

The American School in London

Behavior Policy: Lower School

The current version of any policy, procedure, protocol or guideline is the version held on the ASL website. It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that they are following the most up-to-date version.

Responsible party	Lower school principal
Approved by	Board of Trustees
Approval date	October 2023
Next review date	October 2024

Lower School Student Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct is based on the school's mission and the ASL Portrait of a Learner and reflects our core values and all applicable UK laws and regulations. Students in the Lower School have the right to an excellent education that excites and challenges them in a safe learning environment, to engage actively and constructively in school-sponsored events and activities with other members of the community, to feel cared for and valued as individuals, and to express respectfully their beliefs and opinions. Students in the Lower School contribute to the learning and social environment and also have the responsibility of upholding the school's values. ASL's expectations for all lower school community members are outlined below.

Expectations

ASL expects that lower school parents/guardians will make every effort to understand and respect school policies, including the Code of Conduct. The School encourages parents/guardians to support their growing children in developing a deeper understanding of the purpose of the Code and its positive impact on their learning environment and that of other students as well. Students in the Lower School are expected to respect both school and individual classroom rules at all times. Individual classroom rules are developed each year through student-teacher discussions and joint decision-making and are key to building positive relationships within the classroom. If rules are broken, logical consequences guide continued learning. All members of the school community share the responsibilities that come with the privilege of being part of our community. To that end, we expect parents/guardians to help their children, and other ASL students in their care, to make positive and healthy choices.

Please note that ASL's expectations of student behavior apply to all school-sponsored events, whether on or off campus. ASL reserves the right to intervene or apply logical consequences for behaviors outside of school that potentially affect a student, another student, our greater community or the school's reputation.

Respect

We treat others the way we expect to be treated.
We appreciate our own cultures and personal histories.
We value diversity of thought and experience.

Respect for others

Members of the ASL community respectfully recognize, affirm and value people of all identities. ASL is an anti-bias school. We do not tolerate emotional, physical or sexual harassment, labeling, bullying, violence, discrimination or hurtful behavior of any kind. Inappropriate language and gestures do not demonstrate respect for others and are therefore not allowed. We expect students to promote a positive learning environment in the classroom, across campus and at all school-related events. We are a safe place to be one's whole self with people who are not like us, and we welcome the whole selves of others. Please see ASL's K-12 Statement on Harassment and the Anti-bullying Policy for more details. These policies apply to all members of our community, including students, family members, caregivers and employees.

Respect for self

We expect students to respect their bodies and minds. We value and recognize healthy choices and promote a positive mindset. The School will offer support to families whose lower school children have been identified as engaging in self-harm and/or who make consistently unhealthy choices.

Attire

Student attire should support a safe and positive learning environment. We expect students to dress for school in a way that is respectful of themselves, of others in our diverse community, and of the School as a learning environment. Students in the Lower School arrive to school in weather-appropriate clothing, and in appropriate shoes for PE and recess. Messaging on clothing that includes inappropriate language or gestures does not demonstrate respect for others and is therefore not allowed.

Respect for property

We expect students to clean up after themselves, and to recycle and reuse as appropriate. We also expect students to respect the property of others and the School. ASL does not permit vandalism, theft or borrowing items from the classroom or others without prior consent.

Responsibility

*We take ownership of our words, actions and learning.
We fulfill our obligations to ourselves and to others.*

Interactions with others

Students should be mindful of the feelings of others in the community and treat everyone as they would like to be treated themselves. ASL students do not engage in disrespectful language, teasing or bullying.

Attendance

It is critical for students to attend classes regularly and on time. Parents/guardians are required to inform the School in a timely manner of any absences.

Seeking help

Responsible students are active and engaged in their own learning. We encourage and expect students to advocate for themselves, seeking help from teachers and other trusted adults when necessary. Communicating with teachers about difficult tasks can help students to make good choices under pressure.

Technology

Responsible students use technology appropriately. Our values and rules extend beyond face-to-face interactions to include online communication and social media. Students are expected to adhere to the school's Appropriate Use Document.

UK law

Responsible students abide by all UK laws.

Kindness

We act with compassion.

We help others.

Kindness is at the heart of ASL's values and the expectations we have for all students, families and employees. We are a welcoming school with a strong commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. Kind students act with compassion and help others. Students should remember that ASL is a K-12 school and to respect every student and adult on campus. Students should be particularly respectful of K-12 shared spaces within and around the building where classes and/or activities in the Middle or High schools may be taking place. ASL students are ambassadors for their school and their families, and they are kind and respectful to those outside our school community as well.

Integrity

We are honest.

We make the right choice even when no one is watching.

Students at ASL act with integrity; they are honest with adults and peers and do the right thing whether or not anyone is watching. Lying, withholding information and obstructing the truth are inconsistent with ASL's values. Students are expected to exhibit integrity in all facets of their schoolwork.

Courage to act

We have the courage to speak up for ourselves and for others.

We take positive action to make our community and world a better place.

If a student witnesses behaviors that are not in line with ASL's values, we guide them to take positive action. While we know it can be hard, we encourage students to stand up

for each other and themselves, which could include saying something in the moment, reporting the incident to an adult, and/or supporting those who have been impacted.

Overview of the disciplinary process

Most student misbehavior is addressed in the moment, by an ASL employee, when and where it occurs. In responding to misbehavior, other adults, including administrators and/or parents/guardians, may be included in the process as appropriate.

When more serious behavioral infractions occur, the School will use the following process to investigate and determine next steps.

First, there will be an initial assessment to determine the nature of the infraction(s), what information is available and what further information is needed, and who might be at risk.

Second, the information gathering stage will take place, which could include interviewing students and/or adults as appropriate. Parents/guardians will be notified in due course as appropriate. The School reserves the right to interview students prior to notifying parents of disciplinary incidents. In serious cases, students will be supported during an interview by the presence of a teacher, advisor or counselor who will serve as an advocate for the student. In rare circumstances, students may be asked to remain out of school during an investigatory process.

Third, the consequence(s) for the infraction will be determined by the lower school administration, reported to parents/guardians, and reported to appropriate employees.

Consequences

As a school, we try to do what is best for each student and the community-at-large, and in doing so, the full circumstances of each situation will be considered. In dealing with disciplinary incidents, ASL considers a variety of factors including precedent, a student's age, past record and standing at ASL, and any and all other circumstances related to the incident or individual of which we are aware and deem relevant; however, ASL must also take into consideration the safety of the wider community and the overall values of the School. The needs of an individual must therefore be reasonably balanced with the school's responsibility to the community.

Student behavioral problems vary in frequency and degree of seriousness, and corrective action must be a matter of judgment by the appropriate teacher or

administrator. For most lower-level misbehavior, the philosophy of discipline at ASL is to foster the notion of “learning from mistakes”, while more serious or repeated behavioral infractions will result in more significant consequences. The process outlined below gives examples and is not exhaustive.

Logical consequences to support students’ self-regulation (classroom teacher and/or administration):

- Students will be reminded of school or classroom rules.
- A timeout may be implemented for students to reflect on their behavior.
- Conflict resolution may be used among students.
- A phone call may be made or an email sent to parents/guardians.
- A parent/guardian conference may be held.
- A student may be sent home if another child is physically harmed in a deliberate manner.
- A student may be excluded from extracurricular activities or special trips.
- A student may be suspended from school for one to three additional days in severe cases of misbehavior or for repeated disrespect, teasing, bullying or hurting others.

Lower school administration and employees are always available to support families in resolving disciplinary issues. The lower school counselor is often invited to support students and parents/guardians.

Severe misbehavior, which puts other students at risk or disrupts the learning program of the School, could result in the student being asked to leave the School. If such a circumstance were to arise, the following process will take place prior to a decision being made about expulsion. This process is followed in all three school divisions.

The student’s parents/guardians and the relevant school administrator(s), including the Head of School, will meet for a hearing. If appropriate, the student may also be invited to join. Prior to the hearing, the family will be made aware of the infraction(s), receive a written copy of the school’s findings, and be given time to respond. During the hearing, the Head of School will review the disciplinary process, findings and possible consequences, and invite the student’s parents/guardians (and the student, if appropriate) to give additional input or feedback. Following the hearing, the Head of School will make a decision about the appropriate sanction(s) for the student, which may include permanent expulsion.

Following the Head of School's decision, the family has the right to request an appeal in accordance with the guidelines of the 2014 Education Regulations for Independent School Standards. Full details of the Parental Complaints policy can be found on the ASL website.