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MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT/PARENT
HANDBOOK

ABA
— O M A N —
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

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Welcome to the ABA Middle School

The middle school years represent an outstanding opportunity for social and academic growth. At ABA, we believe in a comprehensive and holistic approach to education. It is our responsibility to ensure middle school children participate in a learning environment where they feel safe, supported, and comfortable advocating for themselves. Our education programme provides numerous opportunities for our students to explore and enjoy learning. With a resolute focus on meaningful experiences, learners are immersed in real-life scenarios, engage in interdisciplinary thinking and employ creative and critical thinking to solve problems.

As an IB Continuum School, ABA's Middle School, ensures that your child engages in principled action, is internationally-minded and learns holistically. Your child will be learning content, developing metacognitive skills and gaining confidence in themselves. Our programme is distinguished not only by what our students learn, but by how they learn. That is the ABA difference!

I welcome your family to ABA middle school, a community of learners where everyone finds success. Please do not hesitate to be in touch with any and all questions. We are looking forward to an outstanding year!

Richard Nies
Middle School Principal

Who We Are

Founded in 1987, ABA educates the next generation of leaders and innovators, inspiring them to make a positive impact on their world. The leading International Baccalaureate Continuum International School in Oman, and a non-profit, ABA enrolls over 950 students from Kindergarten through Grade 12, representing over 70 countries. We are a non-selective school and our Diploma programme results are continually well above the world-wide average. With over 20 staff nationalities, we are truly a diverse workplace and learning environment.

MISSION, VISION AND VALUES



THE IB LEARNER PROFILE

The Learner Profile guides all three programmes and lists the attributes we hope to develop in our students as they become internationally-minded lifelong learners.

As IB learners, we strive to be:

Inquirers	We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.
Knowledgeable	We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.
Thinkers	We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.
Communicators	We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.
Principled	We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.
Open-minded	We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.
Caring	We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.
Risk-takers	We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.
Balanced	We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.
Reflective	We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

THE ABA WAY

Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations

THE ABA WAY

The ABA community lives its mission and exemplifies its values on a day-to-day basis to fulfil its vision. The ABA Way thrives through its active local and global citizenship, creating a collective responsibility to maintain a positive climate of mutual respect, fostering trust, and celebrating differences. Our diversity is our collective strength, and we strive to safeguard, value and nurture each member of our community.

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

The IB Learner Profile articulates the characteristics for learners to develop as global citizens. At ABA, global citizens have an understanding of themselves and the world around them. They are curious to understand and learn from different cultures; and make a difference for the betterment of all.

Global Citizenship and Intercultural Learning at ABA

At ABA we believe authentic and experiential learning fosters kindness, ethical decision making, respect for diverse perspectives, and diplomacy. ABA empowers our community to become global citizens who take action to make the world a more peaceful, socially just, and sustainable place for all.

As members of the ABA community, we have a collective responsibility for promoting and maintaining a school climate of trust and respect. Through building a strong parent-school partnership, student achievement, success, and well-being will be supported. Shared expectations of respective roles, responsibilities and expectations in line with our Mission, Vision and Values, will help ensure that the school culture continues to be one where all feel safe and valued.

Members of the ABA community (parents, staff and students) are expected to:

- Respect the laws of the Sultanate of Oman, the School's policies, protocols and procedures.
- Embrace the School's Mission, Vision and Values.
- Support the School's curriculum, programming, and pedagogy.

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- Support the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and Booster Club in school activities and events to enhance our sense of community.
 - Promote and support efforts to maintain safety and security by following procedures or directions given
 - by the ABA security and traffic staff.
 - Treat all ABA employees, parents and students with civility, honesty, and respect.
 - Presume good intent in communications and take any personal questions, inquiries or concerns directly to the person who is responsible or closest to the issue, using the published communication guidelines.
 - Work together with the school employees and other parents, as appropriate, to support the academic, social, and emotional plans for students.
 - Attend appropriate meetings/conferences.

Parents

- Provide a home environment that supports the development of positive learning attitudes and habits.
- Stay informed about your child(ren)'s progress and experience.
- Attend appropriate school meetings/conferences.
- Keep up to date with school news through publications, emails, newsletters, and social media.
- Encourage full attendance and punctuality; please avoid taking family holidays outside school holidays.
- Inform the school of any change of address, email details, or personal circumstances. If you will be out of town and your children will be cared for by another person, please provide up to date contact information for that person and the dates of your trip.

The Policy Manual can be accessed in the ABA administration building. The Student and Parent Handbooks are kept on the school's website.

The ABA Way is not intended to be fully definitive or exclusive. Where specific issues are not addressed above, conduct will be judged on the basis of what is morally, legally, or socially acceptable within the context of our school.

In enrolling your child(ren) at ABA, parents should understand and agree to the ABA way. Not doing so may lead to the school taking action. If a parent/guardian has engaged in significant or repeated violations of this understanding, the School reserves the right to discontinue enrolment or not to re-enrol a student.

DEIB Commitment Statement

ABA is a vibrant learning community where diversity, equity and inclusion are embedded in our values, committed to ensuring that each unique member feels a deep sense of belonging.

The ABA community is proudly diverse:

We honour our differences, both visible and invisible. We unite as a welcoming and caring community, while celebrating our diversity of nationalities, languages, faiths, cultures, backgrounds, values, physical characteristics, abilities and identities. We commit to maintaining an environment where every individual is valued and respected for their unique experiences and contributions whilst respecting the culture and values of our host country.

The ABA community is committed to equity:

We strive to develop equity by ensuring that all members of our community are treated fairly, and that our norms, systems, and practices support all to thrive, regardless of identity. We actively seek ways for each member of our community to be respected, valued and honoured for their uniqueness.

The ABA community is inclusive:

We aim to explore and understand the differences and unique needs in our community that require us to actively work to ensure that each member can thrive. We expect and value learner diversity, offering pathways for varied success. Our inclusive culture should support individuals and groups to be proud of their uniqueness, feel safe, valued and respected.

The ABA community is committed to fairness and anti-bias:

We take a proactive approach to tackling all forms of racism, discrimination, inequality, prejudice and bias. We commit to a zero-indifference approach, meaning that harmful or hateful conduct will not go unaddressed. As a zero-indifference community, all members have a responsibility to name and respond to every biased behaviour, every time it happens.

The ABA community is a place of belonging:

We commit to developing and upholding a culture of respect, understanding and collaboration that supports every individual to feel accepted and part of the ABA community, who is seen, heard, safe and valued as their authentic self.

We commit to this important work, to ensure that each member of our community is empowered to be their authentic selves, inspired to learn, understand and explore our diverse perspectives, and challenge harmful behaviour. We understand that upholding the values of DEIB is a journey of growth, and are dedicated to ongoing, courageous reflection and action planning.

Accreditation

ABA is fully accredited by the Council of International Schools (CIS), the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA). ABA is authorised to offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years programme (PYP), Middle Years programme (MYP) and Diploma programme (DP).



Governance

The governance of ABA is vested in a Board of Directors which has the ultimate authority of the School. The majority of the Directors are parents of children currently enrolled in the school. As stewards of ABA's future, the Board of Director's primary responsibilities include ensuring the long-term viability of ABA through fiscal responsibility, sound governance and strategic planning in conjunction with the Head of School and Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

To learn more about:

[Board of Directors](#)

[Senior Leadership Team](#)

[Faculty, Specialists and Staff Directory](#)

[Parent Teacher Association](#)

[Booster Club](#)

The Middle School Team

*Click on the names to view the faculty email IDs - name@abaoman.org

MS Principal	Richard Nies
MS Assistant Principal	Tracy van Harmelen
MS Counsellor	Claire Anthony
MYP Coordinator	Paul Warren
Grade Level Leader (G6)	Charlie Bramley
Grade Level Leader (G7)	Erik Peterson
Grade Level Leader (G8)	David Wood
Grade Level Mentor	Chris Downey

Middle School Advisory Team

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Charlie Bramley	Erik Peterson	David Wood
Jeff Cole	Peter Wilson	Will DuBose
Tahir Khanzadah	Andrew Allan	Andrea Zarate Pardo
Valerie Ritchie	Sarah Wood	Sandy Corey
Derek Lyndes	William Kern	Laura Mejia
Cesar Roldan	Abir El Ladki	Brad Stephens
Hebah Al Khalailah	Darren Smyth	Paul Healy

MS Instructional Teams

Subject Groups	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
Language & Literature	Jeff Cole	Derek Lyndes	Sarah Wood	Jelena Walker
Individuals & Societies	Will DuBose	Alexander Corey	Derek Lyndes	
Sciences	Darren Smyth	Valerie Ritchie		
Mathematics	Tahir Khanzadah	Andrew Allan	Hebah Al Khalaileh	
Mathematics	Brad Stephens	Atiq Hussain	Chris Swards	
Design	Paul Healy	Erik Peterson		
Physical & Health Education	David Wood	Peter Wilson	Jack Laurie	Brooke Stephens
Student Support	Ujala Chaudhary	William Kern	Apoorva Joshi	
Student Support	Steni Habachi	Laura Mejia	Kirsten Moss	
Arabic	Nesrine Doughan	Yara Hana	Waleed El Shobha	
Arabic	Emad El Shabrawy	Anjalee Paratian		
French	Anjalee Paratian	Abir El Ladki	Sebastian Monclair	
Spanish	Cesar Roldan	Jordi Beneyto		
Spanish	Sonia Miranda			
Art	Andrea Zarate Pardo			
Music	Zita Gange	Rebecca Hyzl		
Drama	Charlie Bramley			

Middle School Learning

Our commitment to provide an international education of the highest quality ensures that our students experience all eight disciplines of the MYP. Lessons are delivered in learning blocks of 80 minutes each as part of the IB Middle Years programme (MYP). Year-groups are subdivided into four teaching groups, each being assigned a number from 1-4. So teaching groups in Grade 6 are designated as 6-1, 6-2, 6-3 and 6-4. These groupings do not indicate the ability level of students, the numbers are simply used to differentiate between the classes. Classes in Middle School are mixed-ability in nature.

MYP Approaches to Learning Levels

<p>I am introduced to the skill and can watch others performing it (observation)</p>	<p>I can copy others who use the skill and use the skill with scaffolding and guidance (emulation)</p>	<p>I employ the skill confidently and effectively (demonstration)</p>	<p>I can show others how to use the skill and accurately assess how effectively the skill is used (self-regulation)</p>
<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is completely dependent on the teacher -is able to function in completely familiar situations -is able to listen to the questions asked by others -is unable to accurately self assess against ATL achievement levels and has little to no understanding or those levels -has limited success acquiring new skills after they are introduced -has limited success in applying the skills in class activities. 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -can follow directions from others in familiar situations -is able to copy the teacher or classmates in using the skills -has limited success when working in unfamiliar situations related to the skills -is able to ask clarifying questions related to the skill, however would need prompting or guidance from the teacher or classmates -Has some understanding of the ATL achievement levels, but would need some support to effectively self assess -can acquire new skills with support -needs support systems in applying the skill in class activities. 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -can demonstrate skills in familiar and unfamiliar situations -can use identified skill in a largely independent manner -is able to ask specific clarifying questions relate to the skill with little to no guidance -understands ATL achievement levels and can effectively self assess -easily acquire new skills and can demonstrate them to others -can apply the skill in class activities in both familiar and unfamiliar situations. 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -can demonstrate skills in familiar and unfamiliar situations with confidence -can use identified skill in a completely independent manner -is able to independently ask a series of clarifying questions relate to the skill -understands ATL achievement levels and can explain them to others and are highly effective self assessment -easily acquire new skills and can model them to others -Is highly effective in applying the skill in class activities in both familiar and unfamiliar situations. -can create new tools or perspectives that allow for demonstration of the skills in unique ways.

MYP Achievement Grade

Achievement level	IB MYP Descriptor
1	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
2	Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
3	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.
4	Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
5	Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations.
6	Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, often with independence.
7	Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations.

Feedback and Growth

ABA Middle School publishes regular reports on your child's progress at the end of each marking period. Each individual report shares important information with you about your child's progress. As we are not only focused on the academic performance of students, our reports include information on their ATL skills development, MYP achievement level descriptors in each subject and Advisor

comments on their overall progress. There are four reporting periods equally spaced throughout the school year.

Reports are issued on the cycle below:

	Mid-Semester 1	Semester 1	Mid-Semester 2	Semester 2
What is in the report?	Course Synopsis ATL Skills MYP Grades Advisor Comment	Course Synopsis ATL skills MYP Grades	Course Synopsis ATL Skills MYP Grades Advisor Comment	Course Synopsis ATL Skills Final MYP Grades
	PTSC		PTSC	

Mid-Semester Reports

There are two reports that are published in the middle of the semester. These reports are supported by our Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences (PTSCs) to ensure that discussions can be facilitated. In these 10-minute discussions with teachers, parents can inquire about their child's progress and help to shape learning plans. These reports have MYP assessed grades, an assessment of their ATL skills development in that subject and a course synopsis. Information about booking appointments for your conference with teachers is shared with parents via email.

The purpose of this report is to focus on the whole child as a learner. The mid-semester report will be published in November.

End of Semester Reports

The Semester 1 and 2 reports are considered to be the complete report of students' progress. These reports are published at the end of the semester and are available on Managebac. Normally, we invite parents to view the reports when they are published via SMS or email. This report is a comprehensive report with an emphasis on academic (semester 1) and pastoral (semester 2) feedback from teachers. The reports contain a synopsis of the course, MYP Assessment Grades alongside an ATL skills matrix, and a summary of the MYP achievement grades based on MYP Grade Boundaries.

The MYP subject-specific grade descriptor is shared to promote a broader understanding of MYP achievement levels. Semester 1 report is akin to a progress report as at that time teachers may not have collected enough evidence of your child's learning to determine their accurate grades. So for the most comprehensive and accurate grade based on the teacher's professional judgement of all the data collected, the Semester 2 report is recommended.

Student's performances are reported using the MYP assessment framework that uses criterion-referenced marking to determine our students' achievement level. Every MYP discipline has four criteria and the maximum score possible in each is 8. Students performance on each criterion is then collated and converted to an MYP Achievement Grade which has a maximum of 7. MYP achievement grades describe the holistic assessment of student performances across, skills, concepts, contexts and content.

MS Connects!

Our learning plan more than meets the requirements of the MYP and this is complemented by a comprehensive social and emotional curriculum. This social and emotional curriculum includes advisory sessions, library times, educational technology immersion, interdisciplinary learning, visiting speakers, assemblies and MS Club activities.

Middle School Advisory programme

The Advisory programme is designed to meet the social and emotional needs of students in MYP 1-3. The Principal oversees this programme in consultation with the School Counselor and Assistant Principal. Advisors are responsible for oversight of the students in their homerooms. Classroom teachers are responsible for contacting the Advisor, Counselor or a member of the Middle School Team regarding any students in their classes that are having social, emotional or academic difficulties. Sunday and Thursday Advisory time is an opportunity for students to work in smaller, supportive group settings, and explore topics including Career Education, Building Resilience, Teen Health, Diversity and preparing for Student Led Conferences.

Role of the Advisor

In addition to a brief morning attendance check in, advisors meet with their students on a Sunday and Thursday for 30 minutes. Parents are advised to schedule separate meetings with their child's Advisors when Parent-Teacher Conferences are convened if they feel there are specific concerns. Your child's Advisor is the key contact member of staff at school and should be informed of absences or other issues that may affect your child's learning.

Role of the Grade Level Leader

The Middle School Grade Level Leader (GLL) is a member of the Middle School Extended Leadership Team and shares moderate responsibility for administrative, organisational, pedagogical and curricular matters related to the Middle School Grades 6 - 8. Our GLLs play a vital role in improving continuity and consistency of

student learning within their year level, and are advocates for the “where everyone finds success” mantra of the Middle School.

MS Explores!

The MS Explores! The programme at ABA enables students to gain a greater understanding of the country in which they are living. They interact with Omanis and learn about their culture and the environment in which they live. They experience adventure and have the chance to try activities where they develop many of the characteristics of the IB Learner Profile: risk-taking, open-minded, reflective, knowledgeable and caring.

Grade 6 students spend time in the desert. For many students, this will be their first time away from their families. They interact with their peers in an environment where many step outside their social ‘norms’. They take part in learning experiences that leave them with a heightened awareness of the diverse nature of their surroundings, the nature of desertification and the changing lives of the people who live in it.

Grade 7 students go to the coast of Oman. It builds on the previous year’s programme and stretches the students a little further. Removed from their everyday classroom surroundings, they learn of the rich, seafaring history of Oman and are immersed in first-hand experiences of Oman’s diverse marine life. They experience the City of Sur and visit the National Turtle sanctuary to observe the life cycle of Green Turtles.

Grade 8 students camp inside a traditional Omani mountain camp based in the Hajar Mountains. The camp is at the top of the famous Jebel Shams and is surrounded by mountains and wadis. This camp has challenging hikes over mountainous but safe terrain, where students have to carry everything they need with them. This camp leaves students with a rich experience of how to be safe in the mountains and the need to be organised. Students in this camp are also required to bring their own tents and help with the cleaning up routines on the campsite. The camp will culminate with a visit to the Al Hamra village located near the foot of the mountains.

The Middle School Library

The ABA Libraries provide a calm and well-resourced space for students and staff to undertake research, do recreational reading and work on projects with the support of a Teacher Librarian. Students can use and access resources and complete homework using their personal (BYOD) device. The Middle School Library has a wonderful selection of resources in a variety of formats: non-fiction and fiction collections, audiobooks, a growing world languages collection, and a host of online research databases. All students can borrow up to ten items for two weeks, with a

two-week renewal period. Students have access to the Library during break times and after school; as determined by the school librarian.

Counseling Services

What is the role of a School Counselor?

ABA school counselors serve as student advocates. They work to promote and enhance student success by addressing students' academic, personal/social and career developmental needs. (The school counselor is not a disciplinarian, an administrator or a psychologist).

When should I see the School Counselor?

Anytime! The school counselor is here to assist you in a variety of areas. Some common topics include:

- General questions about school life
- Organizational, study and test-taking strategies
- Academic plans and course options
- Stress management
- Peer, teacher and family relationships
- Helping to understand self and others
- Problem-solving, decision-making, conflict resolution and, goal setting
- Making healthy choices
- Career awareness, planning and information
- University planning and application process

Will the School Counselors tell others what I discuss with them?

The school counselors provide a confidential setting and are bound by a strict code of ethics. However, there are three situations in which a school counselor is required to inform the school administration and parents. These include if a student reveals one of the following:

1. They plan to or are hurting themselves.
2. They plan to hurt someone else.
3. Someone is hurting them.

How do you sign up to see the school counselor?

If you see the school counselor around campus, you can say hello and have a chat or, if they are in their office, you are welcome to stop in and introduce yourself.

Otherwise, email the Middle School counselor for an appointment:
canthony@abaoman.org

The School Day

School Week

The school week runs from Sunday to Thursday. Students are expected to arrive in school to register with their Advisor in their Homeroom between 7.40 and 7.45am. They are then to be in their classrooms by 7:50 am. If a student is not present for their homeroom registration by 7.45am they will be marked absent. It is compulsory to attend for the full duration each day.

Teachers will be in their rooms from 7:30am. Traffic can be busy at drop off times, please make the necessary travel time allowances. Classes end at 2:45 pm, although After School Activities or ASAs may run up to 4 - 6 pm. (Most finish before 4:45 pm).

The school day is divided into eight 40-minute instructional periods, many classes meeting in double period blocks. Students will meet with their Advisor two times a week for 30 minutes on Sundays and Thursdays for important information and activities in support of their learning programmes. Students will have two 30 minute sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays to participate in their chosen MS Club activities. On Tuesday, students will either have a Grade Level or Middle School Assembly for 30 minutes.

Session Times	MS/HS Schedule
7:25	Drop Off Starts
7:40 - 7:45	Registration
7:45 - 7:50	Transition
7:50 - 8:30	Period 1
8:30- 9:10	Period 2
9:10 - 9:15	Transition
9:15 - 9:55	Period 3

9:55 - 10:35	Period 4
10:35 - 11:05	Break
11:05 - 11:45	Period 5
11:45 to 12:25	Period 6
12:25 -12:55	Clubs / Advisory & Assemblies
12:55 - 1:25	Break
1:25 - 2:05	Period 7
2:05 to 2:45	Period 8
2:45	End of School Day
2:45 to 4:15	MS/HS ASAs End

Recreational Breaks & the Cafeteria

Within the daily schedule, there are two break periods for all students. Breaks are from 10:35 to 11:05 and 12:55 to 13:25 each day. Staff members are on duty at every recess period for supervision of all grade levels. Students may bring drinks and snacks with them from home for consumption during their recess or break periods. Care should be exercised to avoid items that can be easily spoiled or broken in transit.

ABA is working towards becoming an environmentally friendly campus. We have recycling in place for paper and card, plastic bottles, compostable food waste, aluminium cans and ring-pulls. Water dispensers are available all around school and every ABA MS student is expected to have his/her own reusable water bottle as a part of their school resources and tools. We, therefore, ask you to ensure your child has her/his own labelled non-disposable water bottle for use on campus.

Students are not allowed to leave campus during school hours to buy food from outside vendors or to visit the local shop. Additionally, students are not permitted to use food delivery services to obtain food.

Students who would like to order food for a school activity/event need to get written permission from their activity advisor.

Books and Materials

All students will be issued with textbooks and materials for their various subjects at no additional cost. Accountability for subject materials is considered an important responsibility for each student. If a student loses a book, he/she will be billed for the replacement cost. Students may be charged for excessive damage to textbooks and library books. In the event that school text or library books are not returned, the school will withhold the student's report card until the book is returned or paid for.

All students are expected to provide their own pencils, pens, markers, mathematical equipment, and files as required. Items brought to school should be clearly marked with the student's name.

Lost and Found

A lost and found box is located on the patio area of the Activity Centre near to the main entrance to the school campus. Please check with the Receptionist or in the Middle and High School Office for lost valuables. Unidentified items are turned into the lost and found box. Students are expected to have all personal items labelled with their names.

Telephones and Cell Phones

Students may use school telephones. ABA has a wireless internet facility for educational use. MS Students are prohibited from having cell phones during school hours unless permission has been granted by the class teacher. Students who use mobile phones during the school day will have the phone confiscated and kept until the end of the school day. Repeat infractions will require parents to collect the phone and the student may face further disciplinary action.

Students bring in mobile telephones at their own personal risk and the school cannot be held responsible for any damage or loss of telephones. They should be stored safely in their bags and remain in their bags throughout the day. The phone must remain off until it is time to leave school.

Transportation

The school does not provide school-sanctioned transport for students to and from school, nor does it coordinate private "carpools". Although the school is not directly responsible for such arrangements, ABA students travelling to and from the campus are expected to reflect the highest standard of behaviour.

Campus Access Passes

All ABA parents are expected to apply for an ID card in order to enter the campus either on foot or in their vehicle. Parents must wear their school issued orange lanyard at all times on campus. Be prepared to be escorted to the admin office if the correct identification is not being worn on site.

Visitors

After first visiting security at the main gate, all visitors are asked to report to the Reception in the Learning Centre upon entering the campus.

Security Protocols

All visitors to the campus are required to follow the security protocols as given below:

- All adults must wear an ABA ID badge at all times, while on campus
- ABA parents must wear a visitors ID badge if they lose/forget their own.
- Visitors ID badges are obtained from ABA Security only.
- Visitors must submit a valid photo ID to security to obtain an ABA ID badge.
- Photo ID can be collected before departure when the visitor ID badge is returned.
- All visitors are restricted to the area(s) associated with their visit.
- Visitors are not permitted to wander around the campus.
- Adults are NOT permitted to use Student restrooms at any time.

Security has full authority to enforce any regulations that serve the ABA community.

More information can be found in the ABA Safeguarding Handbook on the [website](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Student Code of Conduct is at the core of our [Behaviour Policy](#) and its purpose is to ensure our school Mission is supported in the classroom and in the community. Primarily, this is to ensure that the conditions for learning are agreed. The Student Code of Conduct also serves to teach students the value of individual responsibility and consideration for others.

The level of discipline in the school is directly related to the commitment of staff, students and parents to the ideals of the school. The school encourages students to demonstrate an understanding of the following key principles:

- Attendance and the relative freedom of students at ABA are privileges that should not be abused.
- The chief mission of ABA is to provide learning opportunities and a caring environment for students from all over the world.
- Teachers and support staff deserve respect for the work they do on behalf of students.
- Students should, in turn, receive respect from teachers and the staff for their academic effort and concern for the welfare of the school community.
- ABA students support the Mission by affording respect to all others.

In addition to understanding the principles outlined above, students should be aware that bringing the school into disrepute through untoward behaviour, both on and off campus, is considered grounds for disciplinary action. “Untoward behaviour” includes (and is not limited to) public consumption of alcohol, illegal substance abuse, rowdiness, and consorting with undesirable persons.

The severity of the sanction imposed on the student will depend upon the degree of seriousness of the behaviour. This will be judged solely by the administration in consultation with the member of staff concerned, if any, and when necessary, the Board of Directors. To protect the integrity of this process and the rights of the student, an appeals process is established. The administration wishes to emphasise that stern measures will be taken against individuals whose actions embarrass the reputation of ABA.

Members of the ABA community are expected to maintain a positive climate of mutual respect, fostering trust. At ABA we believe in kindness, ethical decision making and respect for diverse perspectives. For a list of unacceptable and prohibited behaviours please see the [Behaviour Policy](#) Appendix 8. This list is not exhaustive and will be reviewed periodically.

Academic Honesty

In accordance with the IB Learner Profile (2013) and ABA’s Mission, Vision and Value statements, we expect students to be principled and act with academic integrity.

We ask each member of the school community -- students, teachers and parents -- to familiarise themselves with what constitutes academic honesty outlined in the Academic Integrity Policy.

A copy of the full Academic Integrity Policy can be found in Appendix 1.

Middle School Communication

ABA Student online user profiles

ABA students are provided with an ABA Gmail account as part of our subscription to GSuite Enterprise for Education. GSuite brings access to various applications and services that are introduced at age appropriate times to students. In addition to Google, ABA students are subscribed to additional online services such as SeeSaw and ManageBac depending on their grade level.

All user accounts and profiles created for ABA students will be deleted after one month from the day the student leaves ABA. This includes email and cloud storage. Students have to backup all required data from their respective user accounts within one month from their last day of attendance in ABA.

Please contact helpdesk@abaoman.org if you have any questions.

Exception: Google user accounts of the graduating class (grade 12) will be kept active till the end of the respective calendar year. This is to facilitate the communications concerning the university admission processes.

Parent Contact Information

It is imperative that parent contact details are current and accurate. It is expected that parents will keep their contact information and emergency contact information updated with the school. Please contact the registrar@abaoman.org with any changes.

[Please refer: ABA's Learning Management Systems Parent Guide](#)

SMS/Text Messaging

An SMS service to family GSM/mobile phone numbers is established to notify parents in case of emergency and immediate action required.

Emails

Emails of events, schedules and permissions are often sent to parents. Parents are asked to reply as requested.

Parent/School Partnerships

Meet the Teacher Evening - At the start of the school year parents will have the opportunity to meet their child(ren)'s teachers. The evening will focus on teacher introductions, programme content and sharing classroom expectations.

Conferences - Parent-teacher-student conferences are scheduled twice a year, one in November and the other in April. Students are expected to attend with parents to discuss their progression to meeting their targets with teachers. In general, these sessions are student-led and quite often supported by artefacts collated from classroom work. Parents are encouraged to read the school reports prior to attending the sessions to ensure a meaningful and efficient conference.

Parental Request Conferences - If a parent wishes to speak with any teacher at any time, a conference time can be arranged. *The subject teacher is the primary contact concerning students' progress.* Subsequent to engaging with their child's subject teacher, parents can request to meet with their child's Advisor, or the MS Counselor, Claire Anthony. If the issue remains unresolved, parents should schedule a meeting with the Middle School Principal, Richard Nies.

Formal Complaints Regarding Employee Conduct - ABA distinguishes between concerns or disagreements about day-to-day decisions, which are addressed through the school's established communication pathway, and formal complaints relating to professional conduct. A formal complaint refers to an allegation that a staff member has engaged in conduct that may:

- Breach professional expectations or standards
- Be inconsistent with the school's Mission, Vision, and Values
- Cause reputational harm to a student, family, staff member, or the school
- Raise concerns related to safeguarding, ethics, or professional integrity

In such cases, the matter should not be addressed through the standard hierarchical communication process. Instead, parents are required to submit a formal written complaint directly to the Head of School, with the HR Manager

copied. The complaint should:

- Clearly outline the nature of the concern
- Provide relevant details, including dates, context, and any supporting information
- Be submitted in a timely and respectful manner

All formal complaints will be:

- Acknowledged promptly
- Reviewed in line with school policy and legal requirements
- Managed confidentially and with due process

ABA is committed to ensuring that all such matters are handled fairly, thoroughly, and in alignment with professional and safeguarding standards, with respect for all parties involved.

Home Learning

Home learning provides a natural opportunity for parents, children and teachers to work cooperatively. It can be a two-way window that reflects how the school supports the child and, in turn, how the parents nourish the child at home. The role of parents in this is critical.

There are five types of home learning students may find themselves engaged in:

1. Practice – reinforcing familiar skills
2. Work completion – finishing work assigned in class
3. Preparation or study – reading and reviewing, and organising material
4. Extension, creative learning, or enrichment – building on already successful learning, offering processes, ideas, and information in new ways
5. Online learning in lieu of face-to-face learning **(unplanned/emergency school closure)**

It is important to have a functioning computer, printer and internet access at home for your child. Managing home learning is one of the major challenges facing many adolescents. Please contact your child’s advisor or teacher if they are having a difficult time managing their assignments.

Home Learning Assignments

Teachers routinely assign home learning and expect students to complete and return assignments so they can be assessed. Students access their curricular

documents on Google Classroom and Managebac. Teachers will clearly inform students of their policies regarding late submissions. Missed assignments will be recorded in the school database, and the eventual completion of the work will be required.

Home learning assignments are utilised to assist the pupil to achieve satisfactory school progress and develop desirable work habits. Through these assignments, parents can also become more aware of the aims and objectives of the instructional programme. Assignments are an outgrowth of the work done in the classroom, and sufficient instruction is given by the teacher to ensure that the pupil can work independently. The type of assignment and the time devoted to it are determined by the grade level and age of the pupil. Assignments vary in length. Some will be of a long-range variety. There may be some evenings when no homework has been assigned.

Teachers review home learning in order to provide feedback to the student on his or her progress.

If a student is feeling undue stress as a result of excessive homework assignments, parents are encouraged to contact the Counselor and/or subject teacher immediately.

Unplanned/ Emergency School Closure

In the course of an academic year there are scenarios where the campus is closed. Previously this has been caused by severe weather conditions, or when there has been an important visitor in the country. In the event of an unplanned campus closure we will take the following approach:

Campus closed by 12 noon: Teachers will post tasks on Google Classroom for Period 7 and 8 lessons.

Days One, Two & Three: Teachers will post tasks on Google Classroom for lessons P1-8, teachers will introduce the lessons via Google Meet and then be available to support students.

Day Four: We will re-evaluate given the length of time off-campus and communicate with families in advance.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The school offers a wide range of activities outside school hours. These range from athletics to yearbook, badminton to volleyball, and many others. There are a wide range of activities to choose from during the school year. An updated list of activities will be provided when the list is agreed and ready to be put into action. The programme on offer varies seasonally, at the mercy of the weather, as well as from year to year depending on supply and demand. The more specialized clubs may require a fee but most are provided within the school framework at no extra charge.

The success of each activity depends very much on the enthusiasm and commitment of the students and their parents. Students are encouraged to attend at least one activity per semester.

MS Student Council (MS Student Leadership)

Student Council provides leadership opportunities for ABA Middle School Students. The MS StuCo is an ideal opportunity for our students to hone leadership skills, organisational craft and contribute to their community. The Student Council, in conjunction with the faculty advisor, can plan events and programmes that would be of interest to the students and the school community. The Student Council also leads discussions and focus groups within their advisories to discuss important school issues and promote change.

MESAC

THE ASIA CONFERENCE

The school is a member of The Middle East South Asia Conference (MESAC) The MESAC philosophy is dedicated to coordinating a range of sporting and other activities through inter-school collaboration. Participants in MESAC tournaments benefit in many ways.



Students taking part in MESAC events, as with other extra-curricular activities, should realise that it is a commitment. The tournaments are scheduled a year in advance and, once committed, students must follow through with a demanding training programme. This is usually over an eight-week period.

Experience has shown that MESAC events are very popular and enjoyable. The school has laid down eligibility criteria for students taking part in MESAC events as it is considered a privilege to be selected.

Eligibility Requirements for Participation in MESAC Teams

All schools taking part in MESAC events recognize the value of high standards in sports and other activities. Participation involves commitment but not at the expense of academic standards in school. Participation in MESAC events must therefore be earned. Students are generally selected after try-out sessions about two months prior to the tournament. All players will be selected for Junior Varsity or Varsity teams to ensure the best chance of team success at the discretion of the Coaches and the Athletic Director. At this time, they should be aware that there are strict eligibility criteria, which must be met.

These are:

- Demonstrated academic progress and success.
- No significant disciplinary problems as determined by teachers, coaches and administration.
- Regular attendance at practices, even when participation is not possible due to injury. Students may be released to take part in other school events at the discretion of the coaches.
- Compliance with all MESAC rules as stated in the MESAC Handbook. Students and parents must sign a list of MESAC rules shortly after try-outs.

Below are the guidelines regulating student travel on school-sponsored athletic/activity trips. These guidelines were adopted to ensure students are allowed ample opportunity to participate in activities that require them to be absent from school while maintaining the continuity of their academic programme.

General guidelines for all ABA sponsored trips are:

A maximum of three trips per year

- 10 school days missed in total per school year
- Normally no more than one trip per quarter

Students are responsible for collecting assignments and classwork in advance of absences due to team travel. They are also responsible for submitting work as soon as possible on their return to classes.

POLICY ON RETURNING FROM OVERSEAS SCHOOL TRIPS

Students are required to return to school from overseas trips **ten hours** after they land in Muscat or at the start of the next school day, whichever is sooner. **One hour** can be added to the expected return time for every full hour the flight is delayed.

Students who participate in overseas events are given some flexibility to hand in assignments. Contact the subject teacher that is impacted to finalise this process.

ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

Student Attendance

Our teachers are committed to helping each child learn and grow in all areas of learning. However, when children are absent, this disrupts the flow of learning and children miss significant learning opportunities that cannot be made up. With only 180 teaching days in the year, we want to maximise your child's progress and strongly encourage you to avoid unnecessary absences during term time.

The following attendance guidelines concerning student attendance are supported by: **School Policy 7.3.1 Student Attendance** (revised SY 2019-20)

The School's instructional program is based on regular and consistent attendance of students to allow them to maximise their learning. Since irregular or insufficient attendance is regarded as seriously disruptive to the student's studies and the instructional program, the Head of School is authorised to take necessary action.

The Head of School shall establish appropriate attendance Regulations. These Regulations shall be published in the Student-Parent Handbook and shall be followed by all students.

- If cumulative unauthorised absences are more than 10% (approximately 18 days) by the end of an academic year we reserve the right to make adjustments to the student's academic programme, including but not limited to, restriction of ASAs.

Absences

In the event of a sudden illness or family emergency, student attendance may be excused. However, when a student is absent from school, it is the responsibility of the parent to inform the Middle School Office through the ManageBac platform. On the day the student returns to school he/she must have a letter signed by their parents or a doctor's certificate indicating the duration and reasons for the absence. This must be shown to the Advisor. If no notification is received the absence will be regarded as unexcused. Assignments handed in late due to excused absence will only be accepted by the teacher once the reason for the absence has been verified.

If a student is habitually absent during the school year, a meeting with the parents and Counselor or Middle School Principal will be scheduled.

Planned Absences

Parents who intend to have their children miss school for a day or more should make a formal request for leave to the Middle School Principal at least one week in advance of the planned absence. If granted leave, the student concerned should arrange for make-up work with their teachers. Please note that all absences, excused or unexcused, count against the total allowable in any semester.

Parents Out of Country Policy

If both parents are scheduled to be out of the country, the school must be notified and contact details of individuals responsible for their child's welfare must be provided. The school may contact parents and ask them to return to Muscat.

Make-Up Work

It is the responsibility of the student to communicate with teachers to clearly note what make-up work is required after an absence and set deadlines for each make-up assignment.

Tardiness

Students are expected to arrive at class on time. Lateness is extremely disruptive to class lessons and discourteous to both the teacher and fellow students. Repeated patterns of tardiness will be dealt with as a discipline problem by teachers and administration.

If a student is chronically tardy, a meeting will be scheduled with the parents and the student.

After School Hours

Punctuality of Departure

It is equally important that children be collected from school on time.

Students are requested to vacate the school grounds at the end of the day dismissal time unless they are accompanied by a teacher or are taking part in school-related activities. After 2:45 pm there is no scheduled supervision on ABA's campus, except for school-related activities. Students who are not signed up for one of these activities or who are not under the direct supervision of a teacher are expected to depart campus.

Closed Campus Policy

ABA runs a Closed Campus Policy. Once students arrive on campus they must remain at school for the duration of the school day unless they receive administrative permission to leave.

Should parents wish to take their children out of school during the school day they must notify the Middle School Principal in writing. Students given permission to leave campus **must sign out** at the Middle School Office. When the student returns to school on the same day, he/she must check in with the Middle School Office to receive a pass to be admitted to class. Students participating in after school activities must also remain on campus.

After School Events and Student Socials

Students are encouraged to participate in events and socials throughout the year. Only ABA students are permitted to attend, no guests are permitted. Social functions are established for the enjoyment of students. If a student does not attend school on a particular day, they are not permitted to attend after school events.

These events are usually organised by the Middle School Student Council. Punctual collection of students at the end of school-sponsored events is especially requested. Chaperones are severely inconvenienced by late pick-ups.

Guidelines:

1. Students absent during the day of the social event are **not** permitted to attend the event.
2. Students should be collected promptly.
3. In the event of an emergency, parents will be contacted at home.
4. Any behavioural concerns will be reported to the Middle School Principal and will jeopardise further participation in social events.

Absence from Physical and health education (PHE)

If a student is unable to participate in PHE for a genuine medical reason, an explanatory letter is required. A medical certificate should support this if the exemption is for an extended period. Letters should be given to the Physical and health education teacher.

Physical and health education during Ramadan

Consideration is given to all students who are fasting during Ramadan. Those students will be allowed to participate in an alternative PHE programme arranged by the PHE staff. Parents, please provide written notification to PHE staff if your son or daughter will be fasting.

DISCIPLINE

Disciplinary Procedures

The table below outlines the agreed procedures our teachers will follow when addressing disciplinary issues arising in their classes. The expectation is that any discipline issues be resolved with those directly involved. If this is not successful, the following steps should be taken:

Step 1	The issue should be addressed individually with the student in a meeting outside of class.
Step 2	If it continues, the Counsellor or Middle School Principal will be informed of the situation and parents are notified.
Step 3	If the situation persists, a resolution meeting will be scheduled with the student, parents, the teacher involved, and the Middle School Principal or Assistant Principal.

These steps have been established to provide some general guidelines for dealing with discipline in the classroom. Teachers will use their professional discretion in working with students to help them be successful at ABA.

Any member of staff who observes inappropriate student behaviour will first attempt to restore order and, if necessary, bring the matter to the attention of the Middle School Principal. The Principal will determine the nature and severity of subsequent disciplinary action.

Teachers will report excessive tardiness and concerning absences to the Assistant Principal who, in turn, will consult with the Principal and/or the student's Advisor to resolve, depending on the specific case.

Suspension (In School & Out of School Suspension)

A student may be suspended from all school activities immediately and without prior notice to parents. Parents must be informed immediately of suspension by the Principal and confirmation of the sanction given in writing with reasons for the

action (copied to the Head of School). An initial suspension may not exceed 5 days. A student suspended from School must be collected by a parent or guardian. During the period of absence from the School a student is not permitted to attend any classes, participate in any school-related activity or return to the School premises for any reason. On returning to the School at the end of a suspension period a student will be readmitted only after discussion between the Administration, parent and student concerned.

While on in-school suspension a student must:

- Arrive on time
- Meet with the Administration
- Complete assigned work

Expulsion

Expulsion is for the most serious offences or for repeated infractions of school regulations. This action must be proposed by the Head of School and ratified by the Board. Expulsion forms part of the permanent record of the dismissed student.

Harassment

ABA will not tolerate any form of harassment. If a student is being harassed, the student's Advisor, relevant Counsellor or Principal should be informed immediately. Harassment includes both personal and online activities.

Forbidden Items

The following items are forbidden at school and will be confiscated:

- weapons
- matches and lighters
- chewing gum
- e-cigarettes
- any other item the administration deems unacceptable or inappropriate

The school is a smoke-free campus. The use, possession, purchase or selling of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes/vapes or illegal substances, incurs an automatic out of school suspension.

Student Dress Code

It is the responsibility of the student to adhere to the ABA [dress code](#).

- Students in Middle School will wear an ABA polo shirt in White or Navy Blue.

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- Students must wear the appropriate ABA collared polo shirt according to their programme as above.
 - Students may wear an ABA Vipers Hoodie (available from the Booster Club). No other Hoodies are acceptable; except during PE, when students must wear the Akoa Sector Midlayer (available from the Trutex uniform shop).
 - Students must wear culturally appropriate clothing at all times. Explicitly, students must **not** come to school in the following:
 - **crop or halter-tops (midriffs must not be showing)**
 - **vests or 'spaghetti straps' (shoulders must be covered)**
 - **tight-fitting materials such as spandex, or tight-fitting trousers/leggings such as yoga pants or other activewear (except for during PE)**
 - All shorts/skirts must be approximately knee-length or below.
 - Trainers, sandals (flimsy, unsecured sandals are not allowed) and sneakers may be worn. For safety reasons heels cannot be higher than 5 centimetres.
 - Flip-flops / Sliders / and 'Crocs' (or equivalent) are prohibited.
 - For swimming, girls must wear a one-piece bathing suit, and boys must wear proper swim shorts (above the knee, not too baggy). Swim Caps are required for hygiene reasons, and goggles are recommended. All items should be labelled with the student's name.
 - Wearing jewellery is discouraged. ABA cannot accept responsibility for jewellery, watches or other expensive items brought to school.
 - Parents of students who are in consistent breach of the dress code will be contacted. Students will in the first instance be asked to come to school the following day in appropriate attire. On the second infringement, parents will be asked to bring in appropriate attire. The student will be asked to return home to change.
 - There will be a monthly 'Spirit Day' on the last Thursday of each month. Students and staff will be encouraged to wear Vipers' colours/attire on those days unless the mufti day is themed.
 - ABA Uniform items may be purchased from the Trutex uniform shop located at the ABA Athletics Centre.

Physical and Health Education - Dress Code

PHE uniform consists of:

- Vipers ABA PE Shirt,
- ABA logo shorts – knee-length,
- Sports shoes with non-marking soles,
- A reusable water bottle,
- Sunhat and sunscreen for classes outside,

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- One-piece swimwear is suitable for active participation, swimming cap, goggles and towel in swimming classes.
 - Snorkel set for Grade 7 MS Explores

All jewellery is required to be completely removed for class and students with long hair must ensure that it is tied back for classes. **Students are not to bring valuables, watches or money to PHE.**

If students are unable to participate in PHE, an explanatory note from home and/or the doctor must be provided to the PHE teacher. Wherever possible a modified programme will be agreed upon for the duration of the restriction. Students are required to help with equipment and be involved in roles of leadership as the lesson develops. It is therefore imperative that students still bring their PHE kit to every class. Opportunities to shower will be provided at the end of each lesson. Therefore, students must remember to include soap and a towel in their PHE kit.

Public Show of Affection

Following Omani law, public shows of affection such as hand-holding, walking arm-in-arm, and walking with arms around waists is unacceptable between boys and girls. Parents will be contacted and expected to support the school's position.

APPENDICES:

[Appendix 1 - ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY](#)

[Appendix 2 - INCLUSION AND LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY](#)

[Appendix 3 - CHILD PROTECTION](#)

[Appendix 4 - ASSESSMENT POLICY](#)

[Appendix 5 - LANGUAGE POLICY](#)

[Appendix 6 - IT RESPONSIBLE USE AGREEMENT](#)

[Appendix 7 - ADMISSIONS POLICY](#)

[Appendix 8 - BEHAVIOUR POLICY](#)

[Appendix 9 - BYOD FOR EDUCATION](#)