

AAS FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

Text most recently updated August 2024



**ANGLO-AMERICAN
SCHOOL OF SOFIA**

The International Choice

WELCOME

Dear Anglo-American School Community/Уважаеми родители и приятели на ААУ,

Добре дошли - On behalf of the Anglo-American School of Sofia team, I extend best wishes to all students and their families as we start the 2024-2025 school year.

This AAS Family Handbook and other School publications are available throughout the year on our website – www.aas-sofia.org. In order to facilitate an excellent learning environment of growth and change, we continually examine the work we do to ensure our practices are commensurate with best practices around the world. The procedures and practices outlined in this handbook are a result of considerable thought and deliberation by our staff in conjunction with student and community input. We are pleased that you have chosen to join us during this school year and beyond. **Please take the time to review this handbook as it provides a common framework and language for our School community and thus fosters a stronger partnership.**

Such partnerships are critical for a school and community to be supportive of one another. A key component of a good partnership is effective communication. Please remember that our door is open to comments, concerns or compliments. When we work together each student's learning experience is enhanced as they engage and explore new skills, hone strengths, and strive to be confident, happy and caring citizens in their quest to make our world an even better place.

Once again, welcome to the 2024-2025 school year!

In Partnership,

Dr. Tim Fries
Director - Anglo-American School of Sofia

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Please visit our website on www.aes-sofia.org to find the latest information about our School. Follow the [Anglo-American School of Sofia](#) on Facebook; [@AAS_Sofia](#) on Twitter, and [aaschool_bg](#) on Instagram

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THE AAS MISSION/Мисията на ААУ

We engage, support and prepare each student for today and tomorrow.
Ние ангажираме, подпомагаме и подготвяме всеки ученик за днешния и утрешния ден.

We...

- *foster a love of learning, healthy living and international community*
- *develop the knowledge, skills and values to communicate, find solutions and innovate*
- *enhance critical thinking, resourcefulness and creativity*
- *cultivate leadership, compassion and responsible citizenship in both attitudes and actions*
- *nurture the abilities to interact effectively with others and to act independently with confidence*

AAS Global Citizenship/Глобално Гражданство

At AAS, we recognize global citizenship transcends school approach, beliefs, and actions.

We...

- *Foster people's desire to make the world a better place*
- *Develop empathy and open-mindedness in communication within and beyond our community*
- *Enhance an understanding of local and global issues through analysis, creativity, and action*
- *Cultivate respect and acceptance of diverse people's identity, perspective, and culture, including those of minority or marginalised groups*
- *Nurture global citizenship through peace, ethics, and sustainability initiatives*

AAS Core Values/ОСНОВНИТЕ ЦЕННОСТИ НА ААУ

Commitment, Respect, Excellence

COMMITMENT

- *Academics, athletics, arts, service and sustainability collectively support our mission.*
- *We believe that learning is a lifelong journey that is transformative, collaborative and explorative.*
- *We appreciate and celebrate that the achievements of our holistic approach promote continuous growth.*
- *We are dedicated to the belief that we have a responsibility to embrace and seek out diverse perspectives and ideas.*
- *Self-awareness, willingness to push beyond limitations, and the desire to see things through to completion contribute to intellectual, social, emotional and physical well-being.*

RESPECT

- *Integrity, empathy, mutual respect and consideration, and an ethical environment commensurate with the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights support our mission.*
- *We believe that embracing a mix of cultures, talents, experiences and socioeconomic diversity makes AAS an authentic and fulfilling place in which to learn.*
- *We model and help others model respect for all of our community members.*
- *We appreciate and celebrate people as individuals with unique talents and abilities.*
- *Wisdom and caring promotes the development of attitudes, values, self-regulation, relationships and responsible citizenship.*

EXCELLENCE

- *Challenging, authentic and connected curricula, programs and assessments draw on the best international practices, help students develop the IB Learner Profile traits.*

- *We believe in encouragement, perseverance, cooperation, acceptance of individual responsibilities, and the provision of diverse and engaging learning opportunities for students.*
- *We understand that we are models for others and seek to embrace and live the ethos of being an open-minded, kind and caring community member.*
- *We appreciate and celebrate that successful learning and achievement takes many forms.*
- *Graduates leave AAS with confidence and an understanding of the role they may play in shaping the future.*

AAS Definition of Learning/ Дефиниция за обучение на ААУ

Learning at AAS is a dynamic and engaging process of inquiry, creativity, and critical thinking that prepares students to contribute purposefully to the world around them.

Обучението в ААУ е динамичен и ангажиращ процес на проучване, креативност/откривателство и критично мислене, който подготвя учениците да допринасят целенасочено за заобикалящия ги свят.

IB Learner Profile

Inquirers

- They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

Knowledgeable

- They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers

- They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators

- They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

Principled

- They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Open-minded

- They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring

- They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

Courageous

- They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced

- They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective

- They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

AAS at a GLANCE

History and Overview

The Anglo-American School of Sofia (AAS) was established in 1967 to meet the educational needs of children from the embassies of the United States and the United Kingdom. At that time, a small group of students (less than 15) studied in a small building in downtown Sofia. AAS grew (to almost 30 students) and moved to the neighbourhood of Knyazhevo. Little by little, the School enrolled students from foreign businesses and other embassies, in addition to the US and UK diplomatic missions. As more students joined AAS, the campus was split with Elementary students staying in Knyazhevo and students in grades six to eight (Middle School) moving to a floor in the US Marine House near Studentski Grad. It was around this time that Bulgarian students were permitted by the authorities to attend AAS. A short time later, the Middle School moved to Mladost. In 1998 all AAS students moved to Mladost, renting space at another school. In 2006, AAS moved to our current location and began the process of becoming a Pre-K to Grade 12 school. In 2010, our school celebrated its first graduating class. In August 2012, AAS completed a significant facility project, the Vitosha Wing, doubling the School's capacity. In 2018-2019 school year, the Rila Renaissance Centre opened, which provides additional instructional spaces, additional green space, updated parking, as well as the arts & design centre. In 2023, we added a community Café as well as the Outdoor Classroom.

AAS is a full-service, open admissions, international school with approximately 600 students, 175 dedicated faculty and staff, and a commitment to our mission in state-of-the-art buildings. The School's charter permits the School to enrol children from the international community in Sofia, as well as Bulgarian nationals. AAS is a not-for-profit, private, secular school without affiliation to any religious denomination, political party, or interest group.

Accreditation, Authorization and Affiliation

The Council of International Schools (CIS) and The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accredit AAS. This involves scheduled review and evaluation by an outside team and corresponding follow-up. AAS is an active member of the Central & Eastern European Schools Association (CEESA) and the European Council of International Schools (ECIS). We are also authorised by the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) as an IB World School.

SCHOOL BOARD

The AAS Board of Directors governs the Anglo-American School of Sofia. The Board holds regular meetings, which are open community members. The Board exercises control over the strategic direction, policies, and financial oversight of the School. The Board is guided in its governance by the School's policy manual, which is available for review in the Director's office. There are nine members of the Board of Directors. The American Ambassador appoints four Board members, including the Chair; the British Ambassador appoints four Board members, including the Deputy Chair. The ninth Board member is nominated by the school community and approved by the Board. The Director of the School, the Finance Manager, and an elected Staff Representative are ex-officio and nonvoting members of the Board. The Board of Directors for the 2024-2025 school year are:

Board Members

Aaron Cope (Chair)
Gia Raskino (Co-chair)
Gillian Penswick
David Knox
Nickolay Rashkov
Pamela Della Toffola
Kristen Mchorris
Des Malpass
Boris Gurov

Ex-Officio Board Members

Tim Fries (AAS Director)
Zhulieta Nikolova (Director's Executive Administrator)
Christine Wiest (Teacher Representative)
Diana Tzvetkova (Finance Manager)

BEGINNING of the SCHOOL YEAR

Where do students go on the first day of school?

At the ES main entrance, Kindergarten through Grade 5 students will see signs for their grade level and teacher. They will meet their teachers at the appropriate sign before moving to their classrooms.

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students have a staggered start to begin the school year, parents will receive information from their child's teacher regarding details.

Middle School and High School students go to the amphitheatre (if raining – the Vitosha Gym).

Is there an orientation for new parents and students?

Yes, for 2024-2025, formal orientation program that takes place at the School is as follows:

- Elementary School – Friday, August 19
 - Time: 13:00-14:30
 - students and parents together
- Middle School/High School – Friday, August 19
 - Time: 14:30-16:00
 - separate program for students and parents

Is there a specific evening to meet the teachers and learn more about the program?

Back to School Night in Elementary will happen within the first two weeks of school.

Back to School Night provides Elementary School parents a chance to meet their children's teachers and learn more about class routines and expectations.

Back to School Night for Middle School and High School will happen in the second or third week of school and provides parents an opportunity to meet their children's teachers and to participate in an abbreviated school day. For 2024-2025, Back to School Nights are scheduled as follows:

- Elementary School Back to School Night is Thursday, August 22
 - Time: 18:00 - 20:00
- Middle School and High School Back to School Night is Wednesday, September 4
 - Time: 17:30 - 20:00

PARENTS as PARTNERS

The Anglo-American School is committed to communication with parents and welcomes participation in our school community. In addition to numerous informal events, the School holds many formal events during the year to meet with school staff. These include: New Family Orientation, PTO Welcome Back BBQ, Parent Teacher Conferences, Community Presentations, PTO Meetings, as well a variety of face-to-face opportunities.

Every week, parents and students receive two AAS Newsletters (known as the *Weekly Howl* and *the Week Ahead*) which are sent to parents via email. The *Weekly Howl* contains one article of common interest to the community and short articles on school activities from the past week. Every Saturday, parents and students receive the *Week Ahead* newsletter that contains important upcoming announcements, PTO news, and calendar items. The *Weekly Howl* and *Week Ahead* are a key form of regular communication between the School and parents.

The School also sends additional emails to community members on an as needed basis. These messages may come from the Communications Department, the ES/MS/HS Divisions, teachers, or other staff members. Please read any messages that you receive from the School as they have important information.

Please note that the emails sent to the School (including individual teachers) will be read during work days (08:00-16:30). For urgent communications during the school day, please contact the ES or the MS/HS office.

An SMS system helps with urgent communications.

We encourage parents to contact the School with questions and ideas. We believe consulting with the teacher or staff member closest to the concern best solves individual issues. To ensure efficient communication and timely responses the School uses following guidelines:

- communicate promptly with appropriate staff member
- bring unresolved concerns to the Principals, and if needed, the Director
- note that Board policy directs the School not to consider anonymous complaints
- if you are not sure who to contact, please email or call the Front Desk, (frontdesk@aas-sofia.org) to expedite responses to questions

Visiting the School

Parents are welcome to meet with teachers after making an appointment with them in advance. Teachers are engaged in teaching for most of the day, and the office staff has instructions not to interrupt them, except in an emergency.

Parents are also welcomed and encouraged to take part in the many special events and activities at the school. One good way parents can help is to let the teacher know if they have a special interest or knowledge of an area of study taking place in the school.

All parents wishing to enter campus, including those with diplomatic identification and/or licence plates, must have a yearly pass issued through the school to show gate security. Only vehicles that are pre-registered and have the appropriate yearly pass are permitted to enter the campus.

Thank you for following the directions of our security personnel, including:

- lowering vehicle windows and showing the gate pass
- driving slowly and cautiously while on the school grounds
- parking in appropriate locations and using the crosswalk at all times
- turning off the engine of your vehicle when parked

Guests

Former students, families, and other invited guests are welcome to AAS. To arrange a visit to AAS, please send a written request to the respective Principal or department at least two working days in advance. Children visiting an AAS student may attend classes with that student for up to one day based on Principal approval and with prior arrangement.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANISATION (PTO)

The Parent and Teacher Organisation is an integral part of the life of the school, serving to aid and enhance programs and activities.

The PTO also serves the school by:

- supporting co-curricular and enrichment activities for students
- organising fundraising and other special events
- coordinating parent volunteer support as needed
- conducting special programs for adults

The membership of the PTO is composed of all parents, teachers and members of the Board of the Anglo-American School of Sofia. All members are encouraged to attend PTO meetings and special events, as well as to become involved in PTO activities as volunteers.

PTO activities are coordinated by the PTO Executive Board, which is elected by PTO members. The officers are the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and one to two members at large - up to 10 maximum members if needed. The PTO is an open and democratic organisation; the PTO Executive Board provides leadership in coordinating PTO activities. Copies of the PTO by-laws are available from the PTO President. In addition to the PTO Executive Board members, many parents serve as room volunteers. At the teacher's request, room volunteers assist with activities, and provide a core group for organising campus and school wide activities. Each year a PTO member volunteers to coordinate the room volunteer program for the year.

Many activities each year need volunteer time and talent. Many parents with untapped skills and ideas could contribute to school and community life. Do not hesitate to voice your ideas to your child's teacher, PTO Executive Board members, or the school Director to help us start new adventures. Volunteer for an activity and join the fun! Make school a part of your life too!

There are a number of PTO-sponsored activities to which all are invited to get the year off to a good start. Remember all parents have the right and the responsibility to be active in the PTO. PTO Officers for the 2024-2025 school year are:

President:	Radostina Rashkova
Vice President:	Gergana Moskova
Treasurer:	Milena Mattingly
Room-Parent Coordinator:	Roberta Paz
Events Coordinator:	Monika Lubenova

If you have any questions or wish to join the PTO team please email pto@aas-sofia.org.

ADMISSIONS and REENROLLMENT

The Anglo-American School of Sofia's admissions policy is designed to ensure an international student body that is consistent with the purpose of the school and the needs of both applicants and the existing student body. Class placement is determined by the division Principals to ensure that a balance of demographics is maintained. Parents may share information with Principals to assist the class placement process, but Principals will not accept individual requests for class placement.

Reenrollment

The families of enrolled students will be sent the online re-enrollment form near the beginning of the calendar year and are required to indicate whether the student will be returning or not in the next school year. There is an option for undecided families if more time is needed, however everyone will need to give a decision by the designated deadline. If a family has not replied by the designated date, they may lose their child's seat at AAS.

Student Withdrawals

Notification of the intention to withdraw a student must be made in writing to the Registrar (dkay@aes-sofia.org), the appropriate Principal and the corresponding division assistant. Please give as much time as possible in order to facilitate the compilation of all documents and transition procedures. The offices require a minimum of 10 working days to provide documents for students withdrawing from AAS.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Our educational program is multifaceted and works to continually improve in being responsive to the needs of our students. Our program is informed by our Mission, Core Values, Definition of Learning, and accreditation agencies, as well as various national and international learning standards and outcomes. These include Common Core State Standards (CCSS), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), C3 Social Studies Curriculum Framework, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), AERO World Language Standards, National Core Arts Standards (NCAS), SHAPE PE standards, and the International Baccalaureate (IB).

The School Day

Classes begin promptly at 08:30. The last scheduled lessons of the day end at 15:30. Middle and High School students engaged in extracurricular activities will finish at 17:15 (most often) or later (on rare occasions) depending on the activity. Elementary School students may engage in After School Activities from 15:30-16:40 provided they are signed up in advance.

Please note that Wednesdays are late start days for students. On Wednesdays, school begins at 09:30; dismissal is at 15:30.

Instruction

Instruction at AAS is characterised as purposeful, differentiated, and rigorous, and is always planned and delivered with students in mind. Learning is a social and collaborative experience, and as such, student voice, choice, and diversity are honoured and included throughout the instructional cycle.

Learning Environment

The Learning Environment at AAS is built on trusting relationships and is engaging, safe, respectful, and purposefully crafted to maximise student involvement and efficacy. Students develop the confidence to take risks, to accept challenges, and support each other as they approach new learning.

Assessment

Assessment is used throughout the entire learning experience to support students in knowing what they are learning, where they are relative to the goal, and what their specific next steps are. Teachers are constantly collecting various data about students and their learning - formal and informal, anecdotal and written/recorded. All assessment data is used to plan for student

learning. At the end of each reporting period, there is a formal report of progress toward the goals.

Reporting Practices in Action

Teachers and teaching teams determine the appropriate number of assessments for each subject and grade level, and these will vary. Teachers are expected to provide consistent and regular feedback to students about their progress toward learning goals. Teachers will use their professional judgement along with moderation with colleagues, to ensure that the grades at AAS are accurate, meaningful, consistent and supportive of learning.

Reporting in Action – Elementary School (ES)

Reporting on each child's progress is undertaken through conversations, work samples sent home, formal parent-teacher conferences, and written reports. For Elementary School students there are:

- formal reports at the end of each trimester
- two parent-teacher conferences (autumn and spring)

For Elementary School students, AAS follows the general international practice of standards-referenced grading and reporting. Information is provided to students and parents about progress toward standards for each grade level.

Reporting in Action – Secondary School (Middle & High School – MS/HS)

For MS/HS students:

- formal progress reports (for grades 9-12) and grade level standard descriptors (for grades 6 - 8) at the end of each trimester
- access to the gradebooks (for grades 6 - 12) within the PowerSchool portal for both students and parents
- two conference opportunities for parents and teachers (autumn and spring)

Homework

Homework is not assigned in Elementary School other than regular reading at home or for special projects and occasions. In Middle and High School, "Homework" is not independently assigned and graded. Students will, at times, use time beyond the school day to complete/modify tasks started during the school day.

Homework completion and responsibility are reported separately from academic achievement as part of the learning habits.

Assessment Rubric for K - 8

4 Exemplary	3 Mastery	2 Approaching	1 Beginning
Demonstrates mastery of the standard & application of higher order thinking	Demonstrates consistent understanding of the standard	Demonstrates inconsistent understanding of the standard	Demonstrates limited understanding of the standard

Grade Descriptors for 9-12

7 Excellent	6 Very good	5 Good	4 Satisfactory	3 Limited	2 Poor	1 Very Poor
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Please note: IB achievement levels may vary from course to course due to fluctuations prescribed by the IB. When using IB assessments, please refer to the specific subject reports published by the IB. These reports are available to IB teachers via the OCC or to the IB DP Grade descriptors 2017.

Inc (Incomplete) is used when there is not sufficient evidence for learning.

N/A (not applicable) is used when a standard has not been assessed during the reporting period.

Late or Incomplete Work

When students have not completed enough work to demonstrate understanding, they may be given an “Incomplete” (Inc.)

Additional information about incomplete work specific to MS and HS

At the end of the reporting period, an Inc may remain until the work is completed within a timely manner (usually two weeks).

- If the work is turned in, it will be scored and the reporting grade will accurately reflect the level of performance

- If the work is still incomplete, teachers/administrators will determine whether students get a score of 1 reported, or if students are given an extended deadline or alternate course

If the work is late, incomplete, or missing due to a student's poor learning habits, a decision will be made depending on the developmental level (e.g. grade level) of the student, the consistency of poor learning habits across multiple subjects, and a discussion with students and parents about whether the work will be allowed to be submitted for reporting or not

- If allowed, a time frame will be given, the work will be scored, and the reported score will accurately reflect the level of performance
- If not allowed, students will get a 1 reported; Teachers will communicate to students, parents, and administrators the concerns regarding learning habits as soon as they are apparent
- Students will be put on academic contracts with appropriate consequences determined by administrators if this is a recurring issue

Additional Information about Reporting for MS and HS

- Teachers will keep an open gradebook, allowing students and parents to see grades as they are available
- Teachers and students will follow the Retake Policy (below) in determining the type, timeline, and availability of re-take/re-submission options; this is done with the common understanding that the student has made a good faith effort in completing the work and homework, and has shown engagement in the learning up to the assessment task
- Trimester Progress Reports will be based on summative scores; the following will not be included in reported grades
 - Homework (the exception being a long term project, presentation, essay, etc. where work was done in a summative manner over an extended period of time)
 - Group grades: students will always be scored individually when working collaboratively
 - There will be no "curving" of grades

Retakes & Resubmissions for MS and HS

The teacher may offer a second opportunity for the student to demonstrate their learning of the material. Individual content areas will communicate the specific expectations for re-take/resubmission within their class on the syllabus. In all subjects, this opportunity is contingent on the following:

- Only scored assessments not meeting the standard expectation will be eligible for a retake; in MS a score of 2 or less is eligible; in HS a score of 4 or less is eligible

- A good faith effort from the student in completing the homework during the unit
- A good faith effort from the student in completing the classwork; this includes showing engagement, note-taking, participation, questioning, and completing independent and group tasks (as appropriate)
- The teacher may require a correction of the original work along with an error analysis completed by the student
 - this could be dependent on the type of assessment
- Retake/resubmission completed within one week (where possible excusing extenuating circumstances, e.g. illness, absence)
- Retakes to be completed in the “Get it Done” room assigned by the teacher
 - A student will be given at least two days notice that they are assigned to the “Get it Done” room; if they fail to attend, they forfeit the opportunity to retake
 - To the extent possible, teachers will coordinate with students in an attempt to avoid interfering with athletics and activities, but with the understanding that academics come first
- The teacher may meet with the student to review/revise material
- The teacher may use the original test correction, meeting with the teacher, or revision and verbal demonstration of proficiency with the material to substitute for a retake and the reporting score would be changed accordingly
- Due to the nature of some tasks (labs, extended projects), a retake experience is not always feasible

Academic Program

Summaries of each curricular area can be found on the School’s [website](#). The curriculum involves academics and arts, athletics/activities, and service.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Responsible Use Policy (RUP)

AAS acknowledges the important role of technology in all of our lives and seeks to provide opportunities for students to learn how to use existing and emerging technology effectively and responsibly.

AAS works to integrate technology across the school day in order to develop ethical, competent, and technologically literate students.

The responsible use of current and emerging technologies is critical – even more so in today’s ubiquitously connected world. The Core Value of *respect* prevails with the understanding that like all things, students are learning and need to be taught what this means regarding their devices and use of technology.

To maintain a school environment that encourages a free exchange of ideas, it is expected that all AAS community members (students, families, guests, staff, and faculty) will respect the privacy of other individuals on campus and at school related events off campus. Secret recordings (audio or video) on any device, including drones, is prohibited.

Mobile Phones

Elementary and Middle School students are not permitted to use their mobile phones during the school day. They must be kept in either their bags or lockers. In cases of emergency, both parents and students use the main reception desk. Within the High School, students are not permitted to use mobile phones during lessons.

Athletics and Activities

The Athletics and Activities Program is an integral part of the educational process, providing students with opportunities to further develop their unique capabilities, interests, and needs beyond the classroom. Participation in these activities is a privilege earned by students. Participants are representatives of their school and community and their conduct is expected to exemplify high standards at all times.

Middle & High School After School Program

Most activities are linked to ‘CEESA’ (Central and Eastern European Schools Association), while others are organised internally by AAS staff. CEESA provides a competitive and non-competitive interscholastic athletic and activities program intended to enrich and enhance the educational experience of students.

Elementary School After School Program

AAS provides ES children with the opportunity to learn and develop skills in creativity clubs, dance, sports and many more. Activities in the ES are provided mostly by outside vendors and therefore there are additional fees for participation.

Private Instrumental Program (PIP)

The AAS Private Instrumental Program (PIP) began in 2008. The PIP instructors are all professional musicians, experienced teachers and proficient English speakers. Each is successful in their field and aware of the high standard of education expected by students at AAS.

PIP instructors are not AAS staff members. While they do complete a criminal background check, agree to the AAS Code of Professional Conduct, and Child Protection procedures, they

are not supervised by AAS administration. Agreements for PIP classes are between the parent and the PIP instructor.

Service

Our school mission states that we engage, support, and prepare each student for today and tomorrow.

In support of our mission, our PK-12 Service Learning Programme promotes community involvement in all its forms in order to inspire students to take the lead and make a positive impact.

Community involvement allows students to acquire valuable skills, take more independent initiative, and become active citizens now. Through service experiences, students apply their skills and knowledge with meaning and purpose to positively contribute to local and global communities.

Our ultimate goal is to empower every student to become a leader and change-maker of the world.

Further Details Specific to the Middle and High School

Secondary School (Middle School and High School) tend to involve discrete, yet connected, areas of study. It is important to understand that the essence of good teaching and learning involves teaching people rather specific subjects.

One of the key features of AAS is our prioritisation of building community and teaching key inter- and intrapersonal skills through Advisory, FLEX, Assembly and Friday Features.

Advisory - Grades 6-12

It is our strong belief that each Secondary School student should be well known by at least one adult in their specific division (Middle School or High School). While small classes ensure that all students have close contact with each of their teachers, it is during Advisory that teachers and students are able to interact on a more personal level.

Each Advisory group has 7-10 students and one teacher advisor. This group meets at the start of each day, except on Fridays, for 15 minutes. The primary goals of Advisory are to 1) build relationships between students and Advisors/students, 2) engage with the logistics of school (understanding and celebrating community events, sharing perspectives), and 3) revisit topics introduced through SEL instruction conducted in other areas (Assemblies and Health/SEL Class).

Flex Time - Grades 6-10

FLEX time will take place every fifth day (Day E) Wednesday for 65 minutes. In addition to further building community through SEL instruction assemblies, assemblies, community projects and other thought-provoking activities, this time will be used to provide additional academic support. At selected, regular intervals throughout the year, students will be placed (through a combination of student-preference and teacher-recommendation) in classrooms where they can 1) receive additional academic assistance, 2) have their interest in subjects further extended, 3) complete individual and group tasks in an on-campus environment, and/or 4) develop their reading stamina.

Assembly - Grades 6-12

Every Wednesday, for approximately 30 minutes, our Grade 6-12 students will gather for a community-building assembly. At these assemblies we will 1) celebrate student curricular and extracurricular achievements, 2) promote and understand upcoming community events, 3) address community questions and needs, and 4) build community through inter- and cross-grade level competitions. These events will move towards being fully student-facilitated, with protected time for internal and external speakers.

Friday Features - Grades 6-12

Friday features will take place on Fridays for 30 minutes. These are cross-grade, student-led activities based on student proposals and choice, where teachers serve as mentors to support student leaders.

The Multi-Faceted Purpose of Advisory Time, FLEX Time, Assembly and Friday Features

- building a sense of community and trust within the Middle School
- supporting students academically
- developing students' decision making skills
- discussing issues important to students in order to build strong character and outstanding citizenship
- providing opportunities for students and teachers to create more informal relationships through structured activities
- enhancing communications skills and emotional growth
- fostering a safe environment conducive to trying a new activity, community project, etc.
- creating opportunities for relationships between students within and across the grade levels
- creating a relationship between teachers and students and teachers and parents, so each child will have an advocate outside of the classroom who can serve as a liaison between teachers, counsellors, and parents

Middle School and High School Athletics and Activities Guidelines

The Athletics and Activities Program is an integral part of the educational process by providing students with opportunities to further develop their unique capabilities, interests, and needs beyond the classroom. Participation in these activities is a privilege offered to and earned by students. Participants are representatives of their school and community and their conduct is expected to exemplify high standards at all times. The merits of competing as an individual or on a team or working together as an ensemble, the physical and social development, and skills attained, along with the increased maturity of working with and for others, are possible goals within the reach of every student.

One of many factors needed to provide such an atmosphere is the “Athletic Code of Conduct.” This code is intended to aid our athletes in bettering themselves, in developing a sense of responsibility and in attaining a sense of pride from a job well done.

Athletic Code of Conduct

Being a part of the Middle School and High School athletic experience requires commitment of time, energy and patience. A student-athlete has these responsibilities both on and off the field.

- first and foremost is the responsibility to follow and adhere to all School policies
- second, if a commitment is made to a sport, this commitment must be followed through to completion, as outlined in the afterschool program
- showing respect and a positive attitude to the coaching staff, teammates and opponents is expected at all times
- as a player, students are not allowed to show displeasure with those officiating. Students should be congenial and cordial to all officials
- students should avoid conversations or actions that are negative toward the opposing team. Support should be in the form of positive acts toward both teams
- no swearing, crude comments or gestures are allowed
- athletes representing AAS should conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in all situations

Eligibility

The Principal will determine athletic and activity eligibility. For students to participate in a practice, game or tournament, they must attend all classes the day of practice, game or tournament. Only pre-arranged planned absences will be permitted. The student-athlete must discuss pre-arranged absences with their coach/sponsor by 12:00 noon of the practice day. Students returning from a weekend sporting event must attend classes the next academic day or it will be considered an unexcused absence unless they have a note from their family doctor stating the nature of the illness. All classroom work missed while attending an athletic or

activity event must be made up by the student. Students are eligible for athletics at AAS after the following are received by the MS/HS Athletic Director & Activities Coordinator:

- a physical health card signed by a health professional and by the student's parents giving permission to participate
- student and parent knowledge and signatures regarding this Athletic Conduct Code, which can be obtained from the athletic office or MS/HS office
- a form indicating parent's understanding of hosting obligations in relation to CEESA events and activities

NB: For the fully detailed information regarding MS/HS Athletics and Activities please see the [MS/HS Athletics and Activities Handbook](#) as well as the [Wolves Hosting Program](#).

BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)

As we constantly strive to fulfil our mission here at AAS - to engage, support, and prepare each student for today and tomorrow - we are aware that technology must seamlessly be embedded into the fabric of the student learning experience. Students at AAS-Sofia in grades 6 to 12 bring their own laptops to school for use in their classes, particularly in Maths, Science, Social Studies and Language Arts. With their own devices in hand and with guidance from their teachers, engaged students have taken ownership of their education and are forming critical skills needed for 21st Century success in learning and beyond.

Laptop Recommendations

As you consider purchasing a laptop for your child, particularly if they are entering the 6th grade, it is essential to consider the expected lifespan of the device. The ideal laptop should be durable, versatile, and capable of handling the increasing demands of their academic work over the years. With that in mind, we have compiled recommendations focusing on both Apple and Windows configurations.

Preferred Option: Apple MacBook Air (with M1 chip)

- For a reliable and high-performance laptop, we recommend the 13-inch MacBook Air with the following specifications:
- Processor & Graphics: Minimum of 8-core CPU and 8-core GPU
- Memory: At least 8GB of Unified Memory

This model offers an outstanding balance of power, portability, and battery life, making it an excellent choice for students.

Alternative Apple Options

Certified refurbished or pre-owned MacBook Air or MacBook Pro models with at least an M1 chip are also excellent choices for those considering a more cost-effective solution. Ensure these alternatives have the following:

- Memory: At least 8GB of Unified Memory

While the CPU and GPU specifics can vary, meeting the minimum memory requirement is crucial for optimal performance.

Windows Configuration

If you prefer a Windows-based laptop, here are the recommended specifications:

- Processor: Intel Core i5 or AMD Ryzen 5
- Memory: At least 8GB of RAM
- Storage: Minimum of 256GB SSD
- Display: 13 to 15 inches, Full HD resolution

A Windows laptop with these specifications will provide a robust and versatile platform for your child's educational needs.

Important Considerations

- **Expected Lifespan:** A laptop purchased for a 6th grader should ideally last through middle school and into high school. Investing in a quality device now can save money and ensure consistent performance over several years.
- **Device Type:** Avoid purchasing Chromebooks or iPads as primary devices. While these can be useful supplementary tools, they lack the versatility and power needed for the comprehensive academic tasks students will encounter.
- **Warranty and Support:** Consider purchasing extended warranty and support plans to protect your investment.

Choosing a laptop that meets these recommendations will ensure your child has the necessary tools to succeed in their academic journey at AAS.

Middle School: A Brief Overview

The "Middle Years" are a journey of significant emotional, social, physical and intellectual growth. This journey is truly exciting (complex, fun, frustrating, enriching and wondrous) and follows many different paths. It is important to be resilient and see mistakes or areas of uncertainty as learning opportunities and to celebrate when we overcome these natural

obstacles. With this in mind, we hope our students engage and explore while learning new skills, honing strengths, and striving to be confident, happy and caring citizens.

Middle School Courses

In Middle School each student must study a full complement of classes. Students requiring further learning support or language acquisition support may engage in designated Learning Support classes or English as an Additional Language (EAL) classes, respectively.

In general, a typical Middle School complement of classes is as follows:

Grade 6

- full year courses - Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, Science, Physical Education, Health, and World Language
- trimester courses – Art, Music, Theatre, Transition to Middle School, Electives

Grade 7 and 8

- full year courses - Language Arts, Social Studies, Maths, Science, Physical Education, Health, and World Language
- Students choose two (2) electives which can be a combination of trimester and full year courses

High School: A Brief Overview

High School is a further time of exploration. It is also a time of looking to the future whilst staying in the present. While it is a time when the academic stakes may be considered higher, the adage of students do not care how much you know until they know how much you care continues to be true and most relevant.

Graduation Pathways

Recognizing students hold a range of future academic and career goals, we offer multiple pathways for graduation:

- High School Diploma
- High School Diploma + IB Certificates
- International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

For each of these pathways, students are expected to earn academic credit through a rigorous, appropriate course load, as well as 1) engage in a range of extra-curricular activities, 2) produce a grade 12 culminating project/essay, and 3) develop a cross-discipline understanding of how to actively engage in their learning. Whereas for the two High School Diploma pathways,

fulfilment of all criteria is determined by AAS Sofia, for the Diploma Programme, fulfilment is determined by the external International Baccalaureate program.

To best understand how each graduation path's features support individuals' current and future goals, students will meet both collectively and individually with our counsellors, and family information sessions will be provided.

High School Diploma

A high school diploma is a document awarded to students upon successful completion of their secondary education (Grades 9-12). The diploma serves as evidence that a student is prepared and eligible for higher level education and/or entry into the workforce.

For students who choose to take IB Courses for HS Diploma credit (not requiring an external assessment), course content and assessment expectations are adjusted by subject area to appropriately match graduation requirements. On school transcripts these courses will be named differently to demonstrate the different expectations (Economics 11 vs. IB Economics)

High School Diploma + IB Certificates

In addition to fulfilling all requirements for the high school diploma, students can choose to prepare for and sit for individual IB Certificate exams (taken at the end of the Grade 12). Students who choose to take IB Courses for IB Certificates (requiring an external assessment) will be held to full IB Diploma Program course expectations.

Students will 1) demonstrate active engagement in extracurricular activities, 2) complete a Senior Project and 3) audit the Theory of Knowledge course.

High School Diploma With A Modified Curriculum

For students who either 1) involved in select external extracurricular activities which prevent regular on-campus attendance or 2) require modified curriculum due to specialised learning needs, our AAS Counsellors and Curriculum/Learning Leaders will work with students and families to develop an individualised pathway that best takes into account current needs while maximising future opportunities.

In these cases, students will earn the AAS High School Diploma, and their transcripts will reflect the modifications made to their curriculum.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP)

IB Diploma candidates must complete coursework, and pass the examinations in 6 areas.

Subject Areas	Choices at AAS
Group 1 – Studies in Language and Literature	Literature, Language & Literature, Bulgarian
Group 2 – Language Acquisition	French, Spanish, German Ab
Group 3 – Individuals and Societies	Business & Management, Environmental Systems & Societies (ESS), Geography, History, Psychology
Group 4 – Sciences	Biology, Chemistry, ESS, Physics
Group 5 – Mathematics	Math Analysis and Approaches, Math Applications and Interpretations
Group 6 – The Arts	Theatre Arts, Visual Arts

Students must choose one course from each group. However, where available in the schedule, students may take a second course from Groups 1-4, instead of a Group 6 course. Diploma candidates take six academically rigorous 2-year long courses chosen from the IBDP groups. Three of the courses are at the 3 higher level (HL) and 3 at the standard level (SL). Bulgarian is classified as a group 1 course as it is not offered globally within group 2 (in the case of taking Bulgarian a student would have two group 1 courses and no group 2 courses).

Other IB DP Requirements

IB Diploma candidates are mandated by the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) to complete the following requirements:

- **Theory of Knowledge (TOK)**

This course provides students with the opportunity to develop a critical awareness of what they and others know, through analysis of concepts and arguments, and the basis of value judgement. Assessment is based on an externally marked essay and a presentation, marked internally by the teacher.

- **Creativity, Action, Service (CAS)**

CAS is a fundamental part of the IB Diploma. It provides students with the opportunity for experiential learning. Students are expected to be involved in a variety of ongoing projects in a range of activities representing the three areas of CAS. Student involvement in the projects must be documented and reflected upon in their CAS portfolio.

- **Extended Essay (EE)**

Students must write a research paper of a maximum of 4000 words on a subject of their choice. Although an independent undertaking, students will be provided with guidance and internal deadlines from the IB Office, as well as being assigned an advisor.

Full IB Diploma candidate status will be determined on an individual basis in consultation with the IB Coordinator and Principal. Students who begin the IB Diploma Program and are not successful as determined by the quality of their work and/or their ability to meet deadlines will continue to pursue the AAS Diploma instead of IB Diploma. This will be determined through consultation with the individual student, the student’s teachers, parents, the IB Coordinator, and the HS Principal. The final decision regarding whether a student will pursue the IB Diploma will be made by the HS Principal.

IB exams are taken in the spring of students’ 12th grade year. Exam results are released in July. In the rare instance that students wish to retake one of the IB exams, they should reference our IB Exam Re

As part of the AAS Senior Project, all students will complete some form of CAS, the extended essay and the Theory of Knowledge course regardless of their IB Diploma or Course candidate status.

Please refer to [IB Diploma Practices](#) and Procedures for additional information.

AAS Graduation Requirements

Subject Areas	Credits	Courses
English	4.0	Grade 9 - English 9 Grade 10 - English 10 Grade 11 & 12 - English 11/12, Language and Literature, Literature
Mathematics	3.0	Grade 9 - Math Standard or Math Extended Grade 10 - Math Standard or Math Extended

		Grade 11 and 12 - Math 11/12, Applications & Interpretations, Analysis & Approaches
Sciences	3.0	Science 9 (Chemistry, Physics, Biology) Science 10 (Chemistry, Physics, Biology) Grade 11 & 12 - Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS)
Social Studies	3.0	Grade 9 - Social Studies 9 Grade 10 - Social Studies 10 Grade 11 & 12 - History, Geography, Business & Management, Economics, Psychology, ESS
The Arts	1.0	Grade 9 or 10 Ensemble, Theater Players, Theatre Artists, Digital Art, Concert Choir, Art Foundation, Art Expression, Dance
World Language	3.0	Grade 9 - French, Spanish, Bulgarian Foreign Language Grade 10 - French, Spanish, Bulgarian Foreign Language Grade 11 & 12 - French, Spanish, German (ab initio only), Bulgarian (mother tongue only)
Physical Education	2.0	PE 9, PE 10
Senior Project	1.0	Comprises three components: CAS, Independent Project, TOK.
Other	4.0	Any courses beyond required classes
Total	24.0	

- Students who transfer into AAS during their High School years may have certain graduation requirements waived by the MS/HS Principal
- International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB DP) courses are 2 years in length - see International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB DP) Coordinator for further clarification. Specific details pertaining to the Senior Project:

- CAS: non-IB diploma students are required to complete one CAS project that runs for a minimum of 1 trimester. This project must include a service component and must be agreed to by the CAS coordinator
- Independent Project: Students are required to complete a 2000 word research essay or equivalent project. All students are expected to attend the scheduled Core class where essay writing skills are taught. All projects must include a research component
- TOK: Theory of Knowledge remains mandatory for all students for the first two trimesters of grade 11. This allows all students exposure to this philosophical foundational subject. Students are required to successfully complete/ pass the two trimesters for graduation

Academic Guidelines

High School students will be prepared for and understand the time and study commitment necessary to earn the AAS Diploma and in many cases the external IB Diploma.

Teachers will support students in their learning and understanding and inform parents as necessary where concerns arise.

If a HS student falls behind in his or her studies, the student may be placed on Academic Probation. Academic Probation will be determined at the end of each trimester and will be based on the student's grades (on a 7-point scale) according to the following criteria on the Report Card:

- One "1" grade in any class
- Two "2" grades in any class
- No more than three grades of "3" or below

The administration reserves the right to refer to other data to determine Academic Probation.

The procedure is as follows:

- When the student falls below the academic minimum the Principal and the Student Support Team (Counsellor, IB DP Coordinator and/or Learning Specialists) will review the grades, may call for a parent conference, and work to devise a support plan to help the student improve academic performance.
- A second trimester in which the student does not meet the academic minimum will result in the student being placed on Academic Probation. The MS/HS Principal will craft a contract detailing the terms of the Academic Probation. The Principal and the High School Counsellor will meet with the student and his or her parents to go over the

contract and discuss expectations. The parents and student will sign the contract to indicate their understanding and agreement of the terms. In which the student does not meet the academic minimum will result in the student being placed on Academic Probation. The MS/HS Principal will craft a contract detailing the terms of the Academic Probation. The Principal and the High School Counsellor will meet with the student and his or her parents to go over the contract and discuss expectations. The parents and student will sign the contract to indicate their understanding and agreement of the terms.

- If the student fails to meet the academic minimum after a third trimester, the Principal may ask the student to withdraw from AAS.

AAS faculty and administration are ready to assist all motivated students in improving their grades, and will establish programs, as necessary, to help such students.

Promotion/Retention

High School students who fail a year course will not receive credit for that course. This course must be repeated if it is needed to meet graduation requirements. If this course cannot be rescheduled, the student must seek another course to make up the credit, such as an online course from an accredited school or by attending another school in the region. Any course taken as a make-up credit or as any transfer credit must be pre-approved by the School Counselor and Administration.

Requirements to advance one grade level in the High School:

- to move into grade 10, a student must earn 5 credits, four of which must be English, Maths, Science and Social Studies
- to move into grade 11, a student must have earned 11 credits, eight of which must include two years of English, Maths, Science and Social Studies
- to move into grade 12, a student must be in position to earn the credits needed to earn a High School diploma. Therefore, a student must have already earned 18 credits. The IB course schedule has no room for courses in Physical Education, so these requirements must be met before a student enters grade 11

Auditing

In rare cases a student may audit a course depending on space availability and on approval of the parents, teacher, and Principal. The student will be required to attend all classes, complete all homework and classroom assignments. The student may be exempt from taking any major examinations, depending on advanced notification and approval of the teacher. The student will not receive a credit, but the class will appear on the transcript followed by “audit—no credit”.

Dropping/Adding Courses

No courses may be added by a student after the first three weeks of the course, and must be approved by the teacher, Counsellor, parent, and Principal. Students who withdraw from a course after this period of time without the teacher, Counsellor or Principal's approval, or are removed for disciplinary reasons, will receive a W/F (Withdrawal/Fail) on their report card with no credit. In special circumstances, such as inappropriate placement the student may withdraw from a class without penalty. Forms for changing elective courses are available in the respective counselling offices. Approval to change will depend on class balance and current enrollment. Class changes in the IB Program may only be made through the IB Diploma Coordinator.

EDUCATION OUTSIDE the CLASSROOM

The Anglo-American School encourages field trips designed to support or reinforce the School's program of studies or to introduce or extend student knowledge about Bulgaria. The students go on trips to sites in and around Sofia and longer trips with overnight stays in different parts of Bulgaria. This aspect of our program is important, and all students are expected to participate in these trips. Local and cultural field trips rarely involve additional cost. There is however, some extended school related travel that involves an additional cost to the family. These trips include CEESA athletics and activities, as well as voluntary educational trips. All parents will be notified of field trips in advance. Part of the school-parent agreement document includes permission for your child to go on such trips. There will be a special permission form for overnight stays. It should also be noted that all school policies and procedures also apply while students are participating on a field trip.

Middle School and High School Cultural/Class Trips

Each year, students in the MS/HS engage in extended trips that involve overnight stays.

The benefits of field trips are to carry out the mission of the School by (in no particular order):

- providing an authentic window to how School curricula connects to life outside of School
- gaining greater understanding of Bulgaria and the surrounding region
- becoming closer and supportive of one another, appreciating each other and teachers in new ways, and growing in self-awareness, self-confidence & independence

- considering the ethical implications of one's actions and showing perseverance and commitment in an activity while undertaking new challenges

Cultural Trips usually take place in the fall and specifics will be communicated several weeks before travel, including those having to do with travel groups, chaperones, locations, experiences, and safety expectations. Additionally, there is a parent information evening devoted specifically to cultural trips in the MS/HS.

It is important to note that the MS/HS Cultural/Class trips are a part of the AAS program and thereby participation is mandatory.

School Representation Travel (Team/Group Travel)

AAS values attendance in school, as well as full participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities. In the Middle and High School there are 3 'seasons' of activities each year and some of these involve travel to other cities for events and conferences. In order to minimise days missed due to these events, the following guidelines have been established:

- students are responsible to arrange with their teachers for the completion of missed work by completing a "Planned Absence" form prior to their absence
- students generally have one day to complete missed work for every day they have been away for the trip
- the guidelines may be adjusted by the Principal on an individual basis

There are often more students who wish to participate in CEESA events than there are places available to be selected for a travel team, a number of criteria are used to decide which students may travel. Travelling groups are not selected too early in order to ensure opportunities for as many people as possible. Attitude and sportsmanship are key considerations in the selection process. Skill and aptitude are two other factors used in the selection of a travelling group.

Those students on the travelling list, as well as any students designated as alternates, must continue to participate in practices and rehearsals while maintaining an acceptable academic and work habit performance. The coaches of an activity, in consultation with the MS/HS Principal and/or Athletic Director & Activities Coordinator, will make the ultimate decision concerning travel. If a team member's academic performance should deteriorate or should there be any significant disciplinary problems or notable issues with attendance, permission to travel may be withdrawn by the Principal. All students who maintain appropriate academic and social standing are eligible to participate in after school activities sponsored by AAS. For further

information on expectations, please review guidelines related to academic, attendance, and behaviour probation.

Unless authorised, any student who does not attend classes may not participate in after school sponsored athletics or activities on that day.

Student Travel Fees and Field Trip Fees

Day field trips and the MS/HS School cultural trips are part of the School's program and all students are required to participate. For this reason, the fees associated with the above are part of school tuition.

There are cases when families pay separately for student travel and programming. Examples of such cases include:

- being selected to travel with a CEESA Team or other group, such as MUN
- engaging in an additional educational or service learning field trip, such as Art, French, History, Spanish, Theatre Arts

Travel Fees Refund Policy

In order to manage costs, ensure space, meet requirements, procure accommodation, review safety and meet chaperone to student ratio needs, the travel, accommodation and excursion arrangements of the above trips are made as far as possible in advance. In light of the above please note:

- fees associated with travel, accommodation and excursions are to be paid in advance
- in most cases, fees are non-refundable and non-transferable
 - if a student withdraws from a trip, fees associated with the trip are not recouped
 - if any monies are recouped, the School will return such monies to families, after all accounts are settled
- parents are encouraged to purchase trip insurance in relation to your child's travel
- fees and arrangements related to visa procurement are the responsibility of the family
- should a travel issue arise due to an error; the party responsible for the error will absorb the costs
 - for example, if travel documents (i.e. passport) are not up-to-date and a student is not permitted to travel then the family would absorb travel costs
 - if the School made an error and a student was not permitted to travel then the School would absorb travel costs
 - in the case of shared responsibility for an error then the two parties split the costs evenly

- scenarios of force majeure (i.e. sudden civil unrest at anticipated destination) will be addressed on a case-by-case basis
- if after payment, a student's eligibility is removed due to academic, attendance or behaviour issues, fees associated with the trip are not refunded

Considering the above, please be sure to consider your child's social/emotional/physical readiness to engage in the above trips, as well as your social/emotional/physical readiness to have your child travel for a period of time without you.

The School recognizes that in rare occasions extenuating circumstances arise in which a student is not able to travel (i.e. medical, unforeseen family emergencies). The School empathises with this, but is unable to provide refunds in non-refundable vendor situations since airline companies rarely provide refunds. In the event that a student is no longer able to travel:

- please contact the School as soon as possible
- when possible, the organisers will attempt to fill the vacancy by offering the opportunity to some pre-established alternative students (time and cost permitting)

Trips Organised Through an Agent

- the cancellation policy of the agency will be in effect
- in the event that the agency does not have a policy in place then the School policy will be used

SERVICES

Library

Our mission at the Anglo American School of Sofia is to foster a love of literature and learning, to provide quality print and electronic resources to support the needs and interests of our students, and to ensure that our students, staff, and community have the skills and strategies they need to be effective and conscientious users of ideas and information.

We are at the heart of learning at AAS. Our collection consists of approximately 20,000 materials, and we are committed to keeping the collection current and relevant by providing the best titles in literature and nonfiction. We also provide online databases and subscriptions for students to use at school and at home.

Elementary school students attend the library with their class each week to browse and borrow, and throughout the week if they need to exchange books. Middle and high school students are welcome to visit throughout the week to exchange books or simply explore, study, or read. The library is open throughout the school day, and the door is always open!

Parents are always welcome at the library. Please think of our library as an extension of your local library. Stop in to browse, choose books, and read with your child. When we're not teaching, the librarians are happy to help you find just the right books for your child.

Library Hours

Monday - Friday 8:00am to 4:30pm

Library Loan Policies

Two-week loan period with renewals as needed:

PreK - Grade 2 - Two books

Grade 3 - Three books

Grade 4 - Four books

Grade 5 - Five books

Grade 6 to 8 - Ten books (including textbooks)

Grades 9-12 - Fifteen books (including textbooks)

Parents - Ten books

We are happy to extend the limit should students need books for a project, etc.

Library Holds

Grades 2-5 may place a hold on two books.

Grades 6-9 may place a hold on four books.

Parents may place a hold on two books

Notifications

Overdue notices are sent out when books are 1 week, 2 weeks, and 3 weeks overdue.

Students PreK-5 - email to parents

Students Grade 6-12 - email to student AAS email accounts. (Parents are only contacted if a book is overdue by 2-3 weeks or more.)

Lost/Damaged Books

If a book is more than 3 weeks overdue, students/patrons will not be allowed to check out books until the book is returned or replaced.

Library guidelines ask that the patron purchase a replacement copy or pay for lost or damaged books. Alternatively, they may see the Business Office from 8:30 - 4:00 pm to pay for the book.

Learning Support

AAS maintains a Learning Support program as part of our Student Support Services to meet the needs of students. At the beginning of each year, the records of new students are reviewed by the Student Support Services department to assure that individual student needs are met. Throughout the school year, faculty and staff identify students who might need additional support.

The progress of students is monitored by the classroom teachers and Learning Support teachers. A Student Support Team (SST) in each division meets regularly to review student progress and to develop plans to meet their needs. Interventions include a range of strategies including, developing specific enrichment programs, helping the teacher implement strategies in the classroom, assisting students in the classroom during specific classes, and/or providing targeted support in a small group setting during the school day.

Parents are important members of the team educating their child and are included in the development of any individual educational plan for their child. Parents are also invited to ask teachers and principals if they have any specific questions concerning their child. The Learning Support staff work hand-in-hand with the parents and classroom teachers guiding the students to reach their potential.

At AAS, we provide a variety of services to meet diverse student needs. The level of services depends on the intensity, duration, and frequency of services provided to each student. Each student's services are personalised to their needs. The following are several factors most typically considered when determining a student's level of service:

Academic performance
Social/behavioural performance
Executive functioning ability
Physical ability
English language proficiency
Amount of contact time (e.g., student, classroom teacher, learning support teacher, related services, parent(s)/guardian(s), counsellor, administrator)

An additional Learning Support Fee may apply depending on the intensity, duration and frequency of the service. There are four levels and they will be directly connected to the student's level of educational support needs. The majority of students at AAS will need level one services only; however, some students will require additional support services that include a fee.

Level I Learning Support is general education with high quality differentiated instruction. All students receive some level of Level I academic support and are included in all aspects of school curriculum and programs. There is no additional Learning Support Fee for these services.

Level I Services may include:

Managing accommodations
Assistive technology
Consultative support from LS teacher, EAL teacher and/or counsellor
Monitor by Learning Support or divisional counsellor
Creation of an Intervention Plan (IP)
Short term targeted intervention (4-6 weeks)
Targeted small group instruction
Co-teaching
Related services

Level II learning support includes general education with differentiated instruction with some additional instructional time in the area of need by classroom teacher(s) with possible consultation/support from the Learning Support teacher. A student may be performing slightly below grade level expectations in one or two areas or the student may be performing well above grade level expectations in one or more areas and require enrichment. The Level II services include an identified case manager. An Individualised Educational Plan will be developed based upon a complete educational-psychological evaluation completed by a psychologist. The Learning Support teacher may also provide intervention within a co-teaching

model or in a separate class such as Learning Strategies. If data does not show substantial increase, then more intensive support may be recommended through a referral process.

Level 2 Services may include:

Targeted small group instruction

Learning Strategies Class

Creation of an Individualised Education Plan (IEP) with a Psychological Evaluation to support it.

Co-teaching

Assistive technology

Managing accommodations

Related services

Level III Services

Level III includes general differentiated instruction by the classroom teacher with additional individualised instruction provided by the learning support team. Often, a student is performing below or well-below average, or below or well-below grade level expectation (e.g., below 25th percentile in multiple areas or below 10th percentile on standardised, norm-referenced assessment). The learning support team frequently monitors the student progress, and adjusts instruction based upon the student's response to the intervention. The adjustment may include an instructional increase in frequency, rate, or duration. A student will be supported by a learning support teacher and/or a Learning Support Assistant (LSA) and receive targeted, specific intervention to address his/her academic needs.

Level III Services may include:

Targeted small group instruction

Learning and organisational skills support

Co-teaching

One-to-one Learning Support Assistant (if appropriate)

Social skills support

Assistive technology

Accommodations

Limited curricular modifications

Related services

Level IV Services

A student who is identified as needing Level IV support is scheduled for some general education instruction time with increased intensity of daily instruction provided by Learning Support Teacher and/as well as Learning Support Assistant. Often, the student is performing well-below

average or well-below grade level expectations (e.g., below 10th% on standardised, norm-referenced assessment) in multiple academic, social, or physical areas, and requires a modified curriculum. A one-to-one Learning Support Assistant/Teacher may be assigned. Very few students require Level IV services. The Learning Support team frequently monitors the student's progress (daily, weekly), and adjusts instruction based upon the student's response to the intervention. The adjustment may include an intervention increase in frequency, rate, or duration.

Level IV Services may include:

- Individually designed inclusion opportunities
- One-to-one Learning Teacher/Assistant if appropriate
- Specialised Instruction in an additional classroom
- Accommodations
- Curricular modifications
- Related services
- Social skills support
- Assistive technology

In summary, the level may be briefly described as:

Level 1: Student has not been yet formally identified with a learning disability and is supported primarily in the classroom by the teacher, with consultation from the learning support department.

Level 2: The student has been formally diagnosed with a learning disability, has a complete Individualised Education Plan (IEP), and regularly receives direct support from a qualified special educator outside of the classroom in the Elementary School in place of a language elective, or Learning Strategies class in the Secondary School.

Level 3: (fee will cover additional individualised services): The student is supported by a combination of small group instruction, one-on-one instruction by a LS Teacher or Learning Support Assistant (LSA) in the mainstream classroom. The student has an IEP and has been assessed by a licensed educational psychologist. The student may also have a substantial and modified curriculum.

Level 4: (fee will cover additional staffing for individualised service and/or modified curriculum): The student may have an individual full-time Learning Support Assistant assigned to support them, has a substantial and modified curriculum, and may receive highly specialised instruction in a differentiated classroom. This may include a mix of online or special courses, and is indicated they may graduate via a non-traditional route.

The costs associated with each level of support are below. Fees are paid annually. All costs are in Euros.

Level 1: No fee

Level 2: € 1,500

Level 3: € 10,000

Level 4: € 20,000

Other Support Services on Campus

The School and community have successful partnerships with several external professionals who can provide further student support upon specific evaluations and assessments. The professionals possibly available are dependent on the transient nature of Occupational Therapy (OT), Speech Pathology, Physical Therapy (PT) and School Psychologists who may be currently stationed in Sofia. The School provides an office and learning space for the above professionals, should they be available. In relation to the above it is important to note that,

- referrals are to be approved by the School
- associated fees are the responsibility of the family and are arranged between the professional providing the services and the family
- the above services are limited in scope and often dependent on transient professionals

Counselling Services

AAS has one full-time Elementary Counsellor, one full-time Middle School Counsellor, one full-time High School Counsellors, and High School College/Career Counsellor to support students and families with social, emotional, and academic needs. The High School College/Career Counsellor assists students and families in college/university placement and preparation of application materials.

In addition, the counsellors work with the parents regarding any concerns they may have about their child. At times, counsellors may conduct parent workshops on such topics of interest to the community. If you want to discuss any concerns regarding your child's progress or personal development, please feel free to contact the appropriate counsellor. Students can be referred to the counsellor by parents or teachers. Students may also request assistance for themselves. AAS referral procedures ensure that parents are involved at the earliest stage when the School has significant concerns about student social and emotional needs.

While school counsellors will support students as needed, they are not available for ongoing, clinical counselling with individual students. In such cases, counsellors may make recommendations or referrals for outside support.

Tutoring

AAS understands that sometimes families get tutors to work with their children outside of school. In such cases, the School requests that families notify the division principal (ES or MS/HS).

Tutors are not permitted to work with students on campus without express consent from the appropriate division principal.

Please note that AAS teachers may not tutor their students and are not expected to work or communicate with outside tutors.

Health Services

The School employs two full-time nurses, one male and one female. The health office is located in the basement of the Balkan building (below the Elementary School office near the blacktop playground). Our nurses check on students for general health issues. During class time students may ask for a pass from the teacher if they are feeling unwell or have hurt themselves.

Illness or Injuries at School

If a student is ill or injured while at school, students should notify an adult (teacher or staff) before contacting parents. The Health Office is equipped to provide immediate first aid and to treat minor injuries. In the event of illness or accident requiring further medical treatment, parents will be notified. The nurse will call the home, office and/or emergency telephone numbers listed in the student's file. Parents, or their appointed guardians, will be asked to collect their child at school and arrange for medical treatment. In cases of serious injury, students' parents are contacted and, if requested, our nurse will take the student to an emergency care facility.

In the event of a serious accident requiring immediate medical care at a hospital, appropriate ambulance services will be summoned.

Medication

If a student needs to receive medication while at school please contact the Health Office for details. The School does not administer medication unless authorised in writing by a parent. All medicines must be handed over to the nurse. No student is allowed to self-medicate and all medicines must be taken under the direction of the school nurse. This includes nonprescription/over the counter medication.

Immunisation

Students are required to have followed a routine and customary schedule of immunizations. Up to date immunisation records are required to attend school.

Communicable Ailments

Any student or community member who has a fever or other illness, will be isolated in the Health Room and sent home. Students or community members with the following symptoms should not attend school:

- Fever (must be fever-free for 24-hours without fever-reducing medications prior to returning)
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Pink eye, Chicken Pox, or other active, communicable infection

Head lice are a common, recurring problem in any school setting – if the school nurse identifies a child at school with lice or nits (eggs), the parents will be contacted and informed of the School’s protocol, depending if the lice or nits are dead or alive.

Accurate Information

Please make sure we have up-to-date health records (e.g. allergies, immunizations, etc.) as well as up-to-date emergency contact numbers. Please update in PowerSchool anytime there is a change to your emergency contact information.

Families in Transition

AAS Counsellors offer families in transition additional support for students, parents, and teachers in the process of coming to, assimilating into and moving from AAS and Bulgaria.

The key objectives of the support are to:

- help the students settle into Bulgaria and life at AAS and to establish friendships
- develop a knowledge and understanding throughout the School of the different cultures of the students, and of Bulgaria as our host nation
- support students who remain behind when their friends transition out of Bulgaria
- inform parents of recent research into the new challenges faced by children who are “TCK” (Third Culture Kids)

Applications to Other Schools

Recognizing that some of our families will go to other schools, AAS has established the following guidelines to help the student, parents, and teachers understand the process.

Guidelines for the Application Process

Parents are asked to notify the Registrar, Dola Kay, (dkay@aes-sofia.org) of a possible move and which school(s) the family is intending to apply. At this time the family will be asked to give AAS permission to release student records to the applicant school upon request. AAS will not release student records unless the family has given permission in writing.

The following additional guidelines will help a smooth and timely application process:

- families when notifying the Registrar, will be asked to provide relevant information
 - name and contact information of the school(s) they intend to apply
 - expected start date at new school(s)
 - any potential 'entrance assessments' for application that need invigilation
- families are asked to first contact the Registrar for recommendation letters and forms
- a minimum of two weeks should be allowed for AAS to process applications and send the required student records and documents
- a maximum of three applications per student will be processed in any year
 - if the family deems it necessary to apply to more than three schools, a specific request must be made to the division Principal
- if a school requires an entrance exam, contact the Registrar to coordinate an appropriate invigilation for the assessment based on the options below
 - take the assessment during the Secondary After School Work Session (available for ES students as well with permission from the ES office)
 - use an official external assessment centre (recommendations are available upon request of the Registrar) invigilate the assessment at a convenient time for the student
 - if the above two options are not possible, AAS may be able to arrange for a substitute teacher to invigilate the assessment at AAS at a time convenient for the family and the School; the cost of the substitute teacher will be paid for by the family to the Business Office.
 - if none of the above is possible, making a request to the division Principal with a suggested invigilation plan for the required assessment
- should student recommendation letters be required for admission, the Registrar will coordinate with the appropriate teacher, counsellor, administrator for their completion. Open letters of recommendation are not written. All recommendations are closed and shared between schools.

As a courtesy, the AAS Registrar will contact the family when any unsolicited requests for personal documents or application forms are made directly to AAS without notification by the family.

School Materials

The School provides all basic supplies needed for class. Printed materials (such as textbooks) are provided on a loan basis to the students. Students are expected to care properly for School materials. All losses or damage will be charged at actual replacement cost (including freight costs and customs duties). From time to time, each teacher may make special requests for items to be brought in, based on the particular needs of the class.

ATTENDANCE

Regular daily attendance in class contributes to the School's instructional goal of developing traits of punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility in students. Interaction between students, their peers, teachers and their involvement in the total school environment are critical components of the learning process. Each day's lesson builds on those activities that took place on previous days. When a student misses a class, for whatever reason, that experience can never be completely made-up. Reading the material and performing satisfactorily on tests does not compensate for the loss of insight gained during class discussions or the loss of information acquired through an explanation. As a general practice students will have the same number of days to make up work as they missed.

Board policy and the administration of The Anglo-American School fully support the notion that students should be in attendance at least 90% of the academic year. This equates to a maximum of 18 absences over the course of a school year or 6 days per trimester. The School will take an active role in notifying parents should any attendance issues occur. Where attendance issues persist, students may be placed on attendance contracts or subject to other measures as deemed appropriate by the School administration. Students may be excused several days per year as part of the School's travelling sports teams or other outside-of-school activities. These event days will not count towards the suggested 90% attendance policy.

For Grade 11 and 12 students involved in the IB Diploma Program, attendance is required to ensure eligibility for exams. 240 hours of school attendance are required for HL courses; 150 hours are required for SL courses. Except for extraordinary circumstances, students will be removed from eligibility for Diploma Program exams should their attendance fall below the stated threshold.

Punctuality

Students are expected to be prepared and on time for classes. Parents need to notify the appropriate division office in advance if their child will not be arriving to school at their regular time.

Planned Absences

For ES students, in the event an absence is planned, parents are asked to notify the classroom teacher and the ES Office as early as possible: 02 923 8837 or via email the ES Office at es_office@aes-sofia.org. In the case of a planned extended absence (e.g. family vacation), please contact the ES Principal as early as possible for approval.

The parents of MS/HS students are asked to communicate any planned absence to the MS/HS Office on 02 923 8842 or via email at mshs_office@aes-sofia.org. MS/HS students are responsible to arrange with their teachers for the completion of missed work using the “Planned Absence Form” (for grades 6-12) and to notify the MS/HS Principal.

Absences Due to Illness

If a student is absent due to illness, please notify the appropriate division office before 08:30 on the day of the absence: MS/HS 02 923 8842 or via email to the office at mshs_office@aes-sofia.org; Elementary (ES) 02 923 8837 or via email to the office at es_office@aes-sofia.org.

If a student becomes ill during the school day and the nurse or administration believes the student should go home, parents will be contacted and informed of the situation. It is the parent’s responsibility to pick up the child. Under no circumstances will a student be allowed to leave school without officially checking out with the respective division office.

Early Departure

There may be times when students need to leave in the middle of the day. This may only be authorised in writing by a parent/guardian. All students leaving early must have a dismissal pass from the division office to leave the campus. Students without dismissal passes will not be allowed to leave school premises.

The last two weeks of each trimester in the Middle and High School have summative assessments planned. Students wishing to complete the trimester or year early may receive an Incomplete for the trimester or year if they leave more than two weeks prior to the end of the

trimester. Early departures affect student learning. Families are encouraged to plan early departure accordingly and are asked to make any request for early departure, well in advance of the last day of school to the MS/HS Principal. The MS/HS administration will make a final determination of credit or grade designation for each case.

CITIZENSHIP, COMMUNITY and CONDUCT

The AAS Mission and Core Values inform the elements of citizenship, community and conduct. The “Golden Rule” of “treat others as you would like to be treated,” is the guiding premise of our behavioural expectations. This holds true in the “real world” and “virtual world.” This concept is elaborated on in a variety of ways to help illustrate the expectation of mutual respect and consideration.

Students at AAS are expected to conduct themselves, both on and off campus, in a manner that reflects well on themselves, their school, their families, and their countries. They should maintain standards of conduct that model the School’s Mission Statement, Global Citizenship Statement, and Core Values. The Principal and/or the Director reserve the right to take appropriate disciplinary action in the case of a violation of these standards.

The School expects parents to support its behavioural expectations and to direct any questions regarding an action taken by the school staff to the particular staff member involved or the Principal without delay.

AAS Statement of Rights and Responsibilities

As a community of learners who will be responsible citizens of the future we believe that we should all work together to ensure that learning is enjoyable, fun and challenging. To do this and in alignment with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we believe we all have certain rights, which are:

- the right to learn
- the right to be safe and healthy
- the right to be respected

To make sure AAS is a fun and supportive place to learn we should all have the responsibility to respect the rights of others by:

- allowing everyone to learn and teach
- behaving safely
- showing respect and care to everyone and everything
- demonstrating open-minded attitudes and behaviours
- being willing to learn

Language Statement

The AAS community is a dynamic multi-cultural environment. Language is one key component of cultural understanding. Our core value of respect comes to mind when it comes to language use.

In class we speak the target language (English in an English-medium class, Bulgarian in a Bulgarian-medium class, Spanish in Spanish class, and French in French class).

In our public spaces we recognize the social importance, educational value and comfort of people speaking their “mother tongue,” or practising a developing language. Thus, in our halls we may and will hear an array of different languages. In our group interactions we focus on a language of inclusion.

The Essence of Character

Your character is defined by your total pattern of behaviour. It has been described as “what you do when others are not looking.” You own your behaviour. Your own actions determine your reputation and also help to determine how people react to you now and in the future. Trust, respect, and the true friendship of others must be earned. Your pattern of behaviour or character determines how much trust, respect, and friendship you earn.

Citizenship Ideals

Our global citizenship statement provides clear expectations and guidance on what it means to be a global citizen. The basic tenet of citizenship at AAS is respect for self and others and their property. Any actions or attitudes that convey less than that will not be tolerated. Mutual respect and consideration, whether inside or outside of the classrooms, are the guidelines for all of our interactions with others. To help maintain and foster the above, all students, teachers and parents are expected to model the following behaviours:

- treat all people and property with dignity and respect
- participate actively in the learning process

- exhibit a positive attitude and willingness to hear diverse perspectives
- engage in thoughtful dialogue and discussion in an effort to understand the experiences of others, especially those that might differ from your own
- act responsibly and honestly
- arrive at school punctually and prepared to learn
- use appropriate language

While ‘Citizenship’ does not appear as a subject, it is the foundation of our whole educational structure. Self-control, self-responsibility and consideration for others are the keys to good conduct. We expect all students to be accountable for all their behaviour. Students, parents, and school staff members are jointly responsible for maintaining proper conduct in school, on school grounds, on school transport and at school-related activities.

Community Conduct Guidelines

Mutual respect and consideration are the keys to making our school a great place to be. Below are some more specific details that will ensure a positive experience for everyone.

Attend All Classes On Time and Come Prepared to Learn

Students are to be in their assigned place when class begins. Students are reminded to bring their school agenda or personal organisational device, and to have the correct materials and supplies before each class.

For safety reasons, students may never leave school grounds without a parent/guardian signing them out in the office (either in person or through an approved email).

Leave Distractions to Learning at Home

Candy and other snacks (including gum) should stay in appropriate areas. Personal electronic devices or other electronic equipment (that are not serving a learning purpose) and toys and games, are to be used in accordance with teacher instructions. The School is not responsible for valuables brought to school. Do not bring large sums of money or other valuables to school. Lockers are provided for MS/HS students, but locks are not provided.

Ensure a Positive Web Presence

Personal devices, computers, the web, the cloud, the internet, social media – whatever monikers and devices you use regarding your “virtual world” are a projection of yourself. Students are reminded that what goes online is permanent and can be viewed by the world – the vast majority of whom you do not even know. Schools, colleges, universities, companies, employers etc. routinely check a person’s web presence in application processes – be wise and be safe.

Maintain a Safe, Calm and Clean School Environment

Facilities are shared during breaks, lunch, and recess; please be mindful of other classes and groups.

Students are reminded to please help the cafeteria function smoothly by keeping food on their plate and chatting calmly with friends. Students are reminded to:

- clean your table and push in your chair
- throw food into the trash or compost bins
- recycle or dispose of trash in appropriate containers;
- keep the disposal area clean
- place litter in trash cans and place aluminium cans, plastic, and paper in recycling bins
- out of respect for others and the environment, it is everyone's obligation to help keep our campus clean and attractive inside and outside the classroom

Unauthorised use of electronic equipment

Tampering with or inappropriate use of electronic devices is not permitted.

Weapons

Weapons or items that could be used as weapons including matches, lighters or fireworks, are not permitted on campus. Toy weapons are not permitted on campus.

Food and Drink During the Day

The School's food service strives to present balanced and nutritious meals every day. Hot lunches are served, and soups and salads are available each day. All drinking water is safe, and students should be bring refillable water bottles each day—there are not water fountains. Students are strongly encouraged to eat healthy choices from our cafeteria or from home, and choose to eat healthy snacks.

Drugs and Alcohol

Drugs and drug-related items are not permitted in school or at school events and non-compliance with this rule are treated as serious offences.

Dress Appropriately for School

We work on the premise that students can and should be able to choose their own clothing. Our school does not have a uniform, however, students are expected to dress appropriately for school.

Disciplinary Procedures Information

As a school, our priority is to assure a safe learning environment. Our expectation at AAS is to be the best version of ourselves and support each other in doing the same. The specific expectations apply not only in our “real world” but in our “virtual world” too.

Rules and regulations are established for the safety and well being of all students in our school. Behaviour that interferes with the teaching and learning or safety (physical or emotional) of our students will need to be improved. Failure to abide by School rules or to maintain appropriate conduct will result in disciplinary consequences. School rules apply in school, on school grounds, on school buses and at school related activities. Common sense and a concern for the safety and well being of all shall prevail in situations where a rule has not been formalised. The purpose of disciplinary consequences is to help students internalise positive community values. At AAS we work to make expectations clear, all adults on campus model and offer corrective feedback to students as they learn these expectations, and the school works to turn mistakes into learning opportunities; however, consequences will be assigned for students who violate rules.

The severity of the violation and the student’s individual discipline record will be considered when assigning consequences. Because of the various influences that affect the nature of discipline cases, it is difficult to codify offences and consequences. The Principal or Counsellor may assign alternative consequences. If a student has violated a school rule within the classroom, the teacher will initiate procedures to correct the observed behaviour. The teacher will work cooperatively with the student, parent and counsellor to assist the student in understanding their responsibility for a change in conduct.

Depending on the nature of the offence, the School may assign (but is not limited to) the following consequences for inappropriate behaviour:

- telephone call home
- conference with student and/or parent
- special projects
- meeting after class
- after-school time
- parental conferences
- suspensions - in-school and / or out-of-school
- social and/or academic probation
- other consequences deemed appropriate by the School administration to protect the rights of other students and assist the student involved to grow and mature
- expulsion - in repeated or serious cases

Grave or repeated violations of the standards of basic conduct despite intervention may result in immediate suspension or worse from school; some specific examples include:

- harassment – relational aggression in physical, verbal or digital ways
 - cyber bullying or harassment on or off-campus
- stealing
- academic misconduct
- vandalism/destruction of property
- frequent violations of School citizenship, community and respect expectations
- use/possession of drugs and alcohol on campus and/or during school related activities
- repeated serious violations despite intervention

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

At AAS, “We engage, support, and prepare students for today and tomorrow.” The AAS Academic Integrity Policy is guided by this mission, along with the AAS Core Values of Commitment, Respect, and Excellence.

Purpose

This policy has been created to ensure adherence to the values and expectations of our teachers, students, parents, and administrators. Academic integrity is the responsibility of all stakeholders and this policy serves as a tool for transparency and clarity.

For learning to occur, teachers and students must build a mutually trusting relationship. To receive feedback that supports learning, students must submit work that is their own. Without this, teachers can neither accurately evaluate student learning nor support student growth.

Approach

In addition to our Mission and Core Values, our learner profile, which we share with the International Baccalaureate, states that our students strive to be principled. This means they “act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice, and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities.” They “take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.” (Learner Profile)

Supports for Academic Integrity

AAS provides students with multiple opportunities to learn how to practise academic integrity. Our goal at AAS is to help students understand the importance of academic integrity and to learn the academic integrity skills needed to be successful during their time at AAS and beyond.

Academic Misconduct

AAS defines academic misconduct as the following:

- presenting as one's own the ideas or writing of another entity (person or technology)
- copying another entity's (person's or technology's) work or copying sections from any material published in print or in digital form without acknowledgment of the source
- using unauthorised materials to gain an unfair advantage on assessments/exams/tests
- knowingly helping or attempting to help another engage in academic misconduct
- working with another person to produce work that should have been produced independently
- having another entity (person or technology) rewrite work

When presented with a possible case of academic misconduct, teachers will investigate the incident to determine the context of misconduct. Teachers will use their experience with the content and material, information previously gathered (including classwork, discussion, journals, tests) to determine if the evidence of misconduct is due to (1) a lack of academic integrity skills or (2) a deliberate act of academic misconduct. Incidents deemed deliberate by teachers will be reviewed by the principal. Relevant action will be taken as outlined below.

Consequences for Academic Misconduct:

If a student is found to have failed to act with integrity, this may result in disciplinary action being taken as prescribed below.

For an incident due to lack of academic integrity skills, the following actions will be taken:

- Teachers will understand which academic integrity skills the student is lacking.
- With the help of the teacher, the student will learn these skills and will be expected to demonstrate a commitment and ownership towards this learning.
- The student will complete a reflection at the end of the learning.

For the **first instance** of deliberate academic misconduct in that class, the following actions will be taken:

- When a teacher determines that a student has deliberately committed academic misconduct, they will input a "log entry" through PowerSchool Learning.
- Student writes a reflection that recognizes the area of their choice, how/why it conflicts with AAS's procedure, and what steps will be taken next time to prevent this situation from reoccurring. This reflection is shared with the teacher and Dean of Students.

- The student will be allowed to re-do the assignment under supervision. Failure to attend the supervised re-do session will result in an Incomplete on the assignment.

For **subsequent instances** of deliberate academic misconduct in that class, the following actions will be taken:

- Teacher will inform the principal by submitting a “log entry” through PowerSchool Learning.
- The incident will be recorded in the student’s file.
- The Dean of Students will arrange a meeting with the student and parent to discuss the academic misconduct.
- The student will be given an Incomplete on the assignment.
- Further consequences including suspension and participation in school activities shall be determined by the Principal based on the severity of the offence. In determining severity, the Principal will consider factors such as:
 - Repetition (prior incidents)
 - Type of assignment
 - Type of violation
 - Seriousness of offence
 - Cooperation of student after accusation
 - Contrition of student
 - Collusion with other students
 - Premeditation of offence
 - Degree of effect on school community

If **repeated instances** of deliberate academic misconduct are identified across the school for an individual student, the following actions will be taken:

- The Principal will meet with the student and parents to discuss the record of academic misconduct.
- The student will be ineligible for participation in school activities for the remainder of the term and/or school year.
- The student will be removed from the IB Diploma Program and/or the School may report any instances of academic misconduct to the IB.
- The student will be suspended, with possibility of expulsion.

COMMUNICATION

Calendars

The School maintains two calendars - the school year calendar and the detailed activities calendar.

School Year Calendars

School calendars are posted on the AAS website. The calendar is developed three years in advance. The calendars are made far in advance to help with long term internal planning and external planning within the CEESA region. The primary purpose of the calendar is to provide an effective framework of instructional days for the students, but due attention should also be given to the incidence of public holidays (American, British and Bulgarian). The calendar shall be made available to the community as soon as possible after its approval by the Board. The calendar is developed in accordance with the following parameters:

- 180 school days
- school begins in the final two weeks in August and ends by the end of June
- includes these holidays:
 - Unification Day (September 6)
 - Independence Day (September 22)
 - October Break
 - American Thanksgiving Holiday (last Thursday and Friday in November)
 - Winter Holiday
 - February Break
 - National Day (March 3)
 - Spring/Easter Break
 - Labour Day (May 1)
 - St. George's Day (May 6)
 - Bulgarian Culture and Literacy Day (May 24)
- at least one break every six to eight weeks for students and staff

Annual Activities Calendar

The School maintains an electronic and a printed calendar with specific details of events and activities for the coming school year. This calendar is developed in May/June for the upcoming school year. This calendar is maintained in a Google calendar. The purpose of the Annual Activities Calendar is to:

- facilitate effective planning

- promote cross grade/subject connections
- foster community
- avoid or minimise scheduling conflicts

Parents are encouraged to consult the calendar periodically to keep abreast of events across the School, and to use it to notify the school community of upcoming events.

NB: Please note that while the printed calendar is accurate at the time of printing, some items may be subject to change. Any changes will be posted in the weekly newsletter and the online calendar at www.aas-sofia.org. AAS is a dynamic place with much going on, thus this printed calendar cannot include all events /activities happening at AAS.

Physical Address and Mailing Address

Anglo-American School of Sofia
1 Siyanie Street, Pancharevo
Sofia 1137
Bulgaria

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

The creation of a large and varied technology environment demands that technology usage be conducted in legal and ethically appropriate ways. It is the intention of the Anglo-American School of Sofia that all technology resources be used in accordance with School policies and procedures. Additionally, it is expected that students will use technology resources to benefit their learning through responsible practice. Misuse of technology may result in disciplinary action.

Internet Use

- all students will use the internet as and where appropriate during their studies at AAS
- students will use the internet as a supervised part of their work
- students are encouraged to view the internet as a resource for research, collaboration and communication

- students must be aware that selectivity is required to use the information available on the internet
- the School recognizes that, under certain circumstances, the internet can give students access to undesirable information and images; we work to ensure that students are protected from such information through supervision and internet filters

Social Media Use

The Anglo American School of Sofia realises that part of 21st century learning is being knowledgeable about the constant changes in methods of communication. To this aim, the Anglo-American School of Sofia has developed a guideline to provide direction for instructional employees, students, and the school community when using the internet and social media: [Responsible Use Policy](#).

AAS teachers and other staff members will only communicate with students and families through official AAS mediums.

AAS Responsible Use Policy

The Responsible Use Policy supports the Anglo-American School of Sofia's overall mission as well as its vision of technology use and upholds in our users a strong sense of digital citizenship. This policy applies to all AAS-Sofia computer networks, the resources available on those networks, and all devices connected to those networks.

The primary goal of the technology environment (including internet access, mobile devices, computers, printers, etc.) is to support the educational and instructional endeavours of students at the school. Students should be aware that these expectations apply to any IT device used at AAS Sofia, including personal mobile phones.

Use Technology in an Ethical Way

Responsible citizenship means practising good ethical behaviour, 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. This refers to all devices, School and personal devices used at school. At a minimum, this requires that students:

- not view or install inappropriate content including sites that display profane or obscene material, that advocates illegal acts, encourages the use of drugs, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people
- not engage in any illegal activities, including possessing or sharing pirated software or applications;

- not engage in conversation or activities (such as sending pictures, i.e. “sexting”, creating and/or distributing sexually explicit media) that may inflame, irritate, offend others, hurt others, or harm yourself
- not try to bypass network guidelines with proxies or Internet access devices
- not use peer-to-peer file-sharing software, which is primarily used to download illegal content and could jeopardise internet access for all members of the AAS-Sofia community
- not hack or install malicious software on any device used at AAS-Sofia
- not attempt to hack or modify other student accounts or official school files or accounts
- not copy or remove school software
- obey all intellectual property rules and copyright laws; use of Creative Commons material and licensing is encouraged
- follow [student email guidelines](#), including not sharing or using others’ email accounts or passwords
- immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if they have identified a possible security problem
- not threaten others or exclude or attempt to exclude others from online activities or organisations
- promptly disclose to their teacher or administrator any message or information they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable while on the web, using email, chat rooms or forums

Protect Identity & Personal Information

Once information goes on the Internet, it is likely that it will remain there for a long time. Personal information also extends beyond names, phone numbers, photos, videos, student ID numbers and addresses, but to things such as usernames and passwords as well. As such, it is important that students treat their own and others’ personal information with care and in accordance with GDPR guidelines. Students should never share user accounts or passwords, especially those that are close to their identity (email, AAS Sofia accounts, social networks). All personal information, such as home addresses, phone numbers and full names, should always be kept private.

Images or videos of students, or their work, may be published or utilised in various electronic resources, including the School website and other online platforms, as well as in print media, including teaching and school promotional materials. If a student’s work is shared, only the first name and grade will be included as credit.

Be Aware of Others in the Environment

- students may not use up excessive bandwidth

- computer use should not be disruptive to other students who are working nearby; students are requested to use headphones when listening to audio
- students may personalise their computer carrying case, but any stickers or other markings should not be offensive to others
- students may not remove identifying barcode tags affixed to the computer by the ICT Department
- students should also be aware that individual teachers will have different protocols for classroom use of IT and it is the student's responsibility to be aware of these and adhere to them

Protect the Device

Students should take careful steps to protect all devices used at AAS Sofia from damage or theft. This means:

- carrying it only when the lid is closed
- using a carrying case when moving between classes
- never having open drinks nearby while using the laptop
- identify the personal device with stickers, covers etc.
- in the event of any damage to school hardware at any time while it is in the student's possession, the student agrees to inform their teacher or the ICT department so that repairs can be performed
- AAS is not responsible for theft, loss or damage of student owned IT equipment

Monitored Use, Misconduct and Free Wifi

The student's laptop will be considered a guest of the wifi network at AAS. The wireless network will be filtered by the AAS content filter when users are connected to the school's wireless service. In cases where there are concerns that electronic communications systems are being used inappropriately, teachers or IT department staff may monitor student use. Similarly, student use of the school network is monitored on a regular basis. AAS Sofia reserves the right to inspect personal and school-issued computers and electronic media and to carry out appropriate disciplinary action in cases of student misconduct.

Google Apps and Other Student Accounts

In accordance with our technology vision our students may require accounts in third party account systems (such as Google Apps for Education which includes email, storage, calendar). Many of these accounts will be used at school for school related projects but may also be accessed outside of school with their parent/guardian permission. The use of these accounts will help our students master effective and proper online communications and collaboration.

Be Prepared to Learn (BYOD Students Grades 6 to 12)

Being a good digital citizen and a responsible member of the AAS-Sofia community means students come to school prepared to learn by:

- bringing their laptop to school each day, in operating condition, with sufficient storage available for school use, and with the battery fully charged
- managing their battery use to ensure that they can get through the school day and participate fully
- backing up and managing the files on their device
- making use of designated folder architecture in Google Docs and file naming protocols defined by the teacher

Violations

Students who violate a rule under the Responsible Use Policy (RUP) will follow the same disciplinary actions and procedures of the Family Handbook with resulting consequences being appropriate to the rule violation. The goal is to ultimately turn mistakes into learning opportunities, as well as ensuring our community is a safe place to learn.

SAFETY, SECURITY and EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The physical safety and security of our children and community is paramount. A rule for everything is not feasible and removes the importance of sound, fair judgement. Nonetheless, in matters of security it is important to articulate specific rules and regulations in order to support our community.

Specific Rules of Exit and Entry

- AAS is a closed campus. No student is allowed on or off campus during school hours without the proper identification, Visitor Pass, or Early Dismissal Pass
- no second person (extra private security guard) is allowed in the cars entering the campus
- no weapons on the campus
- cars may enter the campus only with gate passes: always show your gate passes to security guards
- roll down windows so security can check who is in the car
- cars may be checked with screening mirror

- if you don't have a pass with you, please wait for the guards to check your licence number (this is done via the computer system)
- new parents will be instructed through Admissions on how to request a gate pass
- gate passes must be updated when licence numbers change
- while the car is waiting for the gate pass to be issued for new families and licence changes, security guards will verify your name in the computer system before allowing entry into the campus
- face recognition by security guards should be only for AAS permanent staff, Board Members, and agreed upon regular PTO representatives
- visitors can enter the campus only if they have a gate pass or are verified with a phone call to the appropriate school staff member. (Alumni – verified by Principals or Director, all other visitors verified through the Front Desk Receptionist upon them checking with connected staff member)
- after recognition by a staff member, visitors must be registered at security house 2 and issued a Visitor Pass
- visitors having appointments with AAS staff members must be registered at security house 1 before their visit and upon their arrival
- visitors may be checked for dangerous objects
- double parking is not allowed in the parking area
- overtaking the buses is not allowed on campus
- AAS buses with students are always priority on the campus and have the right of way in all areas
- students must have a Dismissal Pass from the reception desk or administration to be allowed to leave early from school and it must be given to security guards upon exiting
- always use the sidewalks and crosswalk
- always follow signals to stop or yield from the security guards
- at all times, everyone must follow the security guards' instructions
- speed is limited on the campus is less than 20 km
- the AAS campus is a designated non-smoking area and smoking is not allowed, including in the parking area
- taxis are not allowed to enter onto the campus: they can park and wait outside of security house 1
- workers can enter campus after registering with security guards at house 1
- for special and big events, guests must be on the approved invitation list in order to be allowed on campus
- security guards must have a list with names of the invited persons, event invitations or a representative who will coordinate the event for recognition of participants
- parents must return their car pass when the student is withdrawn from AAS

- students walking home must have a parent permission slip on file with the front office to be allowed to enter and leave campus before and after school hours
- once parked, vehicles are to be shut off: AAS is a no idle zone (this includes winter when it may be cold and summer when it may be hot)
- dogs and other animals are not allowed on campus

Privacy

Parents must complete one “Media Release Form” for each of their children annually prior to the start of the school year. This form allows parents to express whether or not they give their consent for photographs or video of their children to be used for promotional uses, for example: AAS website, AAS brochures, AAS movie clips, AAS social media channels (Facebook page, YouTube Channel etc.), media interviews, and approved partner organisation’s websites. In all such cases the child’s family name will not be stated.

Emergencies

The School has developed an Emergency Procedures Manual that is regularly reviewed. Evacuation drills, earthquake drills, lockdown drills, and shelter-in-place drills are conducted regularly throughout the school year. Drills are a time to practise for the unexpected. With this in mind, there may be times when drills are practised or false alarms occur in less than optimal weather. If this should be the case during winter, the School works to ensure students and staff are outside for as little time as possible in the process of ensuring safe re-entry to the building. Aside from internal staff, we keep in touch with local authorities, as well as experts with the USA and UK Embassies.

AAS has an emergency phone tree and an SMS notification system. It is essential that parents maintain updated home and office addresses and phone numbers, as well as medical information and alternative contacts with the School for use in emergency situations.

Child Protection

AAS has a Child Protection Policy. AAS recognizes its clear responsibility and its “duty of care” to protect children and to support students in school. People serving in schools, because of their regular contact with children, are particularly well placed to detect outward signs of abuse, behaviour changes and other changes in social-emotional and academic conduct.

- in addition to the above, the Child Protection Policy is to support an environment that is commensurate with the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights,

- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - English](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - Bulgarian](#)
- this policy applies to the whole School including Preschool (Pre-K) to Grade 12, AAS Staff, the AAS School Board, volunteers, invited instructors or consultants, coaches, sponsors, contracted employees, including third party contractors
- the Child Protection Policy works in accordance with all school policies, procedures and handbooks, in particular the AAS Code of Professional Conduct

Escorts and Family Security Staff

Family escorts and staff (i.e. bodyguards and drivers) are not permitted to enter the campus (or be on a field trip or excursion) with a weapon nor undue show of force (i.e. posturing). Drivers may enter the school grounds whilst dropping off children, however, if there are other escorts in the car besides the driver, those escorts must exit the car prior to entering the school grounds.

Escorts and Family Security Staff in Relation to Field Trips and Other School Excursions/Trips

Families with escorts and/or support security staff must contact the School prior to the field trip/excursion to talk with your child's respective Principal to further clarify school protocol regarding family escort/security staff. At this time the Principal will ask, "Is the purpose of the escort travelling near the child because there is an active threat on the family?" If the answer is "yes", then the child (and escort) is not permitted to participate in the excursion. If the answer is "no", then the Principal and family discuss whether or not the escort can have a presence on the excursion depending on the nature of the excursion. For clarity and safety, under NO circumstances is a person (family member, escort, family security support etc.), permitted to be on a school excursion or at school with a weapon.

Community Member Conduct Statement

The School's Mission, Core Values and Global Citizenship statement pertains to our parents, wider AAS community, third-party contracts, and visitors. As such, any person who violates the rules and regulations of the AAS community via in-person or digital means may be suspended or expelled from the school grounds or any school event by the school Director or designee. Furthermore, any continual violations of the rules and regulations may result in suspension from future school events at AAS and may affect the enrollment of any children they have at AAS.

FACILITIES

Community Use of Facilities

Use of AAS facilities and grounds by AAS community and outside groups is supported under the LEED environmental management system because it contributes to social and environmental sustainability.

AAS community and outside groups may be permitted to use school facilities, provided that such use does not contravene school policies, does not interfere with the school program and does not impose unwarranted burdens on school personnel. The Director of Facilities and Operations in conjunction with the Director's Executive Administrator will review each case before giving facilities use permission. Fees may be required by the School based on the services rendered.

For submitting a request to use the facilities, please email the Director's Executive Administrator - Zhulieta Nikolova (z Nikolova@ aas-sofia.org).

Facility Use After Hours

- individuals and groups must sign in at the security gate
- safe, clean and proper use of facilities and equipment is expected
- use of campus facilities by groups must be approved in advance by AAS
- ES and MS students on campus outside school hours must have adult supervision
- smoking and alcoholic beverages are not permitted on campus. In rare instances, for special events, alcohol may be on campus if the Director of AAS has confirmed prior consent
- use of the facility after school hours is at your own risk and may not interfere with school programming or events
- the School is not responsible for personal property or injury

Facility use is permitted upon approval outside of the school day and school programs:

- 08:00 to 18:00 school use only
- designated internal facilities - Monday to Friday - 18:00 to 20:00 eligible for non-school use upon written approval
- designated internal facilities - weekends and holidays - 09:00 to 20:00 upon written approval

School employees may use the School facilities after hours providing it does not interfere with school programming and the use is commensurate with the above facilities use procedures.

TRANSPORTATION

Changes In Travel Arrangements for the Beginning and End of the School Day

Parents must notify the School by 12:00 noon in writing or by telephone of any changes in travel arrangements (for example, a different driver or not going home on the regular bus). Children will not be permitted to change from regular procedures unless the School is notified.

Travelling on the School Bus

AAS provides an optional bus service. Buses are limited to certain geographical areas and the number of students that a bus may hold. The School may not be able to accommodate all bus requests from students. The first priority in providing this service is to ensure the safety of the children.

To allow all students to arrive at school on time, students should arrive at the bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. Parents will be informed of the approximate bus pick-up times. The driver has instructions to wait one minute past the scheduled pick up time at each stop.

Younger students will not be dropped off if there are no parents waiting for them. In this case, students will be brought back to school and parents will pick them up.

Although every effort is made to adhere to the regular bus schedule, traffic and weather conditions may cause the bus to arrive a few minutes earlier or later than planned. During the winter months when there is snow and ice, parents may have to bring their children to a main road for pick-up (winter pick-up points), this tends to be the norm if they live in a hilly area or on a narrow street.

Children must take the same bus home daily and will not be allowed to call two different locations as a residence. A child who would like to have a playdate after school with another child who rides a different bus can do so only if prior permission is given via email/letter/telephone by the parents by 12:00 noon of the day in question and provided there is space on the bus.

Buses leave campus at 15:40 each day. Buses will not leave AAS until all ES students who ride the bus are accounted for. Buses will leave at 15:40 even if MS/HS students who regularly ride the bus have not gotten on the bus.

Some buses have an assigned Bus Monitor for supervision of students. Procedures and rules have been established to assist us in providing safe transportation to and from school and are printed below. Please review them with your child and encourage children to follow these rules. In the event that infractions occur, parents will be notified (via telephone, email, or note). Repeated infractions may result in suspension or expulsion from the bus.

Bus Departures

Buses depart the school at 15:40.

The Elementary After School Activity bus leaves at 16:50.

The MS/HS late buses leave at 17:30. Students must sign up to use the MS/HS late bus.

Bus Rules

Bus transportation incorporates all school rules with respect to community, citizenship and conduct. To provide further clarity on the bus, please note that students are to:

- immediately follow all instructions from the Bus Monitor
- stay seated with seat belt properly fastened at all times
- talk quietly and be ready to listen to instructions
- not eat, drink, or chew gum on the bus (unless granted special permission – for example a particularly long bus ride)
- keep hands and feet to themselves
- not open bus windows unless given permission by the Bus Monitor, or interfere with any part of the bus
- be assigned specific seats on the bus at the discretion of the Bus Monitor
- print or online materials being read or used must be appropriate and in line with the AAS Core Values and Global Citizenship Statement
- behave with respect for others at all time

It is a condition of the School's acceptance of a child on a school bus that parents read the above, and accept the rules for the child and the obligations for the parents. Failure to comply with bus rules will result in a warning. Any subsequent misbehaviour will result in bus privileges being suspended.

Arrival or Dismissal of Students

Please notify the School if a bus change has to be made during the course of a school day. Unless the School is notified via email/letter/telephone about a change of routine, your child will be required to comply with their regular dismissal procedure.

FOOD SERVICE

The School has contracts with two food service companies to provide hot lunches for all Preschool (Pre-K) to Grade 12 students, AAS faculty and staff, parents, visitors and guests. Payments can be made in cash for parents, visitors, and guests.

Liberty Foods Services (LFS), provides breakfast, lunch, and snacks in the Cafeteria. Students can put money on their account in the cafeteria or through LFS' online system.

In the Middle School/High School there is The Café, which is serviced by Taste Place. The Café provides sandwiches, salads, breakfast items, baked goods, fresh drinks, hot drinks, and more. Students can put money on their account in The Café.

The accounts for the Cafeteria and The Café are different accounts, though students use the same account number (their student number).

Students may not order food from outside vendors (for example fast food). On special occasions, authorised student groups such as a student council may receive permission from the School to bring in food from an outside vendor.

OTHER INFORMATION

Indoor Shoes

Elementary students must have a pair of suitable indoor shoes to keep at school to change into upon arrival and after recess. It is important that these be suitable for outdoor wear in the event of emergencies and for emergency drills.

Knapsacks/Bags, Snack and Lunch Containers

Students will need knapsacks/bags in which to carry clothes, books and other items. Students are encouraged to bring refillable water bottles everyday. Please make sure your child's name is written on personal items. The School is not responsible for lost items.

Changing for Physical Education (PE)

- preschool (Pre-K) to grade 5 may come to school in their PE clothing on their PE days
- grades 6 to 10 bring their PE clothing to school and change at the beginning and end of PE class, unless they have PE last period, in which case they can wear their PE clothing home

- PE clothing - track/sweat suits, shorts, T-shirts, and suitable footwear to run around in
- Students are required to bring refillable water bottles for PE class

Lost and Found

The School maintains a “lost and found” area. If something is missing, please have your child check the classroom and then, if unsuccessful, the lost and found area. If an item is lost it is best to report this to the teacher or the relevant division office. Items unclaimed after one month will be donated to charity. If you notice that your child does not bring an item home, please do not delay in communicating with the homeroom teacher or the receptionist, as it is often difficult to follow up on such losses some time after the event. It is advisable to write your child’s name in a permanent pen on inside tags of all clothing and other belongings.

Class Lists

The process we undertake to set up our classes is a complex process that we follow with great care and thought. Some of the many factors included in establishing class lists are: a variety of demographics (country of origin, gender etc.), student needs, group needs, class sizes and language related factors. Class placements cannot be based on personalities or likes and dislikes – a much broader picture must be taken into consideration.

Class lists in the Middle School tend to be more variable than the Elementary School in light of student choice of courses and the course selection process - thus in classes such as a World Languages, or Electives, classes may vary notably in size.

Class lists in the High School tend to be more variable than Middle School and Elementary School. This is in light of student choice, the course selection process, seeing how graduation requirements mesh with new students, and balancing class sizes in relation to electives.

As our School has many transient students due to the nature of their parents’ jobs, between 20% and 25% of the student body is new each school year – many of these families finding out at the last minute they are moving to Sofia. As a result class lists can be in a state of flux to almost the first day of school. It is possible that class placements will change even after they have been announced.

Supporting New Students - AAS School Ambassador Program

International school communities are transient in nature and AAS is no exception. Aside from our School being a warm and welcoming environment in general – AAS has a student

ambassador program to further support newcomers to the Elementary, Middle, and High School. Below is a quick overview of the student ambassador program.

Our Vision: A student-led team of selected ambassadors representing different nationalities, beliefs and backgrounds will work collaboratively to build a supportive, welcoming community at AAS.

Our Goals:

- to form a well-rounded team of ambassadors
- to provide student support for orientation activities
- to pair each new student with a compatible ambassador (MS/HS) or homeroom buddy (ES)
- to see that each student finds connection in our School community
- to host special events welcoming new families and students into the community
- to provide mid-year arrival students with extra care
- to acknowledge students leaving the AAS community
- to guide the rising 6th grade and 9th grade classes in their transition
- to represent AAS as a unique, hospitable community and uphold its core values as expressed through the IB Learner Profile
- to be positive student leaders and role models and provide support at AAS events when requested

Student Ambassadors – Selected students who provide a friendly welcome and support to new students in the transition to and from AAS so that they find success in their new environment. Student Ambassadors are responsible for contacting new students prior to their arrival (MS/HS only), being present at orientation activities, and helping students to adjust to their new environment over the first few weeks by answering questions and providing support. In addition, Ambassadors will play an important role throughout the year in checking in with new students to ensure they know how to connect with the range of community opportunities.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Please refer to the "[Tuition and Fees](#)" page on our website for the latest updates on fees. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the School.

Invoices

Tuition invoices (as well as registration and capital fees) for the school year will be issued to the billing address specified by parents on their child's admission application. Details of payment timing and other stipulations related to fees are found on the invoices.

Capital Fee and Entrance Capital Fee

AAS allocates the stated part of fees (Capital Fee and Entrance Capital Fee) toward improvement of the School facilities, loan obligations, and large non-consumable program items, but retains absolute discretion in allocating to the Capital Fund. The Capital Fee and Entrance Capital Fee represent an integral part of the overall school fees.

Fees Other Than Tuition, Registration and Capital Fees

There is a bus fee for those who choose to use the bus service or are offered learning support at the time of admission or after a later evaluation. [Bus fees and learning support fees](#) are available on the school website. Also, additional school fees may be assessed in either Euro, USD or Bulgarian Leva for other purposes, such as; external examination fees, special field trips, and CEESA sports and activities travel. Such fees can be paid in cash or by credit card at the cashier's office or by bank transfer (bank details from the office). Further details regarding the above potential fees are shared when a student begins engagement in such activities that may involve additional fees.

CODE of PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Integrity, honesty and full compliance with applicable laws have governed the Anglo-American School's practices. AAS faculty and staff have upheld and lived this commitment in their everyday responsibilities ever since its founding in 1967. Indeed, integrity is of critical importance when working with students and adults alike, and is one of AAS' greatest assets. The Code of Professional Conduct specifies and helps the continued implementation of our mission, by establishing certain non-negotiable minimum standards of behaviour in key areas. The nature of this Code is not meant to cover all possible situations that may occur. It is designed to provide a frame of reference against which to measure any activities.

Laws, Rules and Regulations

- we respect the law

Conflicts of Interest

- we act in the best interest of AAS

Families and Relatives

- our hiring, professional development opportunities and admissions decisions are fair and objective

Data Protection and Confidential Information

- we value and protect our confidential information and we respect the confidential information of others

Fraud, Protection of AAS Property, Accounting

- we insist on honesty and we respect AAS's assets and property

Corruption

- we are incorrupt

Gifts and Favours

- our partnerships and business relationships are based on quality and supporting people

Safe Environment – Free of Harassment and Discrimination

- we embrace diversity and respect the personal dignity of our community members
AAS respects the personal dignity, privacy and personal rights of every staff and AAS community member and is committed to maintaining an educational environment free from discrimination and harassment. Therefore, all community members must be

actively open-minded to the perspectives and experiences of others, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, gender, sexual orientation or other identity construct; community members may not engage in any kind of verbal or physical harassment. Anyone who feels that our educational environment does not comply with the above principles is encouraged to raise their concerns with the appropriate administrator.

Cooperation and Compliance with the Code of Professional Conduct

- we will consult the Code, comply with its provisions and seek guidance where needed

Reporting Uncooperative and Non-Compliant Conduct

- we take responsibility for ensuring that we all act with integrity in all situations

Mission Driven

- our Code of Professional Conduct helps us live our mission

The Code of Professional Conduct policy applies to the whole school including Preschool (Pre-K) to Grade 12, AAS Staff and the AAS School Board, as well as, volunteers, invited instructors or consultants, coaches, activity sponsors, contracted employees, including third party contractors.

CHILD PROTECTION

The Anglo-American School of Sofia has a [Child Protection Policy](#). AAS recognises its responsibility in respect of its “duty of care” to protect children and to support students in school. People serving in schools, because of their regular contact with children, are particularly well placed to detect outward signs of abuse, behaviour changes and other changes in social-emotional and academic conduct. Teachers, teaching assistants, support staff other school staff should note that reporting the suspicion of child abuse, “in good faith” exempts them from school disciplinary action in relation to the AAS Code of Professional Conduct.

AAS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, along with their protection and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. As such, all employees are required to sign a declaration that they are in possession of the qualifications they claim; that they are not disqualified from working with children; that they have no convictions, cautions or bind-overs or are subject to any sanctions imposed by any regulatory bodies. School requires all employees to produce evidence of qualifications and references are sought from previous employers. Finally, police checks are carried out on all employees.

DATA PROTECTION

AAS's Data Protection Policies are continuously reviewed on a regular basis by our GDPR Data Protection Officer and DPO Liaison. Our full policy can be found on the School website at:

<https://aas-sofia.org/privacy-policy/>

AAS processes personal data for the following purposes:

- provision of educational services, starting with the admissions process, enrolling students, administration of classes and timetable, teaching activities, issuance of academic records
- provision of educational ancillary services: library services, extracurricular activities, school trips, school events, managing school's publications
- compliance with the staff-related requirements of the labour and social security legislation
- ensuring campus security: monitoring access on campus, performance of video surveillance
- provision of the medical care and counselling that students may need
- School administration: handling student records and other academic documentation, administration of fees and accounts, internal audits and controls, reporting and statistics creation, implementing School policies, archiving, assessing the quality of our services, facilitating research activities
- School related communications: conveying various messages related to the students and AAS's activities by any communication means
- collaboration with other schools and educational institutions
- performance of agreements with service providers and contractors, including insurance suppliers
- other legitimate purposes such as legal services, maintenance and security of the AAS website and IT systems, protection of the AAS legitimate interests including dispute resolution and litigations
- to fulfil statutory obligations in connection with visa/residence permits requirements under European and national migration legislation; in relation to the execution of proper and lawful accounting; arising from execution of the orders of competent state or judicial authorities

Should you have concerns about any use of your information, please contact the Data Protection Officer. (dpo@aas-sofia.org).

SUSTAINABILITY

AAS works hard to be a LEED Gold Certified School. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is globally recognized as a best practice in green building design, construction, and operation. In March 2012, the Balkan Wing achieved Gold Certification under the LEED for Existing Buildings: Operation and Maintenance rating system. At the time, AAS was one of only three such schools in Europe. In August 2013, the Vitosha Wing earned Gold Certification under the LEED for Schools system, which at the time was the highest score of any new building ever constructed in Bulgaria. In 2019 the Rila Renaissance Center won the prestigious Building of the Year national award and in 2021 earned the LEED Gold Certification. AAS is committed to being sustainable.

Transportation

- we provide secure bicycle parking – bikes racks, showers, and changing rooms
- we are a no idle school – turn off your engine when waiting

Landscaping

- we use native and adaptive plants accustomed to Bulgaria's climate
- we utilise irrigation efficiency
- we use captured rainwater for a variety of purposes

Roof Technologies

- our roof has two to three times the insulation of standard roofs
- our green roof further improves insulation & reduces heat island effect
- we collect rainwater from our roof for reuse
- we help flood control and water quality with our green roof

Energy Saving

- we have thermal solar panels for heating water
- we have double-pane wood windows filled with argon gas
- we have increased sound and thermal insulation
- we use abundant natural light in classrooms, learning spaces and public spaces
- we have photovoltaic solar panels providing covered parking to generate electricity

Water Management

- we have simulated a closed-loop water system allowing for the reuse of rainwater

- we use biologically based sewage treatment in an area where such a municipal service is not offered
- the Vitoshka Wing is built so the surface runoff from a storm is no greater than prior to the construction
- we provide high efficiency plumbing fixtures that aid in efficiency
- we have waterless urinals

Pollution Reduction

- we reduce CO2 emissions directly and indirectly
- we have sustainable purchasing of ongoing consumables

Sustainability Pledge

AAS is a school that has made a commitment to sustainability. Our building is a model for green technology and living. As such, we ask our community to support this theme as well by reading and adhering to the following pledge:

- I will plan my use of resources (paper, water, materials) before I start a project
- I will print on double sided paper and preview before I print
- I will not use the printer as a copier
- I will place one-sided printed paper neatly into the REUSE box and use this paper when possible
- I will use the recycling bins correctly
- I will turn off computers, monitors, printers, projectors, water taps and lights when not in use
- I will use digital formats when permissible to reduce the amount of paper I use
- I will reduce my use of plastics at home and at school
- I will take the opportunity to educate others about sustainability
- I will encourage others to follow the Sustainability Pledge

AAS SCHOOL SONG

There are different kinds of stairways that each of us must climb.
There are stairways of knowledge of friendship and of time.
As we climb up to the top or find our way back down
It's nice to know/that there are those/who care about us

Chorus

So many different faces from so many different places
Our home away from home - Anglo-American School!

In our class we learn about the world from A to Z
But it's working together we learn about you and me
And with every step we take there is a helping hand
Even when/we are falling down/we're learning to stand.

Chorus

So many different faces from so many different places
Our home away from home - Anglo-American School!

As we step into tomorrow the road is ever long
With friendship and with knowledge we build our bridges strong!

Chorus

So many different faces from so many different places
Our home away from home - Anglo-American School!

So many different faces from so many different places
Our home away from home - Anglo-American School!

*(Text and Music by Laura-Giosh Markov)