure that my child has ample scheduled time and quiet surroundings for home learning and homework.
- To ensure my child has proper rest, nutrition and a balanced activities schedule.
- To attend orientations, back-to-school nights, parent conferences, and be an active participant in school functions.

- To read all school communication and to provide feedback and participate in surveys, Q & A, town halls, etc.
- To keep our family's school records up to date including health information, contact information and official documents.
- To communicate when something is unclear.
- To help my child accept and comply with the student dress code, and as parents, to dress appropriately on campus, taking into consideration the modest local culture.
- To follow the recommendations made by school leadership regarding the assessment of my child or strategies required to support my child's success.
- To ensure that my child arrives on time and remains for the full length of the school day and to comply with the school calendar for vacations.
- To make tuition payments and other fees on time so that ACS can continue to be a financially stable nonprofit organization.
- To permit and encourage my child to attend grade-level and experiential learning opportunities, acknowledging that they are an integral part of the curriculum.

GENERAL INFORMATION

School Days :	Sunday-Thursday	School Hours:	8:00am – 3:20pm
MS School Phone:	+971 2 681 5115 Ext. 800	School Fax:	+971 2 681 6006
Library Media Center Hours:	7:30am - 5:00pm	Late start Sundays:	8:45am – 3:20pm
Viper Pit Store Hours:	Mondays and Wednesdays Closed on Thursdays	2:00pm – 4:00pm viperpit@acs.sch.ae	

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Name	Role	Email
Maysa Sapargeldiyeva	MS Executive Assistant	maysasapargeldiyeva@acs.sch.ae
Karl Poulin	Middle School Principal	albacarollo@acs.sch.ae
Micheline Foss	MS Counselor	michelinefoss@acs.sch.ae
Chris Neurinski	Grade 6 Team Leader	chrisneurinski@acs.sch.ae
Emma Carroll	Grade 7 Team Leader	emmacaroll@acs.sch.ae
Jessica Forslund	Grade 8 Team Leader	jessica-forslund@acs.sch.ae
Amy Daraiseh	6-12 LS Coordinator	amydaraiseh@acs.sch.ae
Mary Lawson	6-12 School Librarian	marylawson@acs.sch.ae
Naveen Jamal	MS FAS Activities Coordinator	naveenjamal@acs.sch.ae
Kenneth A. Macaulay	Director of Athletics and Activities	kennymacaulay@acs.sch.ae
Suzanne Khoury	Athletics & Activities Executive Assistant	suzannekhoury@acs.sch.ae
Derek Swanson	Director of Learning Innovation and eLearning	derekswanson@acs.sch.ae
Fiona Kellaway	School nurse	fionakellaway@acs.sch.ae
Victor Guthrie	Assistant Superintendent	victorguthrie@acs.sch.ae

Monique Flickinger	School Superintendent	moniqueflickinger@acs.sch.ae
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MIDDLE SCHOOL BASICS

School Year Calendar *Subject to change based on ADEK

AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2019-2020

July-19							August-19							September-19							October-19						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	<10>	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	{10}	11	12
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	<11>	<12>	<13>	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	{20}	{21}	{22}	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
28	29	30	31				{25}	26	27	28	29	30	<31>	29	30						27	28	29	30	{31}		
							<>Eid Al Adha, Islamic New Year						3							22	Fall Break					17	
November-19							December-19							January-20							February-20						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2	<1>	<2>	<3>	4	5	6	7				<1>	2	3	4							1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	{5}	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	<25>	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	{23}	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
24	25	26	27	{28}	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
						20	<>Martyr/National/Christmas days						7							19	Spring break						20
March-20							April-20							May-20							June-20						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	{2}	3	4						1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	{13}	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			<24>	<25>	<26>	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				
Spring Break						18	Ramadan Begins						20	31	<> Eid Al Fitr				18							14	

- Parent/Student Orientation
- School Holidays
- < > Religious or National Holiday (Subject to slight change)
- { } Professional Learning: [] End of Quarterly Grading Term
- Early Release Day
- First and Last Days of School
- First Quarter (42 days) August 27 to October 31
- Second Quarter (41 days) November 3 to January 23
- Third Quarter (45 days) January 26 to April 2
- Fourth Quarter (50 days) April 5 to June 18
- Fall Break (9 days) October 11 - October 19
- Winter Break (23 days) December 13 - January 4
- Spring Break (9 days) February 28 - March 7 (NESA dates March 29-March 31, 2019)

**** NOTE:** Professional Learning (Full day) on October 10, January 5 and April 13
****NOTE:** Every Sunday will be a Late Start day (School starts at 8:45, students arrive between 8:30-8:40)

The School Day

Students are expected to go to their lockers and report to their first class by 7:55. Once the National Anthem plays at 8:00 AM the student is considered tardy. On late start Sundays classes begin promptly at 8:45am.

Students who arrive late to school and miss part or all of the first instructional period will be considered tardy and must report to the office prior to attending classes. Students are dismissed at 3:20pm.

There are after-school activities that take place most days of the week, with the exception of Tuesday when teachers are engaged in their own professional learning. Most activities (including athletics) typically end by 4:30pm, though some may go later (please check with your activity sponsor/coach). All Fun After School Activities (FAS) end at 4:30pm.

In order to ensure, proper supervision of students and student safety students not participating in after-school activities must leave school by 3:45 pm. Only MS students unless they remain in areas that are supervised, either in a classroom with a teacher or in the library. Unsupervised areas include classrooms where there is not a teacher supervisor, playgrounds, outdoor fields, MS/HS courtyards, the gym or cafeteria.

All students must leave the school grounds by 3:45 unless they are directly supervised

MS Schedule

Weekly Timetable

Time	Activity
8:00-8:55	Period 1
9:00-9:50	Period 2
9:50-10:15	Break
10:20-11:00	Oasis
11:05-11:55	Period 3
12:00-12:50	Period 4
12:50-1:30	Lunch
1:35-2:25	Period 5
2:30-3:20	Period 6

Late Start Sunday

Time	Activity
8:45-9:35	Period 1
9:40-10:25	Period 2
10:25-10:50	Break
10:55-11:15	Assembly
11:20-12:05	Period 3
12:10-12:50	Period 4
12:50-1:35	Lunch
1:40-2:30	Period 5
2:35-3:20	Period 6

Lunch and Breaks

Students are strongly encouraged to bring or purchase healthy lunches and snacks. Healthy eating and caring for yourself while enjoying the outdoors at breaks is a meaningful way to keep your growing body strong.

During the morning, a scheduled break allows students to get a snack. There are snacks, sandwiches and wraps available for sale in the Kiosk and Nectar also has many healthy drinks and yogurt for sale. Students may also bring their healthy snacks from home.

The cafeteria is open for lunch, and Sodexo publishes a weekly menu. Those who wish to do so may purchase lunch in the cafeteria. Currently, only cash purchases may be made in the cafeteria. Students are expected to assist in keeping the cafeteria clean and tidy. It is required that students clear their table before leaving the cafeteria.

Students are not permitted to consume carbonated soft drinks, sugary drinks such as iced tea or coffee drinks during the school day, even when Viper Bites is open. After school at 3:20, if Viper Bites is operating, students in the MS may purchase soft drinks, sugary drinks, and other snacks. Students should check with their parents for permission to buy these types of snacks.

Lockers

All students have the privilege of a clean, workable locker so that they have a safe, convenient spot to store your belongings throughout the day (there's even a shelf to put away their computers!). It is the school's expectation that students:

- Keep their lockers clean and organized
- Use only the locker that is assigned to them
- Do not write on lockers or place stickers on the locker
- Should not share their combination number with others
- Take home leftover food and sweaty clothing on a daily basis
- Don't bring valuables to school. If you are worried about losing something, leave it at home.

The school reserves the right to inspect lockers should the need arise. All books and other items left carelessly in the locker areas will be gathered daily and placed in the lost and found box.

Contact Details

Parents must inform the school promptly of a new address, telephone number, and/or e-mail address. Notification can be given via email to msoffice@acs.sch.ae.

Emergency Contacts

It is essential that we can contact parents in the event of an emergency. Please check your contact information on Veracross to make sure that it is correct, and that you have the right people listed as Emergency contacts. Students are only permitted to leave the school campus during the school day with an adult listed as an emergency contact with permission to pick up.

Students Leaving Campus

Student safety is our priority. All MS students leaving campus during the school day must be accompanied by a parent or an adult who has been listed on Veracross as an Emergency contact with permission to pick the child up.

In the event that a non-register adult comes to pick up a child, the parent will be contacted and a request for an email stating the name of the person given permission to take the child. Therefore students;

- must have permission from parents, principal and/or nurse
- who are ill must first see the school nurse, who will in turn contact parents
- must meet parents/guardian in the MS office and collect a pass to leave campus
- must have a pass written by the MS office or the nurse to give to guards prior upon exiting
- returning to school must sign in at the MS office and collect a class entrance pass

When leaving campus for a school-sponsored activity students must complete a planned absence form and return it to the MS office with all the appropriate signatures.

Student Transportation

Parents are responsible for student transportation to and from campus. Limited parking is provided in front of the school. There is a 10-minute difference between elementary school dismissal and MS dismissal, which should ease congestion somewhat. Parents or drivers waiting for MS students should not arrive for pick-up prior to 3:15.

Patience and care are needed when picking up or dropping off students. Since ACS has children as young as four years old, cautious driving by everyone is imperative. Details of traffic flow are published to parents at the beginning of each school year and are available to new parents in the front office throughout the year.

Campus Guests and Visitors

All guests, including alumni, must check in the main gate to pick up a visitor's pass. A valid photo ID must be presented and left. Visitors must then report to the MS office. Once the MS principal grants permission to visit, alumni may visit during MS lunch hours. To minimize class disruptions, visitors are limited to a one day visit and they are unable to attend classes

Student & Parent ID Cards

All students and parents must obtain an ACS ID card. Students must have their ID to enter the school and will need it throughout the school day for printing access. For Parents, IDs must always be worn while on campus. Replacement cards are available for a fee.

Emergency Drills

Emergency evacuation drills are scheduled at intervals throughout the school year. Classroom teachers will give their classes specific instructions. Each classroom has an evacuation plan posted near the exit door. Teachers will ensure that all students are familiar with proper evacuation procedures.

COMMUNICATION

Channels of Communication

As partners in your child's education we value open lines of communication. The school will communicate with parents through the MS News, Monday Morning Coffees, Veracross, scheduled student- parent conferences , report cards, topic specific emails, the ACS web site, and at PTA s meetings. Students and parents are expected to follow the appropriate lines of communication when faced with an issue or concern.

1. Student → Teacher
2. Student → Principal
3. Parent → Teacher
4. Parent → Principal
5. Parent → Director

6. Parent → Board

Messages for Students and Outside Communication

We make a commitment to be present and engaged in our learning and socially with our peers. Therefore, students are not permitted to use their cellphones while in school. **Please do not contact your son or daughter on their mobile phone during the school day.** If parents have messages for students, they should contact the Middle School office and the message will be relayed through the school office.

Parent Newsletter

Each Thursday the school sends via email an e-newsletter, which includes all principals' blogs. This is the primary source of information for parents from the school, and it is important that parents take the time to read it each week.

Gmail and Google Apps

All students are set up with a school Google Apps account so they can communicate via email using Gmail. Students are responsible for making sure their Google Apps password is kept private and that they check their email at least once a day. Many teachers use Google Apps such as Google Docs and Google Classroom in class to share learning materials with students.

Staying Connected via Veracross

Veracross is an online tool available for students and their parents. It can be accessed regularly to check student's progress, weekly learning targets, student resources, homework tasks, and upcoming assessments.

You can expect that every teacher will post the learning target of the day, homework information and dates of major assessments. Veracross is not a substitute for the student planner. Teachers expect students to write their daily homework in their student planner that they carry to each class.

Parents and students are assigned a login and password unique to them for access throughout their career at ACS. If students or parents have any difficulty accessing the site, they should contact the Rodrigo Brasil (rodrigobrasil@acs.sch.ae).

Viper News

Viper News is the daily bulletin, accessible to both teachers and students through Veracross. Viper News is read in the first period of the day to allow students review the announcements and, when necessary, discuss upcoming events with teachers. Any student interested in posting information on Viper News must send an email request to the middle school principal.

Social Media Channels

ACS uses a variety of social media channels to help MS students and parents stay connected,

Please follow us on Instagram (acsadmiddleschool), Facebook (ACS Abu Dhabi Middle School), or Twitter ([@ACSAbuDhabiMS](https://twitter.com/ACSAbuDhabiMS))

The ACS Yearbook

The ACS Yearbook is published and available for purchase annually in May/June, and is a summary of the year's events.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Academic Program The middle school academic program focuses on the whole child's educational experience. Student schedules are balanced between core curriculum and encore/electives, which include opportunities to try new experiences or to build on areas of interest. Below is just a brief overview of the required areas of study. Please refer to the Middle School Course Description Handbook on the ACS website for more information about academic courses and encores/ electives in the middle school.

Core Courses

MS students are offered a variety of courses. Core courses consist of subjects which students must take during each academic year. The core subjects required in Grades 6, 7, and 8 include English/Language Arts, Math, Science, Physical Education, Wellness, World Language, and Social Studies.

Encore

Encore classes are offered so students may experience and understand the importance of learning through a variety of mediums. Encore course choices may include Technology, Drama, Art, Band and Choir.

Changing Class Schedules

Drop/Add for courses must take place within the first four days of the semester. Students who enroll after the first week of the semester will only have two days to request a change of class. All changes must be approved by the MS Counselor

World Languages

MS students are required to take a World Language. Currently we offer Spanish, French, Arabic as a Native Language and Arabic as a Second Language. Students with native language background in Spanish or French will be placed in a different world language course. Students holding passports from Arab countries are required by the U.A.E. Ministry of Education to enroll in Arabic as a Native Language. A new World Language may be taken once the student has entered high school. Students who are enrolled in Arabic as a Native Language in elementary school should continue with Arabic as a Native Language in MS.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (P.E.)

All students in P.E. are required to take part in scheduled class activities and to be appropriately dressed. For physical education classes, students are required to wear tennis shoes, socks, and the ACS PE uniform (available for purchase from the business office and can be collected from the Viper Pit store). During the swimming units, the appropriate attire for girls is a one-piece swimsuit, while boys are required to wear swimming shorts/trunks. Students must not wear their PE uniforms to class. They must change after PE (unless PE is the first or last period of the day).

It is important to note that participation and attendance are important in evaluation because P.E. courses are performance-oriented and days lost because of absence cannot be made up.

For reasons of illness or injury, students may be excused from PE class activities. The following will be honored:

- Notes from parents requesting an excuse from class for up to two consecutive PE days.
- An excuse written by a physician that includes the reason for the excuse and beginning and ending dates. Not being dressed in appropriate attire is not an excuse for non-participation in PE.

All students are required to wear the prescribed P.E. uniform.

Each MS student will be provided with a locker in which to keep his/her PE equipment. It is strongly advised **not to bring valuables** — jewelry, money, iPods, cell phones etc. — to PE. The school is not responsible for items lost, stolen or misplaced. **Please label your child's PE uniform.**

Students are given time to shower after each PE class, and thus students should bring a clean towel to class. Uniforms, socks and towel should be taken home and washed between P.E. classes.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Definition & Purpose

Assessment is a systematic process for gathering information in a variety of forms related to what students know, understand, and are able to do. The primary purpose of assessment is to provide meaningful feedback for improved student achievement. As an ongoing interaction between teachers and students, assessment serves to deepen student understanding and enhance teaching.

Assessment System Components

1. Achievement levels measured by formative and summative assessments
2. Behavior and dispositions measured by [Approaches to Learning Rubric](#)

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is ongoing and happens in many different ways every day. The general goal of formative assessment is assessment for learning. Formative assessment is timely and based on the same knowledge and skills (learning goals) being assessed on the summative. Therefore, **it is essential that students submit formative and prepare for formative work.**

The formative assessment process is:

- For student and teacher learning
- Ongoing and frequent
- Varied in strategy and method, allowing for practice in multiple formats
- Aligned to standards and learning outcomes
- Directly aligned to summative assessments
- Always with specific feedback and proficiency standards
- Interactive with students
- Valuable when used as data for collaborative analysis of student progress

Summative Assessments

Summative assessments evaluate learning progress and achievement at the conclusion of a specific instructional period—usually at the end of a project, unit, course, semester, program, or school year. In the MS, students receive an achievement score between 1-4 on their summative assessments. Grades are posted on Veracross and assigned to “cluster standards” in each subject area.

Summative assessment are:

- For evaluating and judging student performance at a particular time
- Important for providing student feedback
- Administered regularly
- Varied in strategy and method
- Aligned to standards, (which are made clear through the use of rubrics, exemplars and models)
- Aligned and tightly connected to previous formative practice
- Graded using descriptors and grading scale
- Representative of depth and application as opposed to recall and basic comprehension
- Common across grade levels and/or courses
- Moderated by teachers for consistency
- Valuable when used as data for collaborative analysis of student progress

Summative assessments evaluates learning progress and achievement at the conclusion of a specific instructional period—usually at the end of a project, unit, course, semester, program, or school year. In the MS, students receive an achievement score between 1-4 on their summative assessments.

Standardized Testing

All students in the MS complete standardized tests annually. Students take the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test as well the Educational Resource Bureau’s (ERB) Writing Assessment Program (WRAP), and the ACTFL Assessment of Performance towards Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL).

Standardized testing provides another data point and:

- Helps teachers as they plan instruction for individual students
- Provides teachers and parents an additional insight to their child’s learning
- Provides information on our curriculum
- Prepares students for more traditional assessments at a later age
- Helps us see how our students are performing when compared with peers outside ACS

Proficiency Levels and Descriptors

The cumulative achievement levels assigned in January and June are based on teachers’ **professional judgment**. Teachers carefully consider the **body of evidence** (all summative assessment scores), students’ **most consistent** level of **performance and proficiency levels** and **descriptors** in the chart below.

Scale	1	2	3	4
Proficiency Level	Emerging Proficiency	Developing Proficiency	Proficient	Extending Proficiency
Descriptor	Student attempts to demonstrate understanding of the standard. Student is able to demonstrate skills in isolation of each other and is not yet making connections between the skills and concepts.	Student demonstrates partial and inconsistent understanding of the skills within the standard. Student may have some conceptual misunderstandings	Student demonstrates a thorough and consistent understanding of the standard.	Student demonstrates an exceptional and consistent understanding and/or the ability to transfer skills and concepts within the standard to a variety of contexts.

ACS K-12 Approaches to Learning (AtL)

We believe that **Approaches to Learning** (AtL) develop over time through purposeful modeling and guided practice. Approaches to Learning skills;

- help students prepare for, and demonstrate learning through, meaningful assessment
- can be learned and taught, improved with practice and developed incrementally
- provide a solid foundation for learning independently and with others
- provide a common language that students and teachers can use to reflect on the process of learning.

Students receive feedback and reflect on their AtL throughout their learning process. Teachers record evidence throughout the school year and are encouraged to ask students to frequently self-assess using a common rubric (Grades 6-12). Four AtL areas: collaboration, responsibility, self-directed learning, and citizenship are reported on each quarter.

Approaches to Learning Rubric

Rarely (R)	Sometimes (S)	Consistently (Co)
When demonstration of the skill happens infrequently "I am still learning to do this"	When demonstration of the skill happens at certain times, but is inconsistent "I do this sometimes."	When demonstration of the skill is typical "I do this most of the time"

AtL Skill	Specific Performance Criteria
Collaboration <i>Collaborative skills that elevate the learning for oneself and for others</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commits to and works productively toward the shared goals of the group ● Takes an active role without dominating the group ● Engages in give-and-take dialogue to build on learning and ideas of others ● Encourages others to share ideas
Responsibility <i>Responsible skills that maximize learning opportunities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Comes to class prepared to learn ● Uses time constructively ● Listens actively ● Sustains focus on tasks ● Takes responsibility for actions and the consequences that accompany them
Self-Directed Learning <i>Reflective skills that lead to greater self-efficacy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrates self-awareness ● Approaches mistakes and challenges as opportunities to grow ● Seeks and uses feedback provided ● Reflects on past and present learning ● Adjusts thinking to new contexts
Citizenship <i>Respectful skills that demonstrate open-mindedness and global awareness</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shows respect ● Demonstrates a consideration of multiple perspectives ● Contributes to a positive learning environment and respects others' right to learn ● Recognizes needs and actively responds

Assessment Conflicts

Students should not have more than two tests or other major assignments (not including quizzes) in core subjects (English, mathematics, social studies, science, or world language) on any given day. Students should attempt to resolve issues regarding three or more tests on one day as far in advance as possible. In general, unless some other compromise has been reached, the most recently announced and/or posted test will be rescheduled.

Homework and Assignments

Homework is expected of students in all grades in the MS and serves as a basis of a follow up to class discussions or reinforcement of information and ideas learned in class. Homework also promotes individual responsibility, independent practice, and good work habits.

As a general guide, MS students can expect up to 30 minutes of homework daily in each major subject, although homework may not be necessary each night. Two hours of homework is a reasonable expectation at this level for the student who applies him or herself during the day. In the MS, homework on weekends will be kept to a minimum. Extended assignments and long-range projects will often require weekend work. Since tests may be given on Sunday, studying on Friday and Saturday could be necessary and expected.

Assignments and tests will be posted on Veracross. This will allow students and parents to find out about upcoming assignments, and enable students to plan their study time accordingly. In addition, teachers will be better able to avoid overloading students with work at any one time.

Progress Reports and Report Cards

The assessment calendar is divided into two semesters, each approximately 19 weeks long. Report cards are provided at the end of each semester (end of Quarter 2 and 4). Progress Reports are given in the middle of each semester (end of Quarter 1 and 3).

The Middle School uses Veracross for the communication of academic reporting. When progress reports or report cards are published, parents can access their child's reports via the parent portal on Veracross. As no paper reports will be sent home, it is important that parents and students understand how to log in to access student progress reports and report cards.

Narrative Comments

Narrative comments are composed for all students in each subject at the end of the first and third reporting periods. These progress reports are posted on Veracross for students and parents to view.

Three-Way Conferences & Student Led Conferences

There are two times in the year (fall and spring) designated for Conferences. The fall Parent-Student-Teacher Conference (end of October/early November) follows the issuing of Quarter 1 Progress Reports. This meeting allows parents and student to visit with teachers to review and discuss academic progress, approaches to learning and establish goals for the next part of the year. Parents and students sign up online to arrange a time to meet with the teacher. Students are expected to attend these conferences along with their parents.

The **Student-Led Conference** held in May. Student-led conferences are a student-focused alternative to traditional parent-teacher conferences. During the conference students share a portfolio that they have created. This portfolio facilitates a discussion about their progress with personal goals, as well as academic achievement. Student-led conferences aim for students to:

- Develop organizational, oral communication and leadership skills

- Learn to evaluate their work honestly and fairly
- Take ownership of their learning by being accountable for their work and behavior
- Increase their self-confidence
- Encourages them to engage in open and honest dialogue with their parents and teachers

As needed, other parent meetings are teacher initiated, meaning that the teacher requests a meeting with the student and parents. Typically these conferences are limited to students who:

- are performing well below grade level expectations;
- are in danger of not advancing to the next level (World Languages / Mathematics); and/or
- are not meeting expectations in regards to the Approaches to Learning Rubric.

Teachers will notify parents and students if a meeting is requested.

Academic Distinction

Students who have distinguished themselves through their work ethic, attitude, exceptional ability/aptitude, perseverance, or tremendous improvement throughout year-long courses will have a note of Academic Distinction marked on their Semester 2 report card in the corresponding subject. Teachers may describe the specific distinction in their report card comments.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to demonstrate integrity by accepting responsibility for learning and for the accurate evidence of this learning. Academic dishonesty is defined as:

- presenting as one's own, the ideas of another;
- copying someone else's work or copying sections from textbooks, encyclopedias, or any other printed, published or digital materials without acknowledgment of the source;
- cheating on tests/exams; and/or
- knowingly permitting another student to copy homework or test answers

You are expected to complete assignments and assessments on your own. Learning to work on your own and with others are both important lifelong skills.

Homework, Formative and Summative Assessments

Students are expected to complete their assignments independently. While in some cases collaboration might be acceptable and even encouraged, in others it may be inappropriate and forbidden. Helping your friends is acceptable only if the teacher has indicated that this is appropriate for the particular assignment or activity. Copying another's homework is not acceptable, but helping someone understand how to do the work is appropriate. Allowing someone to copy homework assignments or information during tests and quizzes is considered cheating. In any case, students should assume they are to work independently unless informed otherwise by the teacher. If you are in doubt, ask the teacher.

Academic Dishonesty includes:

Copying the work of others

- Allowing someone to copy your work

- Sharing (requesting/supplying information during tests or quizzes)
- Possessing unauthorized materials during an assessment task
- Communicating the contents of an assessment task to other students

Plagiarism

Derived from the Latin word *plagiarius* (“kidnapper”), plagiarism refers to a form of cheating. To use another person’s ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source is to plagiarize. Plagiarism, then, constitutes intellectual theft.

You are plagiarizing if you:

- Present ideas as your own without citing the source
- Paraphrase without crediting the source
- Use direct quotes without the use of quotation marks, footnotes, or textual citation of the source
- Submit a paper or assignment for which you have received so much help that the writing is different from your own.

The principal will keep records on each incident of cheating or plagiarism. The consequences for cheating and plagiarism are cumulative throughout a student’s MS years. The consequences are as follows:

1st offense

- Student’s academic misconduct will be confidentially communicated to all of his/her teachers.
- The student will have to redo the assignment or complete an alternate one.
- The parents will be notified.
- The principal will be notified.

2nd offense

The above steps will be taken and additionally:

- a meeting will be held with the principal, parent and student.
- the student will serve a one day **in-school** suspension.
- a suspension letter will be placed in the student’s permanent file.

3rd offense

The above steps will be taken and additionally:

- the student will serve a one day **out-of-school** suspension.
- student and parents will sign a **binding Learning Support contract**.

4th offense

The above steps will be taken and additionally:

- the student will serve a **2 day out-of-school** suspension.
- the principal will be notified and an SST (student support team) meeting will be held.
- the student will be placed on social probation.

- student and parents will sign a **last/revised binding Learning Support contract**.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Middle School Counselor

The Middle School Counselor provides valuable services to students, parents and staff at ACS. The Counselor is available to parents who may have concerns regarding their child. Please contact the MS office to make an appointment to see the counselor.

The issue of confidentiality is paramount for effective counseling to occur. However, parents must realize that in a school, confidentiality is broken under these conditions: the child poses a threat to him/herself, or to others; someone else poses a threat to the child; or when the child gives permission for the Counselor to talk to a person mentioned in a counseling session. Counseling concerns are never mentioned in the students' records unless it is an admissions matter.

Middle School Student Transitions

In the Middle School, the Counselor helps to ease the transition for the new students through a variety of strategies including, but not limited to: screening admissions files; administering admissions screening tests; matching new students with buddies, meeting with new students in transition groups and offering parenting support groups.

Middle School Oasis

Oasis is a refreshing daily event between students and their advisors, which may include breaks, games, activities, or group discussions. The Principal and Counselor assign students to an Oasis group. The week of Oasis activities ranges from small group discussions to grade-level meetings to whole school meetings for announcements and various friendly competitions.

Student Support Teams (SST)

In the Middle School special teams of school personnel (teachers, counselors and principals) are organized to support and assist students who experience difficulties in academic performance, behavior, or social interactions. These teams are known as the Student Support Teams (SST). Occasionally, parents are invited to meet with the SST in order to keep them actively involved in the aid of their child. Some strategies that are available to help a student may include testing by the Counselor, support services, counseling services, Veracross updates and weekly SST reports sent home.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

The purpose of Student Support Services (SSS) is to identify students with disabilities and/or who are having difficulty meeting the academic requirements necessary to be successful and to ensure that additional support is provided to those students. The aim is to identify these students early enough and to work as a team with parents to provide the necessary help for students to be academically successful at ACS. Support may be provided through the learning lab and/or

coaching sessions with the student support (SS) teacher after a referral has been submitted to Student Support Team (SST.) SST will determine Students' eligibility for services.

Parents will be informed by means of an email from the (SS) teacher that the student has been referred for (SSS) and will be informed of the recommended services and type of services will be provided.

Health and Wellness Center

The health office is open 07.30-16.30 Sunday to Thursday and is staffed by 2 HAAD licensed School Nurses. They support the health and well-being needs of the school population through delivery of the HAAD (Health Authority Abu Dhabi) School Health Program. This includes responding to minor injuries on the campus, prevention of ill health through monitoring communicable diseases, undertaking the School Health Screening for grades 1-12 (see school policies), childhood immunizations programs (G1+G11), health promotion campaigns, and working to HAAD standards of practice to ensure the safety and well-being of all our students.

The American Community School of Abu Dhabi strives to be an allergen aware campus, and **not an allergen free school**. An allergen-aware campus seeks to create an environment in which children with severe allergies can learn to make appropriate choices to keep themselves safe. Students who have chronic conditions such as allergies, asthma, diabetes will require their parent to complete a health care plan with relevant supporting medical reports/prescriptions so that we can ensure their health needs are met and considered throughout the school day ([downloadable from our webpage](#)).

- If a student requires a course of medication through the school day, parents are required to complete the relevant consent form ([downloadable form from our webpage](#))
- If a student becomes unwell during the school day they are to attend the Health & Wellness Center where the nurses will document and assess if they need to go home.
- Students who have a fever, diarrhea, and/or vomiting need to be free of symptoms at least 24 hours without medication prior to returning to school per Health Authority directive, even if they feel well enough to attend school. This reduces the risk of infectious diseases/ill health to our students and staff.

For any inquiries to either school nurse, please email nurses@acs.sch.ae. or telephone 025084412. For any additional health information and guidance, check out the Health & Wellness page under community links on the ACS website.

STUDENT LIFE

Activity Nights

ACS will host Activity Nights throughout the year which are organized by the Student Council, ACS Parents or a high school organization. Some events involve all MS students and some are grade-level events. All events held at school are supervised and chaperoned by school personnel and/or parents.

Regular school rules and expectations apply during these events, and the following special rules also apply:

- **Only current** ACS students are eligible to attend. A student must have attended a full day of school the day of the event.
- Students attending the event must arrive within the first part of the event (usually within one hour). Students **may not leave** the event before the established finishing time.
- Students must wear appropriate dress. This will vary with the different themes of the events and will be published by the sponsoring organization.
- Students must behave appropriately for the social activity as determined by the chaperones for the activity.
- Students need to be picked up on time at the end time of the event, as there will not be any supervision after the activity is complete.

Fun After School (FAS)

The Middle School Fun After School (FAS) program is a coeducational after school program designed to provide students with the opportunity to participate in a number of non-competitive sports and activities throughout the school year. While students are engaged in the FAS program they will be encouraged to identify with the ACS core values of curiosity, compassion, courage and integrity. It is the intent of this program to provide a wide variety of opportunities for MS students to improve familiar talents, expand upon existing interests and explore altogether new arenas of ability. Deciding to sign-up for a program is a commitment and **attendance is monitored**. Students are to inform the supervisors if they are unable to attend.

Sports Teams

Sports teams are active throughout the year at ACS. We have an active Under 14 (U14) program, which is divided into three seasons - fall, winter, and spring. We also have a Grade 6 league, with two seasons - one in the fall (soccer) and one in the spring (basketball). In addition to the U14 program, many Grade 8 athletes participate in Junior Varsity (JV) teams, consisting mainly of high school students. ACS belongs to two different leagues, a local league made of UAE schools and for JV and Varsity teams, MESAC (Middle Eastern Schools Activities Conference).

If a student is disciplined on a local or MESAC trip for serious rule violations, he or she forfeits the privilege of receiving a letter or pin for that activity. The student may also become ineligible for the next season of participation if the infraction is deemed serious. The principal makes this determination in consultation with the coach and the athletic director.

Middle Eastern Schools Activities Conference (MESAC)

This organization arranges meetings among the member schools for sports, academic, and cultural activities. These events include volleyball, soccer, basketball, fine arts, academic games, forensics, swimming, badminton, cross-country, track and field and softball. JV athletes may travel to Dubai, Doha, Muscat, and New Delhi to participate in these events. The Viper Club welcomes MS parents to join and participate in its activities. Parents will receive timely

information about the Viper Club (club is open during MESAC events and other activities/games) through weekly bulletins and on the PTA page of the [school's website](#).

MESAC Rules and Regulations

Prior to each MESAC event and other activities with students traveling outside the country, participating students and their parents are required to attend a meeting with the Athletic Director and the sponsor(s) of the activity. Details of the travel plans are discussed, and the MESAC rules and regulations are reviewed. These rules are available from the Athletic Director.

Field Trips and Week Without Walls (WWW)

As part of the regular school program, students travel on extended field trips in support of the school curriculum. Our Week Without Walls program is closely tied to our MS curriculum and offers students an unforgettable experiential education opportunity. In addition, teachers occasionally organize field trips to extend the learning for students into the community and take advantage of opportunities that cannot be duplicated within the school. Any student participating in a school-sponsored field trip must have written permission from a parent or guardian. In most cases the general permission, which is signed by parents during the application process, will suffice. In some cases, a special permission form may be required which is in compliance with procedures indicated by the principal, teacher, or sponsor of the group involved.

At the discretion of the teacher(s)/chaperone(s), and with the concurrence of the MS principal, students who have encountered disciplinary problems may be prohibited from attending out-of-town field trips, including the Week Without Walls.

Returning to School After Student Trips

Students who traveled out of the country on school sponsored trips do need to report back to school until 10 or 12 hours after the plane lands in Abu Dhabi or Dubai, respectively. Absence or tardiness beyond this time is considered unexcused, and may result in a ban from participation in future activities. The trip administrator is responsible for advising students at the airport about their expected arrival time to at school the next day. This trip administrator will also need to inform the MS office of the designated time. Absence or tardiness beyond this time will be considered unexcused, and may result in a student being ineligible to participate in the next activity.

Eligibility Guidelines for Extracurricular Activities

The following eligibility guidelines will be applied to all extra-curricular activities, which require regular after-school practice sessions and/or would require a student to be absent from regularly scheduled classes.

- A student will be considered eligible to participate during that quarter if they are in good academic standing and are not on social probation in that quarter. Students on Level 1 Academic Support may participate, but may not travel or otherwise miss class time to participate in the activity.

- If a student is declared ineligible, the time period involved will be from the day report cards are issued until the last day of the current quarter.
- Students on probation for disciplinary reasons or placed on social probation at any point in the quarter become ineligible.
- Class attendance is mandatory the day before and the day following any extra-curricular activity. Participation in extracurricular activities is an additional responsibility that should not conflict with the student's primary academic responsibilities.
- Absences for MESAC or other school sponsored trips count toward the total absences for a quarter..
- Students eligible to travel on MESAC events will be in grades 8-12.
- In deference to students of host schools and to show sensitivity to different cultures, students will not be allowed to travel on a school sponsored activity while having hair dyed unnatural colors (green, blue, purple, orange, etc.).

8. If a student is selected for a team or other school-sponsored activity/event and accepts a position with that team/group/cast, she/he cannot quit that activity to join another school-sponsored activity. The student is ineligible to participate in any manner until after the initial activity or team has finished for the year.

9. A student is declared ineligible if in violation of the ACS Activities code.

Library Media Center

The Middle and High School Library Media Center offers a variety of resources for research and recreational reading to support the school's curriculum and students' personal interests. The Library provides a variety of tech equipment for check out, access to databases, news sources and research tools. In the Library, students have places to read, quiet study rooms as well as spaces for collaborative work. The Library's goal is to promote a love of reading, learning, and provide a place for collaboration.

The library is open Sundays through Thursdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Students have access to the Library Media Center before school, during break and lunch periods, after school and during class time as deemed appropriate by their teachers.

Library Expectations:

- Treat the library and all materials with respect.
- When working in the library, respect the learning environment of others.
- As a courtesy to others, wear headphones when listening to audio/video.
- Leave food outside the library.
- Water bottles and drinks must be in sealable containers.

Print Material Checkout Policy:

- Print materials may be checked out for three weeks. Books may be renewed, unless there is a waiting list.

- Students are responsible for all borrowed materials. A replacement fee will be charged in the case of a missing, lost, or damaged item.

Technology Equipment Checkout Policy:

- **Tech Equipment is a one day check out.** Checked out items must be returned by the end of the school day (4:00pm).
- We require students to trade a personal tech item when checking out tech equipment. The Tech for Tech policy ensures that students follow the one day check out guideline.
- Check out of equipment for more than one day must be approved by Library or Tech Department Staff.
- Students are responsible for all borrowed materials. **A replacement fee will be charged in case of a missing, lost or damaged item.**
- If your laptop is damaged it should be brought to the Tech Office for assessment and repair, after which a loaner can be issued if necessary.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Two of our core values are “people flourish in safe and caring relationships” and “people are responsible for their choices, actions, and consequences that result”. The overarching principle that guides our enforcement of these behavioral guidelines is based on trust, respect, and continuous open dialogue, with the end goal being not to punish, but to change behavior and build responsibility.

Staff and Student Rights, Responsibilities and Expectations

Rights

- A safe environment (physically and emotionally)
- Clear communication about academic and behavioral expectations
- To be treated with respect

Responsibilities

- To conduct ourselves in ways which promote and preserve these rights for others, and ourselves, and which meet our behavioral expectations.

Expectations

- Safe and legal behavior
- Adherence to class rules and teacher instructions
- **Respectful behavior towards others**
- Punctuality and regular attendance
- Scholarly effort
- Honesty
- Respectful attire (see dress code)
- Respect for the host culture

The following types of behavior do not meet the expectations of MS students, and are considered major school rule violations:

- Use, possession, distribution of drugs, alcohol or tobacco products and/or other potentially harmful substances.
- Attendance at school or school activities under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Disruption or obstruction of the learning activities through violence, defiance, force, insubordination, noise, coercion, extortion, threat, intimidation, fear or passive resistance.
- Possession and/or use of any potentially dangerous materials or weapons (guns, knives, chemicals, fireworks, etc.).
- Assault or physical injury or fighting with anyone at school, adult or student.
- Arson, vandalism and/or initiating a false fire alarm.
- Forceful, unapproved and/or irregular entry of school premises.
- Theft or stealing of any kind.
- Any other unlawful or illegal activities while under school supervision.
- Disrespectful, rude and/or inappropriate language.
- Physical, verbal and/or mental abuse, or harassment (including sexual harassment).
- Leaving school and/or missing classes without authorization.
- Forgery of any kind.
- Violation of another student's personal property.

Please note that although not a major infraction, **students are not permitted to chew gum** at school.

ACS Middle School Discipline Policy

Our middle school is built on a foundation of mutual trust and respect. ANY action that prevents a person from feeling safe, secure and happy to learn at school will be addressed promptly. Our discipline policy attempts to take a proactive approach to issues of meanness and unkindness by confronting them head-on and working with students involved through counseling and administrative measures.

Behavior Management/Rewards/Consequences

The primary means of behavior management and intervention is the teacher. His or her rules and expectations will be clearly defined. Positive reinforcement throughout the school is encouraged. The consequences for students who choose to not show respect to fellow students or staff, or who have not followed the school's policies will depend on the seriousness of the problem and the harm done to others and/or the educational environment.

It is our philosophy that students should learn from behavioral difficulties. Therefore, when consequences are necessary, they are always intended to help students in this process. The formulation of a plan by the student to improve behavior is one effective way to facilitate this learning, and is likely to be one of the consequences for failing to meet behavioral expectations.

Teachers, with the help of the principal when necessary, will work individually with a student in an attempt to help the student meet expectations.

Detention

Students may be expected to come before or after school, or on a weekend morning, for up to one hour in a supervised setting to reflect upon their behavior. Students are generally given at least 24 hours notice of their detention whenever possible. Students will be asked to use the office telephone to inform their parents that they have a detention should 24 hour notice not be possible.

Suspension

Students may be removed from classes and not allowed to participate in activities for a period of one to three days. In all cases of suspension, students will not be allowed to participate in any school activities during the period of suspension, and a parent conference may be required before the student may return to regular classes.

In-School Suspension

In-School suspension will be in an isolated setting at school with teachers sending students their work from the classroom. Students who receive in-school suspension are required to bring their own lunch to school.

At-Home Suspension

At Home suspension will be used when the problems have been repeated or are of a more serious nature. Students who are serving their suspensions at home are expected to complete all of their assignments while they are at home. If necessary, students will be asked to make up assessments upon their return to school outside of the normal school day.

Social Probation

The principal may place students consistently in violation of school rules and regulations on social probation. First violations of a more serious nature may be handled in a similar manner. This means that the student may be prohibited from participating in extracurricular activities or from being on campus except during regular school hours. Probationary status may be assigned at any time, and will be reviewed by the SST. Students and parents will be informed in writing and through conferences of the terms and reasons for social probation. Students failing to show the necessary improvements may be recommended for expulsion. Such a decision would involve the Superintendent.

Expulsion

In severe or repeated cases of student misbehavior, a student may be recommended for expulsion from ACS. It will be recommended when it is determined that the student is a threat to the safety and welfare of others, has continuously or seriously disrupted the education of others

or when a student has been placed on a behavior contract by the principal and has not fulfilled the requirements of this contract.

Dress Code

Learning within a multicultural community offers all individuals the opportunity to become responsible global citizens. At ACS, we seek to understand and respect cultural differences of beliefs and values while ensuring that we are sensitive to the customs and norms of our host country. While we appreciate the role that attire plays in expressing individuality, we expect all members of our community to wear the ACS uniform.

What is the ACS uniform?

The ACS uniform consists of an ACS logo top from Lands' End and a variety of options for bottoms in either khaki or black.

Do I have to buy the bottoms from Lands' End?

Students can wear any bottom in khaki or black. That includes plain khaki or black sweatpants, shorts, jeans, and skirts (to the knee). Bottoms must be in good condition -- no rips.

May I wear black leggings or jeggings?

Leggings and jeggings are not acceptable to wear to school, unless they are under a knee length skirt or dress. Black or khaki pants, shorts, jeans, skirts, sweatpants are all acceptable.

What shoes do I have to wear?

Students can wear their own shoes, socks, tights and leggings/jeggings (under knee-length skirts or dresses) are all opportunities to express their own style.

May I wear my own sweatshirt over my uniform shirt?

Lands' End has sweatshirts, sweaters, fleece jackets and vests with the ACS logo and students can wear sweatshirts and fleeces from Viper Pit in evergreen, gray, white, black with the ACS Athletics logo on it. Sweatshirts and jackets, either plain or with other logos, are not to be worn on campus in hallways and classrooms during the school day.

*The only class that will be allowed to create a class sweatshirt or top and wear it in place of a uniform top will be the **senior class** (i.e. Senior Class of 2018). Club and team shirts are only permitted on designated spirit days or at end of the school day.*

My Nike basketball shorts are black; can I wear those?

If the shorts/pants are solid khaki or black with the exception of a logo smaller than the logo on your uniform shirt, you can wear them. If the logo is larger than your uniform logo

and/or there are stripes or lettering along the side of the shorts or pants, then they are not permitted. Please check your school dress code to ensure compliance.

Do I have to order online?

A limited inventory of uniform tops will be available for purchase in the Viper Pit throughout the year. Lands' End orders can be shipped anywhere in the world and if families create an account, they will email special shipping offers and sale events throughout the year.

For all after school events, the students and parents are expected to dress in modest clothing, respecting our host country:

- Leggings must be accompanied with a skirt, dress, long top, sweater or light jacket that extends at least to fingertip length when standing.
- Shorts, dresses, and skirts must be knee length.
- Clothing cannot be transparent or torn showing skin.
- Hats or shades are not appropriate while in school building, particularly class, library or assemblies.
- Shirts and Tops must:
 - Cover both shoulders, without having to pull it up (nothing sleeveless);
 - Fully cover the back or belly and have a modest neckline;
- Ensure that undergarments are not visible at any time;
- Not include images, words or phrases that are offensive or make reference to alcohol or drugs.

Students who are in violation of ACS dress code will not be admitted to class , will meet with the Principal and will modify his/her clothing before going to class.

Instances of dress code violations will be handled as follows:

- A warning: the problem is solved in the office (e.g. change shirts) or students call home for a change of clothes. Parent notified.
- A detention: the problem is solved in the office (e.g. change shirts) or students call home for a change of clothes. Parent notified
- Parent conference: students call home for a change of clothes.

Further Violations – Will be at the Principal's discretion and further conversation with parents, student, and Principal. The administration reserves the right to make final decisions on the acceptability of student attire. We thank you in advance for your understanding of our school beliefs and for supporting both the specific parameters of the dress code as well as the spirit in which it is intended.

Attendance

Regular participation in class activities is a vital part of the learning process, and it is therefore important and expected for students to be present in each class, every day.

In order to gain “credit”, students must be present in classes for a minimum of 80% of the class meetings; therefore, extended family holidays within the published school calendar are strongly discouraged. Students who miss important assessments due to absences for any reason may receive an incomplete on their quarterly report card.

The **principal must approve** absence other than for illness, emergency, or official school-related activity in advance. A letter from the parent should be presented as far in advance as possible so that teachers of the student may be informed.

Tardies

Students who are either to school or class negatively impact their learning and the learning of others. It is the student’s responsibility to attend all classes on time. If a student is late for class, he/she will be marked “tardy.” A student will be notified after accruing three or more tardies in one reporting period.

When tardies become a pattern during a reporting period (one quarter),

- the student will be notified after their **fifth** tardy and assigned a one-hour detention (3:30-4:30)
- one afternoon of detention (3:30 - 4:30) will be served for every tardy after six. Parents and students will be notified about each detention
- the student will receive an in-school suspension for excessive tardies (12-13), a conference with the student, parent, and principal is necessary and co-curricular activity may be suspended.
- continued lateness will result in an out-of-school suspension and issuing of a social/academic contract.

Planned Absence

If a student is planning to be away from school for one or more days (e.g. due to family responsibilities), the school would like to be informed. MS students must submit a completed Planned Absence Form to the school one week (ideally) and no later than four days prior to leaving. Students must take the form to each of their teachers to indicate work to be completed. Forms are available from the MS office. If you have any questions, you may contact the MS office.

Make-up Work

Students returning after an absence will be given a reasonable time (generally equivalent to the number of days absent) to complete missed assignments/tests. Students are responsible for contacting teachers regarding missed assignments and missed tests.

Students arriving late to school should contact teachers whose classes they missed to discuss make up of assignments, tests, quizzes, etc. Similarly, students who anticipate leaving school early should notify those teachers who the student will not see in the afternoon, at least one day prior to the early departure.

Students who become ill during the school day will be sent home only if the parent or emergency contact is notified by the nurse's office. It is important that an emergency contact is stated on each student's registration form and health record. The nurse must excuse students before leaving school because of illness.

Admission Slip

Students who have been absent for all or any part of a day are asked to bring with them, when they return, a statement signed by the parent or guardian which specifies (1) the date(s) and/or time of the absence and (2) the reason for the absence. This note is presented to the MS assistant, from whom the student will receive an admission slip required for readmission to classes. If you know that your child is going to be absent from school for any reason, please call the MS assistant. In addition, the MS office may contact parents concerning a student's absence from school at any time.

Class Attendance / Activities

In order to participate in after-school and evening extra-curricular activities (sports, concerts, theater, etc.), **students must attend a minimum of 3 class periods that same day** (when events occur on the evenings of school days). If a school activity occurs during the weekend, participating students must be in attendance at school on Thursday for a minimum of 3 class periods. A doctor's notification and other relevant information may alter the enforcement of the regulation in extenuating circumstances. The final decision in all cases lies with the principal.

Additionally, students participating in after-school and evening activities **are expected to be at school the following day**. Not attending school the following day may result in the student not being able to participate in further extra-curricular activities.

One trip per quarter

Middle school students are normally allowed to be absent from school for a trip to participate in an extracurricular activity once during a quarter. Please note that **absences due to such trips** do count as an absence with respect to the 80% attendance policy. If a student is involved in activities that will result in more than one trip per quarter, the student must submit a written request to the MS principal for permission to take the additional trip. The review panel consists of the MS principal, the athletic director, the counselor, the activity sponsor, and selected teachers. In general, **students who have "4's" and "3's"**, and who have an exemplary attendance record, may be favorably considered. Students struggling academically **or with poor attendance** will normally not be allowed to travel on a second trip.

Request for Homework

If a student is absent from school and would like to know what homework has been assigned, the parents or student can **access Veracross** through the school website or **contact a teacher directly** by email.

Nuisance Items

The term “nuisance items” includes such things as toys, phones, and iPods. These items should not be brought into classrooms where they will cause disruption to the learning process unless the teacher in question specifically permits them for an activity.

Cell phones should never be used or ring during class time and must remain switched off and in lockers during class time.

If a student does not follow these rules, the cell phone will be taken away and returned to the student at the end of the day. After the second incident, the phone will be taken away and it will only be returned to a parent. After the third incident, A month “phone check in” will be instituted. The student will be required to bring the phone to the MS office every morning before the first period class. The phone can be picked up at the end of each school day.

Roller blades, “heely” shoes, pocket knives, water pistols, slingshots, and other similar items are not allowed on campus. **Bringing a replica of a weapon to school may result in suspension.** If a student rides a skateboard or scooter to school, it should not be used once the student is on school campus; it should be stored by the bike rack.

RESPONSIBLE USE AND POLICY GUIDELINES

The 1:1 computer program aims to promote meaningful uses of integrated technology, which inspires students to develop critical thinking skills and support continuous inquiry. ACS students will use state-of-the-art technology in a creative and collaborative environment, and model respectful, responsible, and ethical uses of technology in both social, personal, and academic contexts.

Being a Responsible User

As a member of the ACS community and the 1:1 program, students and parents need to be familiar with the Responsible Use Policy (RUP). In order to use technology at ACS, students and parents must have read and signed the Responsible Use Agreement (RUA).

The use of technology at ACS is focused on educational purposes. As these devices can also be used for personal and recreational purposes, it is important that students are aware of the expectations for the use of technology at school. In some cases, students’ behavior is guided by clearly articulated expectations, but in other cases, they must make wise decisions about their own behavior, dictated by a sense of good citizenship and as a responsible member of the ACS community. **These expectations apply to any technological device used at ACS.**

Students are expected to access only classroom-related sites and applications during class time. Recreational games, non-academic use of social networking sites or other activities that disrupt studies, peers or classes **are strongly discouraged.**

Being Prepared to Learn

Being a good digital citizen and a responsible member of the ACS community means students come to school prepared to learn.

This means bringing a computer to school:

- in operating condition and good health
- that meets the “Laptop Dress Code”
- with a minimum of 15% empty disk space available at all times
- with a battery fully charged. Students should not need to use a laptop charger at school.

Care and Maintenance

Damaged or malfunctioning computers should be brought to the Computer Help Desk as soon as possible for maintenance. A loaner laptop will be provided for the day.

In order to ensure that a computer remains in good health students will:

- employ careful battery management techniques to ensure their computer can last through the day
- care for and transport their laptop responsibly
- regularly perform software updates
- regularly restart their laptop
- regularly back up data on their laptop
- keep files and folders organized

To ensure the security of laptops and to avoid damage:

- When not in use, student laptops must be locked in a locker or kept in a storage cart in the classroom.
- Laptops should not be left unattended for any amount of time.
- Students may not loan laptops or borrow laptops from other students.
- At home, ensure that laptops are stored in a safe place away from food, drinks, pets, and siblings.

The Laptop Dress Code

- Laptops must be transported in a hard shell case and a neoprene case or laptop bag.
- Students may not decorate or deface school owned computers or hard shell cases.
- Inappropriate media may not be used as a screensaver/desktop or attached to laptop accessories.
- **Display of weapons, images contrary to the culture of the UAE and/or inappropriate language (in any language), is not permitted.**

Keeping Health & Balance in Mind

The 1:1 computer program is meant to be a positive, enriching resource to enhance learning and creativity. It is recognized however, that computers, mobile devices and other technologies can sometimes have a disruptive effect on a person's behavior and well-being. Proper usage of

technology should never cause pain, fatigue, or other physical or mental ailments. Additionally, while technology can be an engaging way to spend time, it can take up time that could be better used for studying, working with friends, or seeking direct help from teachers.

It is important that Middle School students use break times during the school day to socialize with others and take a rest from screen time. With balance in mind we have guidelines for when and where MS students should use their laptops.

MS Laptop Use - When and Where?

Time of Day	In a classroom with my teacher	In the library	Outside or in the hallway
Before School	✓	✓	✗
Break		✗	
Lunch	✗		
After School	✓	✓	

Middle school students are not permitted to use their laptops during breaks unless under the direct supervision of a teacher. Students may use their laptops before and after school to complete work in the library only. **Laptops will not be used during the lunch break.**

Ethical and Respectful Use

Responsible citizenship means practicing good ethical behavior, whether online or offline. **Students are encouraged to model good online citizenship by making sure their actions and choices do not disrupt the learning environment for themselves or others,** just like in the classroom.

- Students should cite any and all use of websites, books, media, etc. Students should not share or use others' email accounts or passwords, and not engage in conversation or activities (such as sending pictures) that may inflame, agitate, risk, offend (cyber bullying, flaming, trolling, etc.) or threaten the privacy or security of others.

- The activities below are prohibited at school:
 - use of peer-to-peer file-sharing software that could jeopardize
 - use of hacking or installing malicious software on any device used at ACS
 - use tools to bypass network restrictions or LANschool
 - use of Virtual Private Networks (VPN)
 - possessing or sharing pirated software
 - trespassing into another person's computer, accounts or files
 - removing school installed software

- Using print resources should also be done in a responsible manner. To conserve paper and ink, students will use "print preview" and print documents only once to reduce unnecessary printing.

Protecting Student Identity & Personal Information

With the ubiquity of information networks, safeguarding personal information has become extremely important. Once information goes on the Internet, it is likely that it will remain there for a very long time. Personal information includes names, phone numbers, student ID numbers, addresses, usernames and passwords. As such, it is important that students treat their own and others' personal information with great care. **Students should never share user accounts or passwords, especially those that are close to their identity** (e.g., email, ACS accounts, social networks). All personal information, such as home addresses, phone numbers and full names, should always be kept private.

Sharing Work Online

Students will be sharing their work in a variety of online spaces and are expected to act safely by keeping personal information private. **When they share their work online, they are expected to treat those spaces as classroom spaces.** Language or images that are inappropriate for class are not appropriate online. If a student's work is shared, only the first name and grade will be included.

Community Awareness

All students are members of the greater ACS community and have a social obligation to protect community resources, such as bandwidth. Participating in activities that use up excessive bandwidth, such as peer-to-peer file sharing, is strictly prohibited at school. **Computer use should not be disruptive to other students who are working nearby;** students are requested to use headphones when listening to audio. Students should also be aware that individual teachers will have different protocols for classroom use and it is the student's responsibility to be aware of these and adhere to them.

Monitored Use, Misconduct, and Free Will

In cases where there are concerns that electronic communications systems and/or technology are being used inappropriately, teachers and/or the technology department may restrict and/or monitor student use. Similarly, student use of the school network is not private, and there should be no expectation of privacy.

In cases of student misconduct ACS reserves the right to inspect computers and electronic media and to carry out appropriate investigation and possible disciplinary action.

ACS does not take responsibility for personal media or information transmitted to a third party by a student of their own free will, nor does it take responsibility for any repercussions that may occur from said action (e.g., posting photos on a social networking website).

ACS reserves the right to make adjustments to these guidelines and expectations throughout the school year if necessary and will be proactive in communicating any changes.

Consequences for failure to adhere to the RUA may result in restricted or complete loss of access to technology and the school's networks and may include suspension, expulsion, and/or notification to the appropriate legal authorities. The school may also remove any software from a student's computer that is causing problems with the ACS network, his/her education or the education of other students.

Responsible Use Agreement (RUA)

The Responsible Use Agreement (RUA) acknowledges that students and parents have read and understand the Responsible Use Policy. Parents complete the agreement during the registration/re-enrollment process. Students complete the RUA during their first week of school.

RUA Grade 7 and 8: Student Owned Laptop

I understand that:

- I am required to supply an Apple MacBook laptop (please refer to handbook for details and purchasing options) to be able to participate in the 1:1 program.
- I will follow the responsibilities and expectations outlined in the ACS Laptop Handbook and RUP.
- Use of school IT resources and services including access to the Internet is a privilege and not a right. Failure to abide by the Laptop Handbook and the RUA could lead to:
 - The revocation of these privileges
 - Appropriate disciplinary action by the Middle School Principal
- Parents/Students are financially responsible for:
 - Laptop repairs not covered under warranty
 - Any deliberate damage to ACS IT equipment, networks and hardware or software systems
 - Damage, loss, or theft of library and media equipment (i.e. lost chargers or laptops loaned by the library)
- If I should leave ACS, any ACS-licensed and provided software, which are the property of ACS, will be removed from my laptop.

RUA Grade 6: School Owned Laptop

I understand that

- The Laptop is the sole property of ACS and is on loan to the student.

- Students will comply at all times with the ACS Laptop Handbook and RUA. Any failure to comply may terminate rights of possession effective immediately and ACS may repossess the laptop.
- The use of school IT resources and services including access to the Internet is a privilege not a right. Failure to abide by the Laptop Handbook and the RUP could lead to
 - The revocation of these privileges
 - Appropriate disciplinary action by the Middle School Principal
- Parents/Students are financially responsible for:
 - Any damage to IT equipment, networks and hardware or software systems resulting from deliberate or willful acts of vandalism.
 - Damage, loss, or theft of library and media equipment (i.e. lost chargers or laptops loaned by the library)

Middle School Laptop Support Process (Tech Strikes)

All MS teachers **are required** to support the enforcement of the Responsible Use Policy (RUP). If a student has failed to follow the RUP he/she should receive a tech strike which is recorded with the date, reporting teacher’s name, and a description of the incident that occurred.

Teachers record Tech Strikes (TS) and the technology coach also monitors them. Below are the procedures followed once a student receives a TS.

First Tech Strike	Second Tech Strike	Third Tech Strike
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information is recorded on TS Form ● Student writes an email (with guidance of the issuing teacher) to parents explaining why they received a tech strike. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information is recorded in Tech Strike Form ● Parents, principal and homeroom teacher are informed in formal letter written by the student with the support of the Tech Coach or by the Tech Coach. ● The student is provided with a disciplinary laptop for 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information is recorded in TS Form ● Parents are informed by the Tech Coach ● The student is provided with a disciplinary laptop and the Principal assigns an appropriate consequence.

This is all summarized below:

Tech Strike Table

Strike No	Recorded in TS Form	Email*	Letter*	Laptop Assigned
1	YES	To parents	x	x
2		x	to parents, HR teacher, principal	disciplinary for 5 days
3		x	to parent by Tech Coach	disciplinary and Principal

*teacher, or Tech Coach will help/guide the student with the email or letter