



AMERICAN ACADEMY FOR GIRLS

SALWA, BLOCK 5, STREET 1



**Elementary School  
Parent/Student Handbook  
2023-2024**

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**\*\*PLEASE SIGN and Email to your daughter's Homeroom Teacher**

### Kuwait National Anthem

Watani Al Kuwait Salemtalilmajdi

Waalajabinekatalia A saade

Watani Al Kuwait

Watani Al Kuwait

Watani Al Kuwait Salemtalilmajdi

## Principal's Welcome Letter...

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the *American Academy for Girls*, Elementary Department. It is our pleasure to have your daughter(s) in our school community. As we head into our official 2023-2024 of school, AAG offers an instructional program based on an American-style curriculum, combined with Arabic and Islamic Studies, whose curriculum the Kuwait Ministry of Education requires. The ES School runs from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> Grade. English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science, Arabic and Islamic Religion are all the subjects taught in the department. Specialty teachers instruct the students in Art, Music, and PE. Social-Emotional wellbeing activities and Character Education is promoted by a weekly class led by our Guidance Counselor -- and it is also a time to foster social interaction with the girls, so they can communicate, laugh and connect with each other.

AAG's high quality and integrated Elementary-School program provides a safe, engaging, and nurturing environment, while promoting the creative, social-emotional, and intellectual development of your daughters. It is designed to create life-long learners who value personal development and cooperation with peers. Through various developmentally enriching activities that challenge and motivate, we will help to ensure that your daughter enjoys her learning environment and continues to flourish during her school years. We will help her build confidence, a sense of work ethic and responsibility. Additionally, collaborative learning is leading us to develop ourselves technologically in 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and to empower more independence within our girls too.

We encourage a strong, cooperative relationship between teachers, students and parents; it builds a foundation in support of a learning community that extends from home to school. This partnership ensures a positive and supportive environment that is conducive to student growth and development during these unprecedented times. We welcome and value your input and encourage the collaboration of ideas. This handbook is an essential resource for you to use throughout the school year. Please refer to this Parent/Student Handbook for answers to any questions you may have regarding policies, procedures and rules. Teachers are available to help in any way possible; just contact them to set up a time or simply to ask a question.

**Please do not hesitate to contact us via the ES mobile number: 96723878, if you have any questions, compliments, or concerns.**

Regards,

**Dr. Natalie Glover**  
**ES Principal**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The American Academy for Girls is a private, single gender school, which provides an American style education crafted to meet Kuwait educational requirements and encourages students in their pursuit of academic excellence.

## **CORE VALUES**

We believe that the community will strive to:

- Provide learning experiences that cultivate self-respect, resilience, and integrity
- Create opportunities for personal, social, and academic excellence through the advancement of analytical skills, independence, and responsibility
- Maintain open lines of communication and work together with the school community for the success of students
- Develop citizenship, worldwide awareness, and an understanding for diversity
- Continuously assess and modify the school's curriculum to provide an optimal learning environment

## **PROFILE OF AN AAG GRADUATE**

The American Academy for Girls believes in fostering an environment of high academic achievement by empowering girls and young women to be:

- Critical thinkers and problem solvers
- Effective communicators
- Academic achievers in a collaborative environment
- Global citizens

We guide students to experience that learning is best achieved through reflection, parental involvement, and community collaboration. The American Academy for Girls welcomes all nationalities and teaches appreciation of different cultures and respect for diversity within the international community.

## **1. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

AAG offers an instructional program based on an American-style curriculum combined with Arabic and Islamic studies, whose curriculum the Kuwait Ministry of Education requires. We believe that each student progresses uniquely through every developmental learning stage. Thus, we provide a supportive learning environment which moves through the curriculum from basic readiness activities to the higher level thinking skills necessary for independent and group learning activities.

The Elementary Program provides instruction in the areas of Language Arts, Mathematics, Science/S.T.E.M., and Social Studies. It is enhanced by courses in Computer Technology, Art, Music, Physical Education and Library Studies.

AAG offers differentiated learning experiences to meet the diverse needs of students at each grade level. Learning is enhanced by creative and interactive experiences which may include Science Lab, Center Work, Writer's Workshop, and other student-centered learning activities.

The Elementary School staff believes that by providing a comprehensive program in a positive and stimulating learning atmosphere, each student will have the opportunity to become a curious, confident and capable learner.

### **AAG will fulfill its philosophy by:**

- Creating a climate that reflects an atmosphere of respect, trust, high morale, cohesiveness, and caring among all members of the AAG community;
- Providing an American-style learning environment that promotes the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of our students, collectively and individually;
- Staffing the school with qualified, competent, compassionate, and experienced support staff, teachers, and administrators;
- Monitoring the curricula and our practices to assess their appropriateness and effectiveness;
- Communicating regularly with parents in order that the school, parents, and students work together to promote student learning;
- Encouraging good citizenship, social awareness and an appreciation for all cultures through participation in a variety of activities;
- Promoting and encouraging the academic standards required for success in future endeavors;
- Supporting our teaching methodologies through on-going professional development and evaluation.

In addition, the staff offers opportunities for the students to experience a well-rounded education. These activities include more variety when we are physically present within the school. Some examples done through virtual learning may include:

- Science activities
- Interdisciplinary projects and class projects
- Holiday celebrations
- Activity days
- Singing and Music Concerts

- International Studies

## **Non-Discrimination**

AAG admits students of every race and nationality, and extends to them all rights and activities of the school.

## **2. ADMISSION**

The American Academy for Girls admit students without regard to race, ethnic background or students of other faiths. All perspective students seeking admission at AAG must follow the admissions procedures outlined below. Parents are encouraged to contact the Principal before the admission process begins.

### **2.1. Admission Process and Requirements**

- Complete application form for each student.
- Complete the Emergency Form for each student.

Complete the following:

- Submit a copy of either the student's nationality certificate or Civil ID Card. (Kuwaitis)
- Submit a copy of the father's passport with official residency. (non-Kuwaiti)
- Submit three recent passport photographs.
- Submit a copy of the birth certificate.
- Submit the student's health file report card from previous school at the time of registration.
- Pay registration fees of KD 100 (non-refundable) to the Business office.
- Make an appointment with Admission's officer for an entrance exam and interview to be held with the Elementary School Counselor.
- Each student takes scheduled examination after payment of KD 20 (non-refundable)
- The results of the examination are reviewed by the Principal and the Director. Parents are then notified of the decision regarding admission/non-admission.
- Parents receive the Health documents which must be completed and submitted to the Nurse prior to the student's first day of class.
- It is the responsibility of parents to inform the registrar if they are aware of any special education needs and difficulties that the student may have at the time of submission of the application.

### **2.2. Registration**

Registration of new students or re-registration of those students currently enrolled will take place in the spring. Parents will be informed of the exact date of registration. New students must present a Certificate of Birth, Civil ID card, and report card from their previous school at the time of registration, attendance, and behavior report.

### **2.3. Parents' Responsibilities**

The parents are the primary educators of their children; the school works as a partner with the parents to secure the education and formation of the children. The parent will have the responsibility to work in cooperation with the school to secure a successful experience for the child.

### **2.4. Permanent Record**

A permanent record must be maintained for each student; the student's official file should only contain these items: academic transcript, academic testing, health records, emergency information, and academic or behavior information.

### **2.5. Release of Student Records**

All materials in the students file shall be treated as confidential and shall be accessible only to the Principal, members of the professional staff, to the legal guardian, and parents. The parents are to be made aware that they have the right to this information. The parent or student who wishes to have access to student records should notify the Principal in writing. The school will grant access within 24 hours of the request.

### **2.6. Parent/Student Emails**

Parents are requested to give the school an updated email so that they can have access to all teacher-student communication and ease of communication with the school administrators and teachers.

### **2.7. Change of Address/Telephone**

It is vital that the school office has up-to-date contact information. Parents are asked to notify the office as soon as possible in the event of any change of address or telephone number. Communication and the safety of your child depend on such information. Every child should have an emergency form filled out by a parent or guardian on file in the school office.

## **3. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ACADEMIC PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

### **3.1. English Language Arts**

The vision of the Elementary Language Arts Program is that all students will learn to their fullest capacity. The Elementary Language Arts program is a continuum of literacy skills and strategies for students in Grade One through Grade Four. This continuum includes processes critical to reading, writing, speaking, listening, information management, and the use of technology. In Grades One and Two, the primary goal is to teach all students to read and write fluently and comprehend a variety of fiction and nonfiction selections from all areas of the curriculum. In



Grades Three and Four, students continue to acquire and refine strategies from comprehending and analyzing selections of all literary types and materials which relate to all subjects.

From Grade One through Grade Four, students learn the structure of language and use the writing process to produce narrative, persuasive, expository, and technical writings.

In English Language Arts, students should be able to:

- Use oral language (listening and speaking), reading, and writing as primary ways to learn
- Effectively communicate with others through speaking and writing
- Read and write on or above grade level
- Independently read leveled books from [www.kidsa-z.com](http://www.kidsa-z.com)

The goals of the Elementary English Language Arts program are defined by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts and Literacy, which include areas of: reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language. More information on the standards and their exact content can be found online at: [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)

### **3.2.Mathematics**

The content of the mathematics curriculum is also guided by the Common Core State Standards. Though the standards for content vary by grade level, all students will be held to the same Standards for Mathematical Practice, including:

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
- Model with mathematics
- Use appropriate tools strategically
- Attend to precision
- Look for and make use of structure
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning
- Students will relate concepts and procedures from different topics in mathematics to one another and to other disciplines, using a variety of representations-- graphical, numerical, algebraic, verbal, and physical.

### **3.3.Science**

In the elementary grades, students receive an introduction to the study of the content area disciplines through a curriculum that is activity oriented, content rich, and embedded with the opportunities to reinforce thinking skills. The content area disciplines lend themselves to the integrated approach to instruction.

The framework for our science curriculum is guided by the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). It includes the study of physical, earth, and life sciences that build upon each other throughout the students' K-12 science education. Content and skills are taught through a hands-on approach that emphasizes inquiry, scientific experimentation, and science process skills. More information can be found at: [www.nextgenscience.org](http://www.nextgenscience.org) [www.scienceatoz.com](http://www.scienceatoz.com)

### **3.4.Social Studies**

Many aspects of geography, history, and health are covered in our elementary social studies courses. With the AERO standards to guide curriculum and instruction, we ensure that each student has a foundational understanding of self, country, and international communities that will be built upon throughout the K-12 education. Historical events and facts, geographic features and economic trends combined with civic rights, roles and responsibilities enable students to determine how societies have evolved and how they function, as well as their place within their own communities. (American Education Reaches Out, [www.projectaero.org](http://www.projectaero.org))

### **3.5.Art & Music & PE**

Students in the elementary grades participate in art, music, & PE classes taught by a specialist in each of these areas. Follow-up activities are also provided by the classroom teacher, and art, music, and PE are frequently highlighted within thematic units. The sequential curriculum includes both skills and concepts that allow students opportunities to express creativity and individualism.

### **3.6.Computer Technology**

In these days of teaching and learning, Students use the computer lab, 1:1 devices, and Interactive Smart Boards to communicate, learn in classes, submit work and interact with peers and teachers. Data access, retrieval, and processing support instruction in reading, writing, and research. Informational technology is an integral part of student growth and academic success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and it helps students acquire information from a variety of sources to produce effective oral and written presentations.

## **4. Homework Policy**

We will have daily **homework assignments a week. Special classes will not have homework.**

## **5. Settling in Suggestions**

Before each session, get your child accustomed to the following:

- Bedtime (preferably the same time each night and not later than 9:00 p.m.) and wake up in time to have breakfast and be on time for school.
- Feed your child a nutritious breakfast & snacks to ensure she has enough energy to concentrate in the afternoon sessions (any food containing too much sugar and/or chocolate is highly discouraged)
- Encourage independence in your child by allowing her to, tidy up after herself, carry her belongings independently and even participate in all/some eLearning practices on her own.
- Become familiar with the school facilities to better aide your child in feeling safe and secure in the school environment

- Familiarize yourself with the rules and procedures of the department so that you may talk about these points with your child (use this book as a resource or refer to your child's teacher).

## **6. Parent/Teacher Relationships & Ongoing Communication:**

At AAG, we believe that a good parent/teacher relationship is necessary for the maximum school success. Throughout the year, you will be provided with all the essential information that is needed to keep you updated about your child's life at school. Newsletters, emails, letters, will be emailed on a regular basis. Report cards will tell you about your daughter's academic progress. We will have a scheduled Open House and Parent meetings by appointment. We also use Class Dojo and school agendas as communication tools as well.

We will be utilizing AAG Gmail and Class Dojo as the primary methods of contacting parents regarding all school related matters such as sharing learning materials, activities, and holidays. A school e-mail will be provided to you. Note this **should be an account that is checked daily as we will be sending time-sensitive information such as invitation to the Google Classroom.**

You may call or email your child's teacher to set up an appointment for a conference during the school day, if necessary. **We strongly encourage you to contact your child's teacher first to clarify any questions or concerns before administration is consulted.**

## **7. Parent Newsletters**

Newsletters will be emailed monthly and posted in Google Classroom. Be sure to read them carefully as they contain important and helpful information.

## **8. Classroom Environment**

Every child has the right to feel safe and secure during the sessions, free from bullying and emotional harm. In addition, it is important that each child is capable of learning to develop self-discipline, positive work habits, and to think independently. **We do NOT allow social media groups in the elementary school, (i.e. Snapchat, Instagram, and Facebook.) Please check your daughter's devices for social media groups as they have been problematic in fostering bullying.**

## **9. Positive Behavior Policy**

At AAG, we believe that everyone always has the right to feel safe. Our goal is to prepare children for successful participation in our community by providing the following:

- A safe, caring, nurturing, well-planned positive virtual learning environment using to learning.
- Successful positive behavior guidance is built upon strong relationships that are grounded in trust and respect. Teaching staff and administration develop strategies to build each child's social, emotional, and behavioral skills based on shared understandings and respect with each family.

Establishing regular and ongoing two-way communication with families will create strong relationships that allow for effective collaborations.

- Expectations that children's behavior will be expressed clearly, simple, and will be developmentally appropriate.

### **9a. Positive Behavior Policy**

- Understanding the limits of young children's ability to wait, to share, to appropriately express feelings (e.g. anger, sadness, fear) to cope with tiredness/disappointment.
- Through discussions and rulemaking, the children and the teacher will compose a list of virtual rules/expectations that protect each student's right to safety and respect as well as the responsibility that each child has in maintaining class order.
- Working together with families and others to better understand the factors contributing to a child's behavior. Ask the question: "What is this child trying to communicate when they demonstrate this behavior?" Factors contributing to a child's behavior may include:
  - Programmatic structures or conditions such as the flow of the day/daily schedule, arrangement of the classroom, noise level, etc.
  - The child's feeling of security within the classroom or the condition of their relationships with adults or peers.
  - The child's unique circumstances. For example:
    - The child is going through a transition at home and experiencing emotional distress as a result (e.g. a new baby in the family) or has experienced trauma.
  - By consistently observing and documenting children's behavior, teaching staff may identify the situations that trigger disruptive or unsafe behaviors and help determine the factors that contribute to such behavior.
- Positive reinforcement and encouragement for appropriate behavior. It is important to let children know that they are making progress toward a desirable new skill to encourage their effort. Positive reinforcement can be done in many ways and may need to be tailored for individual children. Children demonstrating new and more complicated behaviors may need additional reinforcements.

Examples of developmentally appropriate ways to reinforce positive behaviors include:

- Using social reinforcements such as praise, smiles, encouragement, or even a well-timed high-five or thumbs up.
- Using activity reinforcements as a reward for desired positive behaviors, such as being able to choose a song or activity for the group or during center time.
- Redirection / distraction, early intervention to avoid escalation of conflict and bullying.
- Teaching of communication and problem-solving skills that encourage self-awareness and self-discipline.

### **9b. Logical consequences for inappropriate behaviors that reflect the dignity and rights of the child**

- Such consequences will never include physical, verbal, or emotional punishment.
- Such consequences will not result in the child being isolated (left alone) for any length of time.
- A supervised "positive time out or thinking time" may be applied for dangerous/unacceptable behavior.

- Unacceptable/dangerous behaviors which are repeated or prolonged require careful investigation and advice from the Counselor.
- Incidences of inappropriate behaviors like bullying and aggression will involve the whole staff team in consultation with parents to develop and implement a program to address issues regarding the behavior.

We believe that:

- Everyone has the right to feel safe all the time.
- Behavior improves more when handled in a positive way.
- Children feel angry, frustrated, and may need help to express those feelings appropriately.
- Staff and parents need to share responsibility, being consistent all the time creating a safe secure environment for children, and modeling appropriate behaviors.

<b>ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR</b>	<b>UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR</b>
<b>Sharing and taking turns</b>	<b>Disregarding classroom rules</b>
<b>Being co-operative</b>	<b>Disregarding well-being of others</b>
<b>Politeness</b>	<b>Impolite or rude behavior towards group or individual</b>
<b>Participating in activities</b>	<b>Bullying/Cyberbullying</b>
<b>Being friendly</b>	<b>Refusing to engage with peers or teacher</b>
<b>Listening</b>	<b>Interrupting, not listening</b>
<b>Helping</b>	<b>Disturbing others; not showing responsibility for self or belongings</b>

#### **9c. Actions taken when unacceptable behavior occurs**

- Talk to the child about the behavior and explain why it is unacceptable behavior
- Redirect the behavior of the child, reinforcing safe practices
- Withdraw the child from class and offer other choices – a “time out” “thinking chair”
- If unacceptable behavior continues, parent will be contacted to discuss implications and next steps

This list is not inclusive since it is impossible to predict all incidents of misbehavior that may occur. The idea is that the consequence be related to the misbehavior.

#### **9d. Actions taken if the unacceptable behaviors are repeated**

The teaching staff team including counselor in consultation with the parents will design and implement strategies to manage the behavior. However, if the behavior continues after the teacher has applied various disciplinary measures and after conferencing with the parents, the following will occur:

- First violation: No recess
- Second violation: Will not be allowed to participate in fun school activities (i.e., fieldtrips, Bazaars)
- Subsequent violation: Parent conference is scheduled.
- Continued violations: Parent conferences are scheduled with the ES Principal, teacher, and counselor.

Violations of a violent or aggressive nature may result in the student being sent home and a recommendation of removal from AAG will be made.

**NOTE: Parents will receive feedback from the teacher regarding the success or failure of disciplinary efforts.**

### **10. Attendance Guidelines & Class Orientation**

Your child's regular and prompt attendance at each session is essential to her success. School begins promptly. Students will have a 5-minute break in between each class. The instructional activities are group-oriented and involve interaction with classmates. Therefore, it is impossible to make up these crucial periods at home. Please view school as a priority and see that your child attends the sessions every day, **on time** except for illness or emergency. "Independent Work" time is scheduled for students throughout the week. It is a time to review what has been learned and complete homework and assignments.

#### **10a. School Hours**

School hours are 7:25 am to 1:42. Please refer to your daughter's class schedule for the exact times of the sessions when they are issued at the beginning of the new school year.

#### **11. Absence from a class(s)**

Be sure to contact your daughter's teacher and Google Classroom for make-up assignments.

### **12. Grading Policy & Student-Performance Reporting**

- 25% - Homework
- 25% - Class Participation
- 25% - Projects
- 25% - Tests/Quizzes

Report Cards are sent Quarterly. Students who are on an AIP (Academic Improvement Plan) or those who are showing signs of Academic and/or Behavior difficulty, will receive Progress reports in-between Report Cards. For each lost library book, 15 KD will be applied.

### **13. Promotion Policy**

Students will be promoted to the next grade level contingent upon all work being submitted by the final due date.

### **14. Vacations**

Parents are requested **not** to schedule vacations or extended holidays during the school year. If this is unavoidable, parents are requested to notify the school **in writing one week before the absence**. Such an absence is considered **unexcused**.

### **15. Uniform Policy**

School uniforms/PE uniforms should be worn by all students for each class. Students must wear **black** shoes for school and PE uniforms, and a **red** AAG jacket. Please note the following regarding our uniform policy:

- Colored hair and colored extensions are not allowed

- No make-up, fingernail polish, or false/acrylic nails
- On dress down days, no short dresses or short shorts
- No expensive jewelry (i.e. rings, bracelets, necklaces)

Please visit our AAG website for more purchasing information

### 16. Dress-Up/Theme Days

From time to time, the classroom teacher, with approval of the Elementary Principal, will announce “Free Dress Days” / “Dress-Up Days”. The following are guidelines for “Free Dress Days:” We will announce when students can wear coordinated theme days.

### 17. STAR Awards: (i.e. attendance, participation, good behavior, etc.)

Students who exhibit one or other mentioned attributes will receive an award.

### 18. Meals and Snacks

Please make sure your child brings healthy food and drinks to school. It is permitted to drink water in between classes, but not to eat. All classes will receive lunch and snack time in the schedule. Per the Ministry of Education, only plastic bottles are allowed. **No metal water bottles!**

### 19. Illness

In order to maintain a healthy environment and limit the spread of any infection (viral or bacterial infections) in the school, please keep your child at home if she is sick or has any of the following symptoms: **Fever (37.5 or higher temperature), sniffles, cough, vomiting, diarrhea, skin rash, conjunctivitis (pink eye).** **If your child has any of the aforementioned symptoms, she should not be sent to school.** Please keep her at home and consult a doctor. If your child has been diagnosed with any of the aforementioned symptoms at the school, parents will be contacted by the nurse; the child will be immediately removed from the classroom and kept in the school observation room until she is picked up by her parent(s). Children sent to school with a fever, vomiting, or any other severe symptoms will be sent back home immediately. Parents will be informed of any contagious disease, such as chicken pox, diagnosed in her child’s class. **Medicines must be given directly to the nurse, not the class teacher. Please do not send containers of medicine in your child’s lunch box without notifying the nurse. Teachers are not responsible for checking student’s lunch boxes for medication.** Per school policy, students who are absent due to illness, ***must*** submit a medical report deeming them ‘fit to return to school’ to the school nurse. The school nurse must clear the students before they can return to the classroom.

**\*\* Please note that medical forms given to the students in September must be completed and returned to the nurse by the end of September. This is a Ministry requirement\*\***

### 20. Miscellaneous Information

Parents are invited to visit the school’s website at [aag.edu.kw](http://aag.edu.kw) on a regular basis where they can find the new information, announcements, information about important events, and activities taking place in ES. The grade-level website contains important information pertaining to academics.

## PARENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT SIGNATURE PAGE

Student's Name (as per passport):

\_\_\_\_\_

Grade/Homeroom Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

This Parent/Student Handbook is the primary reference point when you have a question regarding policy or procedures for the ES Department.

If you have any questions regarding the content of this handbook, please contact the ES Principal or Principal's Assistant at # 96723878.

Please electronically sign and email this page back to your daughter's homeroom teacher by Sept. 14, 2023.

Thank you.

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Permission to release photos and videos of my child to be used at the discretion of AAG:

Yes       No

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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