

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

EARLY CHILDHOOD
THROUGH GRADE 5



ACS Athens
American Community Schools



ACS Athens

American Community Schools

OUR VISION

Empowering Individuals to become Architects of their Own Learning,
to Thrive as Conscious Global Citizens and Improve Life and Living on the Planet.

OUR MISSION

ACS Athens Mission

ACS Athens is a student-centered international school, embracing American educational philosophy, principles and values. Through excellence in teaching and diverse educational experiences, ACS Athens challenges all students to realize their unique potential: academically, intellectually, socially and ethically — to thrive as responsible global citizens.

Our Beliefs

- All decisions in the school must be made in the best interest of students.
- Academic excellence is built upon each student's unique talents and abilities.
- Student learning must be a shared responsibility of the student, the school, and the family.
- Students learn and develop best in an environment of cooperation, belonging and trust.
- Respecting, accepting and embracing diversity enriches one's community.
- Effective global citizenship demands a strong sense of civic responsibility and community service.
- Educating students should promote intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development and ethical decision making.
- All individuals can succeed and acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to become life-long learners with ethos.

ACS Athens Parent Student Online Handbooks

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Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT	7
WHO WE ARE	7
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OVERVIEW	7
THE SCHOOL DAY	8
How We Assess Learning	9
Curriculum Resources	9
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN AND KINDERGARTEN AT ACS ATHENS	9
Conscious Cubs	9
Dogs in Learning (DIL)	10
The JK Program	10
Kindergarten Program	11
Learning Stations	11
Supplies Needed for JK and Kindergarten	13
Getting Ready for the Big Day - JK & Kindergarten Readiness	13
SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR GRADES 1 - 5	14
Foreign Language Classes 1-5	14
Specials Classes 1-5	15
Learning Management System	16
HOMEWORK	16
FACILITIES	17
Library Media	17
Media Studio	17
Technology Lab	18
Science Lab	18
Innovation Lab	18
SUPPORT SERVICES	18
Optimal Learning	18
OLP Consultation	19
Advanced Learners Program (ALP)	20
Elementary Math Studio	20
Literacy Support and Enhancement Interventions	20
ESL Foundation Program	20
Counseling Services	20
Child Study Team (CST)	21
STUDENT EXPECTATIONS	23
Attendance	23
Tardiness	23
Daily Absences	23
Extended Absences	24
Early Dismissal From School	24

Dress Code	24
Personal Devices and Items	25
Parent Responsibilities	25
Emergency Drills	26
Emergency Temporary School Closure	26
Administrative Decisions Affecting Students, Updated: September 24, 2021	27
The ACS Athens Conscious Citizenship Model	27
The ACS Athens 3 R's	28
The ACS Athens 3 R's and Digital Citizenship	28
Ways Parents Can Support with The ACS Athens 3 R's	29
Giving Life to Learning – Through the Restorative Process	30
Student Conduct	30
AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS	31
Learning Enhancement Program	31
Elementary Sports After School Program (ESAS) & Elementary School Arts Academy	31
Staying After School	32
STUDENT LIFE	33
Student Council	33
Honor Code	33
Health Office	33
Lunch Program	34
TRANSPORTATION	34
Bus Procedures	34
Bus Code of Conduct	35
Approval For Online Learning	35
SPECIAL TRADITIONS	36
ROLE OF PARENTS	37
PTO	37
Personal Property	37
Lost & Found	38
VEHICLES OF COMMUNICATION	38
Report Cards	38
Conferences	38
Student-Led Conferences	38
Passports	38
PTO Parent and Principal Meetings	39
Website	39
Telephone/Email	39
SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	40
School Photos	40
Field Trips	40

Birthday and Holiday Celebrations	40
ENROLLMENT	41
Admissions/Registration	41
Financial	41
Transfers From Our School	41
Child Safety Statement	42
Bring Your Own Device - laptop to school BYOD - Policy	42
ACS Athens School Policy on the Use of AI in School- Code of Conduct	44
ACS Athens Student Philosophy on Safe and Ethical Use of Generative AI	46
Bibliography	47
Additions to 2026-2027 Handbook	47

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This handbook provides information about the school's operation, guidelines, agreements, processes, student behavior, and student life. This information will be pertinent to your child's elementary school years.

Students and Parents must review this information! It must be signed electronically through **PowerSchool**. After careful review, click the Agreement Forms button on **PowerSchool** to declare your agreement.

WHO WE ARE

We are a team of dedicated professionals who bring unique experiences and expertise to the field of education. Most of our educators hold master's degrees in one or more fields of education and engage in professional development every year. Classroom teachers collaborate with grade-level team members and Specials teachers to provide meaningful and holistic learning experiences for our students. This collaboration provides opportunities for students to take academic risks to become architects of their own learning. We believe in educating the "whole child" by focusing on intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and creative growth while valuing the rich diversity of culture children bring to the classroom. Experiences and activities are planned to meet the needs of each child at his/her own level and rate of development.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The Elementary School curriculum is designed to scaffold learning throughout the grades in all content areas. Students develop their reading, writing, phonics, and grammar skills through a workshop model. Social studies units incorporate selected United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) to broaden students' understanding of their place in the world and responsibility toward others. In these units, students have opportunities to recreate historical events and host exhibitions of learning based on key concepts. Each grade level includes one unit of American history and/or culture. Students actively construct an understanding of numeracy and engineering skills by constructing what they learn with hands-on activities in mathematics and science. In addition to mastering the basic tools for learning, students learn to think conceptually, gather facts, acquire knowledge, apply and practice skills, develop attitudes and take action.

The Elementary School views students as thinkers with important, emerging theories of the world. Building on students' prior knowledge, teachers integrate the curriculum using a range of teaching strategies and resources. Rather than focusing on isolated and non-contextualized facts, students develop critical thinking skills to become lifelong learners, problem solvers, and positive contributors to our global society.

Early Childhood, Pre-Junior Kindergarten through Grade 2

Early Childhood at ACS Athens serves children between the ages of three to eight years old. This is a time of significant physical, cognitive, social-emotional, and language development and it encompasses Junior Kindergarten through Grade 2. Emphasis is placed on the learning process and children build meaning

from their activities. Learning is spontaneous. Children learn from each other, and teachers act as facilitators in the learning process.

During these formative years, our focus is on ensuring that all developmental milestones—social-emotional, cognitive, and physical—are met. We understand that early childhood is a critical window for growth, and we are committed to creating an environment that supports the whole child. To achieve this, we aim to actively partner with parents, recognizing that collaboration between home and school is key to unlocking each child’s full potential. Together, we can provide consistent support, celebrate progress, and ensure every child thrives in a nurturing, developmentally rich environment.

In Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten, the arrangement of the classroom encourages play and exploration. Learning centers are designed to develop language and literacy skills at a developmentally appropriate pace. Play and hands-on activities are an integral part of the learning opportunities. Children are free to experience, react, think, grow, and change in their own unique ways.

In Grade 1 and Grade 2, students develop foundational skills in reading and writing and explore science and social studies through units of study. Phonics supports the development of reading and writing, and mentor sentences introduce grammatical structures. Students build conceptual understanding in mathematics and are encouraged to explain their mathematical thinking. NGSS units include *Waves, Living Things*, and *Space Systems* (Grade 1) and *Earth Systems, Ecosystems*, and *Matter* (Grade 2).

Intermediate Grades, Grade 3 through Grade 5

The Intermediate Grades serve children between the ages of eight to eleven.

One of the most important transitional milestones when moving into **Grade 3** is the shift from *learning to read* to *reading to learn*. This means students read more content-based texts and utilize a variety of strategies to collect information, make inferences and synthesize what they read. As writers, students begin to apply critical thinking to narrative, expository, and opinion genres. Students expand their conceptual mathematics understanding to multi-digit addition and subtraction, use strategies to solve multiplication and division within 100, measurement and geometry, and develop an understanding of fractions. The year-long Communities unit integrates Social Studies and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) including *Force and Interactions, Ecosystems, Life Cycles and Traits*, and *Weather and Climate*.

In **Grade 4**, readers and writers compare and contrast points of view, themes, and topics, and deepen their ability to infer, summarize and synthesize while exploring narrative, expository, and opinion genres. In math, students develop fluency in solving problems using all four operations, comparing, ordering, and adding/subtracting fractions and decimals, and exploring and measuring angles. Students explore South America, the United States, and the Olympic Games in Social Studies. In Science they explore the NGSS Units of Study, *Energy, Waves, Earth Systems, and Structures and Living Things*.

In **Grade 5**, students explore fiction and nonfiction reading and writing through memoirs, argument essays, and research-based essays. In math, students extend their understanding of adding and subtracting fractions to multiplying and dividing fractions, divide with two-digit divisors and decimals, and explore volume. In Social Studies, students learn about Explorers, Colonial America, and Ancient Greece. NGSS units include *Matter, Ecosystems, Earth Systems*, and *Space Systems*.

THE SCHOOL DAY

The school day begins at 09:00 and ends at 15:45. Students are supervised on the playground from 08:30 to 09:00. All students should arrive by 08:50 so that they can be ready to learn at 09:00 sharp!

How We Assess Learning

Students are also involved in the learning process by giving critical feedback to their peers and themselves. Assessment can occur from written tests, lab reports, presentations, performances, observations, research papers, projects, etc. Report cards are used to provide feedback on students' level of mastery and to provide important anecdotal observations about a student's progress and social development. Students take a standardized, norm-referenced test (MAP) twice every year in grades 3 – 5. Once a year, students lead their own conferences and communicate their learning to their parents using a portfolio of their work during the Student-Led Conferences.

Curriculum Resources

Textbooks supplement, rather than direct, the curriculum at ACS Athens. Students learn beyond typical textbook requirements and strengthen higher level thinking skills. In addition to the texts listed, teachers frequently draw upon primary sources (including guest speakers or performers), library/media, online resources, computer software, trade books and literature to enhance the curriculum.

Resources are provided to all students by their classroom teachers and are accessible through Moodle, the school's learning management system (see below for details). All books loaned to students will be returned to the teacher at the conclusion of each course. Students who withdraw from school should return all resources before their records can be cleared. If a student fails to return books or damages them, there will be a fee to replace the resource.

JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN AND KINDERGARTEN AT ACS ATHENS



Conscious Cub

The ACS Athens Early Childhood mascot serves as a role model who will help our youngest students grasp the complex concepts of the ACS Athens school philosophy in a child-relatable manner. In his fun-loving approach he will communicate ACS's three R's (Respect, Responsible, and Ready) and define the profile traits of an ACS Athens graduate. Conscious Cub is a large friendly bear who will help our students develop conscious citizens traits from the early years.



Dogs in Learning (DIL)

All NEW Early Childhood Dogs in Learning Program

Never too little to make a difference!

The *Early Childhood Dogs in Learning Program* entails both indoor as well as outdoor sessions once per week for PJ-2nd grade. The program focuses on enhancing Conscious Citizenship, reading, and writing skills.

This program blends to meet both the social and emotional needs of our students as well as encourage literacy with dogs inspiring children to take risks in their reading and being the muse in their writing. Research indicates that working with a dog improves students' self-esteem as they see their dog respond to their requests, thus providing a tangible experience in leadership and empowering students to become accountable decision-makers in all areas of life. Enabling students to care for, work with, and train a dog, helps them realize that every action has a consequence regardless of who they are or how old they are. This approach aligns with our holistic education and our aim to further develop conscious citizens.

Having the opportunity to work with professionally trained dogs under the supervision of canine behaviorists and faculty here at ACS Athens helps focus, channel, and connect positive energy and memories for the school year and beyond. Early Childhood students are becoming architects of their own learning, becoming self-aware, conscious citizens already on their way to improving life and living on our planet.

The JK Program

For ages 3 & 4

The Junior Kindergarten Program is a two-year program available to children who turn three years old by December 31st of the current school year. The school day begins at 09:00 and ends at 13:00.

A Day Care program from 13:00 until 15:45 is offered to parents who wish to extend their child's schedule. A hot lunch is provided during Day Care.

English is the language of instruction, and each classroom has a teacher and an aide.

The primary goal of Junior Kindergarten is to recognize and meet the developmental needs of each child and to assist them in developing to their full potential. Teachers work with all levels of English proficiency from non-speakers to native speakers. Progress is made on a timetable that is unique to each child. At any given time, children in this class are at a variety of developmental levels. The classroom

teacher and the classroom aide collaborate to create developmentally appropriate activities via flexible grouping. Teachers serve as facilitators while they create a learning environment that enables children to make choices which enhance their learning process. Most importantly, we want to make the experience of school a positive one by ensuring a smooth transition from home to school, building social skills and good work habits.



The classroom is designed to encourage play and exploration. Classrooms are structured with centers for Reading, Math, Writing, Science, Art, Music, Cooking, Dramatic Play, and Building Blocks. Each center is stocked with stimulating hands-on materials. Center Work is a big part of the school day. Students circulate from center to center and perform a variety of tasks that increase in level of difficulty or challenge throughout the school year. Centers are for free exploration where the student directs the activity. Teachers direct, facilitate, and take notes while observing students in their centers. Children are free to experience, react, think, and thus grow and change in their own unique ways. Children visit the Library Media Center once a week to check out a book. Greek is also introduced as a foreign language once a week in their classroom through stories and interactive activities.

Kindergarten Program

For ages 5 to 6

Kindergarten is a full day (09:00 to 15:45) program serving children who turn five years old by December 31st of the current academic year. The program offers Language Arts (Reading and Writing), Math, Science, Social Studies, Greek or Arabic, Music, Art, Technology, Library, and PE. Class sizes are small, usually with a maximum of 20 students per class with an assistant.

Activities vary throughout the day and include listening to and reading unit related stories and information books, discussions, writing stories, cooking, performing science experiments, making graphs, creating artwork, exploring many different media, dramatization, singing, music, and movement.

In Kindergarten, students learn to read and write all letters of the alphabet and develop reading and writing skills. Students learn math in a conceptual and constructive way. Math concepts include numeration, sorting, making patterns and measurement, math vocabulary, graphing, addition and subtraction, word problems, shapes, and greater/less than.

An essential learning element in Early Childhood is play. Our guiding belief is that play is every child's right and intrinsic need. Children do not play to learn, but rather learn through play. Play serves an important function in the cognitive, creative, language, social, and physical development of young children (Saracho, 1986). Furthermore, while engaging in some form of play, children learn about problem-solving, taking turns, responsibility and caring for materials, negotiating roles, role-playing, sharing, and developing concentration.

Learning Stations

The classroom is set up with different centers.

Reading Center

Students have the opportunity to use all classroom materials mentioned in the Writing Center. Big books, poems, hanging word picture charts, graphics, chants, and songs (all in enlarged print) are easily accessible. Students understand that words are made up of sounds, sounds are represented by letters and each letter has a sound (phonetic awareness). Students learn to sound out and blend letters to make words (c-a-t = cat). Children are also introduced to high frequency words through activities that help them learn to recognize, read, and write these words.

Math Center

Some of the items found at this center include pattern blocks, rods, cubes, geoboards, counters, math games, puzzles, ten frames, dice, and number lines.

We build a strong foundation of basic mathematical concepts with manipulatives and real-life contexts in the classroom (calendar, play and math games). Students' natural ability to learn through play is harnessed and supported.

Students work with math manipulatives. The following topics are covered: sorting, patterns, number sense, basic addition and subtraction, measurement, introduction to place value, and an introduction to geometry according to their developmental level. We emphasize understanding the basic concepts with concrete objects first and only then move on to using the mathematical symbols. Much learning in math occurs hands-on and, as a result, worksheets are secondary. The teacher keeps anecdotal records of student progress in math.

Writing Center

Students are assigned activities where they develop their writing abilities. This center is equipped with writing folders, journals, magnetic boards, dry-erase boards, blank and lined paper, pencils, Play-Doh and magnetics, wooden and plastic letters. At the beginning of the school year, teachers work with students to scribe their stories. As students begin to understand phonetic awareness and phonics they begin writing on their own. Students draw pictures and "write" (from scribble to random letters and inventive spelling to whole sentences) according to their developmental level. Through our Language Art curriculum, students are introduced to informational and narrative writing. Students are called writers during workshops and are encouraged to write and draw as many details as they can. Students go back to their writing to add words and picture details. Writing pieces are shared and published when made into classroom books.

Students need to master letter sounds and letter names to 'crack' the reading/writing code. Teachers provide daily opportunities for them to 'have a go' at writing themselves. In this way, they actively think through how to encode their own message in writing and with continual practice get better at it. Copying takes initiative away from the child and is just passive handwriting practice.

Art Center

The Art Center is both an important and fun center for students. Students are encouraged to dabble in a variety of media. Some of the media found at this center include tempera paints, glue, crayons, markers, pastels, scissors, chalk, finger paint, plasticine, paper and fabric. This is one of our most popular centers and students are given the opportunity to express themselves through a variety of materials and processes throughout the day.

Students are encouraged to look carefully at real objects and notice patterns and shapes to help them draw for themselves. Different media and techniques are introduced over the year. Students are taught to care for materials themselves. At this age the process of making something is often more important than the final product. Experimentation is encouraged. Kindergarten students additionally attend art class twice a week with an art specialist.

Cooking Center

We also have a Cooking Center! At this center, students have the opportunity to explore concepts in Math and Science and to develop their oral language, fine motor skills, and to indulge the senses, naturally.

Students learn about nutrition, measurement and sequencing while following a step-by-step process and developing independence. Emergent reading skills are practiced by reading through recipes and students practice math skills by counting and recognizing numerals.

Dramatic Play Center

This center includes a housekeeping area, dolls and dollhouse, puppets, and dress-up clothes. This area is used for role playing, cooperative learning, and dramatic play. This center is periodically changed throughout the year transforming into a doctor's office, a house, a flower shop, etc.

Supplies Needed for JK and Kindergarten

- A backpack to hold Student Take-Home Folder (**A4 Size**), Passport, and Snack.
- A small, nutritious snack to be eaten daily mid-morning. We suggest fruit, cheese, raw vegetables, juice, or a sandwich. **Please avoid sending high-sugar foods.**
- Appropriate clothes for outdoor play during hot and cold weather.
- A change of clothes to be kept at school in case of emergency.
- P.E. attire (summer and winter set), sport shoes, water bottle – **Kindergarten students only.**
- **A yearly updated physical is needed for children to participate in P.E.**
- **Please do NOT bring any toys to school as they may get lost or broken.**

Appropriate Clothing for JK & Kindergarten

- **Please dress your child for school in play clothes**, as children will be working hard and getting dirty in the process!
- Please **label** your child's clothing (First and Last name), bags, lunch boxes, and water bottles!

Getting Ready for the Big Day - JK & Kindergarten Readiness

Starting school is an exciting time for both child and parent as it marks the beginning of a very important stage in a child's life. Before your child starts school, make sure he/she can:

- Take care of his or her own toilet needs and is fully toilet trained.
- Get dressed by him or herself.
- Express his or her needs to others.

In order to ease any frustration or anxiety before school starts, we also strongly urge parents to:

- **Label all your child's things** (especially jackets, coats, hats, gloves, and boots).
- Be cheerful and upbeat. The thought of your child going off to school may be tugging at your heartstrings. If you have fears and anxieties of your own, try not to show them.
- Make sure your child has a good night's rest before each school day.
- Consider walking with your child on the first day to the classroom. Then, as difficult as it may be, SAY GOODBYE and GO; don't procrastinate or you will make it harder on your child and yourself!

Students must always be on time as the school day begins at 09:00 sharp. Parents must promptly pick up their child(ren) at 13:00 (JK) or 15:45 (Day-care and Kindergarten).

SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR GRADES 1 - 5

Elementary School Scheduled Courses Grades 1-5					
Core Classes			Specials		
English Language Arts	Reading/Writing/Phonics/Grammar	5x/week	Foreign Language (FL)	3x/week	
			Art	2x/week	
Mathematics	Number Sense/Operations/Measurement/Algebra/Geometry/Statistics	5x/week	Music	2x /week	
Science	(NGSS)-Next Generation Science Standards	3x/week	Physical Education	2x/week	
Social Studies	Unit Themes	3x/week	Technology	1x/week	
			Drama (Grade 5)	1x/week	
			Science Lab	1x/week	
			Library Media Center	1x/week	

Foreign Language Classes 1-5

Greek Language Arts

The Greek Language Arts program is addressed to native or near native speakers of the Greek language, who have adequate and age-appropriate skills in reading, listening, speaking and writing skills. The

instruction is solely in Greek. Emphasis is given in grammar, age-appropriate writing activities and selected topics of Greek Mythology, History, Literature and Culture.

Greek Language and Culture

1. Greek as a Foreign Language for Beginners

The Greek Language and Culture Beginners program is addressed to non-native speakers of the Greek language who wish to develop their communicative skills. At the Beginners' level students build their basic vocabulary while developing reading and writing skills appropriate to their age. Instructions are mainly delivered in Greek but English is used to facilitate understanding.

2. Greek as a Second Language- Intermediate Level

The Greek Language and Culture Intermediate program is addressed to non-native/near native speakers of the Greek language. Students enrich their vocabulary and are encouraged to use it in various everyday situations while they are further developing their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Students are also introduced to age-appropriate topics of Greek Mythology, History and Culture. Instructions are mainly delivered in Greek, but English is sometimes used to facilitate understanding.

General Notes

Students are given a placement test to determine class designation.

Arabic

Designed for native speakers of Arabic, there is a different curriculum for each grade level. A course description is on file with the Foreign Language Coordinator written in Arabic for your review.

Specials Classes 1-5

Art, Music, Technology, Library Media Center, Science Lab, Drama (Grade 5), and Physical Education

Art: Students learn and practice the elements of art through exploration, play, and creative discovery with a variety of 2D and 3D artistic mediums. They are also introduced to a wide range of historical and contemporary artists covering many movements and styles. Students become responsible artists by practicing organizational skills, clean-up habits, and learning how to view and discuss art. Art classes meet twice a week.

Music: Students are guided through the prime ideas of music. They listen to, learn, compose, and perform music from different parts of the world and of different styles and are encouraged to use several tuned and untuned instruments. Beginning in 1st grade, students learn how to read music. Third and fourth-grade students need to have their own recorder. Music classes meet twice a week.

Technology: The elementary computer literacy program introduces students to the computer's main function as a tool for research, writing, and other primary applications. The applications are incorporated into units of study and are integrated into the elementary school curriculum, so students become responsible and independent digital citizens.

Library Media Center: Students visit the library for lessons that integrate with homeroom content and to check out books. Weekly lessons include opportunities to develop research skills, build vocabulary,

appreciate literature, and learn how to select appropriate reading material. Students are encouraged to select one book at their independent reading level and one book of free choice for their weekly reading.

Science Lab: Students from Kindergarten through Fifth Grade conduct hands-on experiments and begin to build an understanding of basic crosscutting concepts, practices, and disciplinary core ideas to discover how each of these connects and applies to the world in which they live. The curriculum follows the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) aligned with American Education Reaches Out (AERO) standards and emphasizes design thinking and highlights scientific inquiry skills. Students visit the Science Lab once a week or once every two weeks.

Drama: The Grade 5 Drama program is designed to help students analyze text and express themselves through movement, voice, and action, using imagination and creativity. Through engaging activities and performances, students build confidence, strengthen communication skills, and learn the value of collaboration—important life skills that extend far beyond the stage.

Physical Education: The physical education program at ACS Athens is a vital part of the holistic schooling experience that provides all students with an opportunity to develop a positive lifestyle. We strive to empower all students towards maintaining regular, lifelong physical activity for a healthy and productive life. Activities are designed to improve strength, endurance, social skills, and overall general health. Physical Education classes meet twice a week.

Learning Management System

Moodle

Moodle is our password-protected Learning Management System (LMS) that gives students access to learning activities and resources as well as information about class subjects. Students can also retrieve their daily homework and class announcements from their class Moodle shell. Furthermore, students are acquainted with the use of their personal ACS emails, the use of Google Suite, and other digital tools and resources. Parents can follow student learning through the Learning Journey tab on Moodle.

In 4th and 5th Grade, specifically, students further develop their Moodle skills that help them build their pre-blended learning confidence so that they are ready for a smooth transition to fully blended learning as they enter 6th Grade. Through Moodle, students can access sites and content at home while building their independence as learners.

HOMEWORK

"It was on my fifth birthday that my father put his hand on my shoulder and said, "Remember son, if you ever need a helping hand, you'll find one at the end of your arm." - Sam Levenson.

At ACS Athens, homework is given to strengthen skills taught at school, enrich, and extend concepts, and help develop solid work habits and routines. Each grade level will build upon the next to support these skills. You can expect your children to spend the following amount of time on homework throughout each school week. If your child is spending much more or less time than the projected range on homework activities, please make sure you communicate that to the teacher so that an adjustment can be made. This includes homework in Greek, Arabic and ESL classes.

Junior Kindergarten: No regular homework given, although there are a few special projects each year plus weekly show-and-tell. Reading to your children is highly encouraged.

Kindergarten: 5-10 minutes. Includes reading and short daily practice of skill building. There are a few special projects each year. Reading to and with your children is a daily expectation.

Reading to your children is highly encouraged.

First Grade: 10 -20 minutes. Includes nightly reading plus periodic unit-based homework a few times each month.

Second Grade: 20-30 minutes daily. Reading can be a part of this nightly timeframe.

Third Grade: 30-40 minutes daily. Reading can be a part of this nightly timeframe.

Fourth Grade: 40-50 minutes daily. Reading can be a part of this nightly timeframe.

Fifth Grade: 50-60 minutes daily. Reading can be a part of this nightly timeframe.

If absent from school for an extended time (two days or more), the student or his/her parent or guardian should notify the school via telephone or email. Assignments can be accessed on your child's grade level Moodle Page, the schools Learning Management System. If absent from school for any reason, the student is responsible for making up all the class assignments and homework he/she missed.

Students are expected to set goals for their learning and work to achieve them. Students are asked to maintain a serious attitude towards their learning, think positively, and stick to a plan.

Some of the homework assigned may require adult help or guidance. Parents should not do homework *for* their children. Parents should take a *coaching* role instead or follow the Socratic method of questioning: "*What is your assignment for tomorrow?*" Parents should encourage their children, ask deeper questions, and assist them when the need arises.

FACILITIES

Library Media

The Elementary School Library Media Specialist integrates homeroom curriculum through engaging lessons where students are exposed to a plethora of books and various media including tablets, iPads and laptops. The library houses approximately 15,000 print and audio-visual materials. All new and donated library materials are evaluated based on their literary merit, usefulness in balancing the collection, and value in supporting the curriculum. Students visit the library weekly for lessons and to check out books. Replacement costs will be charged for lost or damaged library materials.

Media Studio

The Elementary School Media Studio, located in the Library, is a creative, inclusive space where students explore storytelling and media production through hands-on projects like news shows, skits, and tutorials. By engaging in imaginative themes and real-world topics, students develop technical skills, confidence, and cultural awareness in a supportive environment.

Technology Lab

The Elementary Technology Lab consists of 21 desktop computers. Each computer has educational software installed as well as secure access to online educational resources. Classes attend one session per week with additional computer lab availability throughout the week. Laptops are also available, bringing technology into the classroom for students to work on projects throughout the year. The elementary computer literacy program is designed to introduce students to the computer's main function as a tool for research, writing and other primary applications. The applications are incorporated into units of study and are integrated into the elementary school curriculum. Each classroom has its own computer with an interactive board that teachers use to enhance their curriculum. In addition to this, students have the option to use iPads for selected projects.



Science Lab

The Elementary Science Lab is located on the 2nd floor of the elementary building. Students from Kindergarten through 5th grade conduct hands-on experiments and begin to build an understanding of basic crosscutting concepts, practices, and disciplinary core ideas to discover how each of these connect and apply to the world in which they live. The curriculum follows the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) aligned with AERO standards and emphasizes design thinking and highlights scientific inquiry skills.

Innovation Lab: Empowering Personalized, Innovative, Creative Program (EPIC)

The **EPIC Program** in the Elementary Innovation Lab empowers advanced learners in grades 3–5 to explore personalized, milestone-driven projects that integrate core subjects into real-world solutions. Through structured weekly sessions and collaboration with classroom teachers, students develop critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills, culminating in a showcase that celebrates their innovation and growth.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Optimal Learning

The Optimal Learning Program (OLP) offers students with learning differences an opportunity to fully participate, contribute and excel in the classroom. Students who receive Optimal Learning (OL) services are provided with the necessary accommodations to be empowered and reach their fullest academic potential. OLP realizes the importance of addressing each student's needs in the classroom and supports faculty with Differentiated Instruction strategies and content delivery.



The process begins with a student's referral by a classroom teacher or parent. The Child Study Team (CST), consisting of the school's Principal and Assistant Principal, the K-12 Counseling-Psychologist, the Counselor(s), the OLP Specialists and the OLP Coordinator, determines which programs offered by the school will most effectively

meet the student's needs and provide opportunities for him/her to reach his/her potential. The OLP Specialist works closely with teachers to differentiate the student's curriculum and adjust his/her learning experience to suit his/her individual needs.

A full battery of psycho-educational assessments, which are administered by in-house, or non- ACS Athens based psychologists, must be completed prior to enrollment in OLP. Based on their findings and subsequent report, standards are set according to the individual needs of the referred student. Effective strategies are developed by the OLP Specialist and are then shared with all teachers working with each student. Small group instruction and cooperative learning activities are incorporated within the student's curriculum to complement various learning abilities.

The Optimal Learning Program provides three levels of support:

1. OLP Classroom,
2. OLP Consultation
3. OLP Individual Support Plan (ISP)

For new students: enrollment in OLP Classroom, OLP Consultation or OLP ISP is determined by the OLP Coordinator and OLP Specialist and recommended through the Admissions letter.

For returning students: enrollment in OLP Classroom, OLP Consultation or OLP ISP is determined by CST and recommended to parents.

OLP Consultation

The Optimal Learning Program Consultation is a support service for students who need support as well as testing accommodations to help them succeed in the regular class; however, these students have achieved higher levels of independence and do not require OLP Classroom time. The consultation lasts between 15 and 20 minutes and takes place once a week.

1. The Optimal Learning Program specialist meets with the student on a brief pull-out basis during a scheduled and convenient time for both. The OLP Specialist is responsible for contacting the student at the beginning of the school year and arranging the regular weekly meeting.
2. OLP Consultation students receive an ILP, as described above, and are entitled to accommodations, which are specific to each student's needs and stem from the psycho-educational report. Accommodations are stated within the ILP as guidelines for teachers to follow so that individual student needs are met.
3. The OLP Specialist communicates regularly with members of the faculty to monitor each student's progress.
4. Formal communication with parents takes place at the end of the school year, when the ILP is reviewed, progress is discussed and new goals for the following school year are set. The parents of the newly enrolled students meet with the OLP team at the beginning of the school year. The OLP Specialists also participate in the Parent-Teacher Conferences that take place across all schools (Elementary, Middle and Academy). In addition, communication between the professionals of the Optimal Learning Program and parents is continuous and ongoing throughout the year via phone calls or emails as often as necessary.

Advanced Learners Program (ALP)

ACS Athens is dedicated to supporting the unique strengths and potential of its students through the **Advanced Learners Program (ALP)** in Mathematics. Designed for students in Grades 3–5 who exhibit exceptional mathematical aptitude, the ALP is a structured, three-phase program that offers increased academic challenge and enrichment. Each phase includes specific eligibility criteria, guiding students through progressively advanced content and skill development. Successful completion of each phase may qualify students to accelerate by one grade level in mathematics for the following academic year, ensuring they are both supported and challenged at an appropriate level.

Elementary Math Studio

The Elementary Math Studio offers students best practices approaches to learning mathematics in an environment that guides and encourages elementary students to develop and achieve their academic potential. During sessions, small groups are guided to reach conceptual understanding of numeracy skills and are exposed to mathematical literacy. Students also have access to various resources to help build confidence, understanding of number sense and foundational math skills. The Math Studio also challenges and engages students who demonstrate exceptional mathematical abilities.

Literacy Support & Enhancement Interventions

The Literacy Intervention program provides targeted support in reading and writing to help students meet grade-level expectations or further develop their literacy skills. Services may include both push-in and pull-out sessions, allowing for a flexible and responsive approach to each student's needs. In small groups, students work on grade-level readiness by engaging in scaffolded activities that build on their individual abilities. Using readers aligned with the curriculum, these sessions support foundational literacy skills in a developmentally appropriate and intentional way.

ESL Foundation Program

Students who are at beginning and intermediate levels of English are enrolled in the ESL program to further develop their English language proficiency. The ESL team works with students during their language learning time on reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in the English language. Additional support throughout the day is provided during core classes. The ESL teacher collaborates with each student's homeroom teacher to ensure alignment of learning, skill building, and consolidation of knowledge. There is an additional fee for this program due to the small size and individualized attention that students receive attending this service.

Counseling Services

The School Psychologist and the Elementary School Counselors work with students individually and/or in groups to assist them in the development of skills for optimizing their strengths. Approaching students

holistically will help them overcome emotional, social, and cognitive challenges. The school psychologist and the counselor work closely with parents and teachers to resolve student issues and are involved in the Child Study Team in order to suggest interventions for any needs students may have. Students may access counseling services independently and do not require parental consent to schedule or attend sessions. When parent consent for counseling is requested, it must be provided in writing.

Child Study Team (CST)

Consent Form- Child Study Team

By enrolling your child in our school, you agree to adhere to our Child Safety and Trust guidelines as recommended by the Child Study Team (CST), which are critical for your child's safety and success. Non-compliance with these guidelines may lead to the withdrawal of your child's admission or suspension from the school. We emphasize the importance of these rules in maintaining a secure and positive learning environment for all.

The Child Study Team monitors and analyzes a full range of student performance, including academic, social-emotional, behavioral and overall well-being. The team determines which programs offered by the school will most effectively meet the student's needs and provide opportunities for them to reach their potential. CST supports students by creating intervention plans and recommending the next steps for student support and growth.

The Child Study Team (CST) is made up of the Principal, Assistant Principal, Counseling team, K-12 Licensed Clinical Psychologist, the Optimal Learning Specialists, and the OLP Coordinator. CST carefully considers input from faculty, staff, and parents on a regular basis. This team meets weekly for continued collaboration about student needs.

For each case, the process begins with a student's referral by a classroom teacher or parent.

In order to design and determine the best possible learning experience for each student, informal observations may involve administrators, educators, and specialists throughout the day as needed, inside and outside the classroom.

Process of Referrals to the School's Licensed Clinical Psychologist

According to APA (American Psychological Association) *Clinical psychology is the psychological specialty that provides continuing and comprehensive mental and behavioral health care for individuals, couples, families, and groups; consultation with agencies and communities; training, education, and supervision; and research-based practice. It is a specialty in breadth — one that addresses a wide range of mental and behavioral health problems— and marked by comprehensiveness and integration of knowledge and skill from a broad array of disciplines within and outside of psychology proper. The scope of clinical psychology encompasses all ages, multiple diversities, and varied systems.*

The referral to the clinical psychologist can be made:

1. Through CST's request (consent needed)
2. Through Designated Safeguarding Lead / Officer (no consent needed)
3. Parent's request (consent needed)
4. Student's request (informing the parents after the first session of the student's request, consent

needed)

5. Psychological emergencies (no consent needed)

1. Child Study Team CST

CST can request the clinical psychologist to support a student if the case is to be managed within the school. The decision of whether the student needs further support comes from the clinician is based on assessment, observation, and/or clinical interview. The clinician needs to update CST to a level of confidentiality and parents of his findings. Recommendations may be given. If the case is only managed internally by the school's psychologist, nine (9) sessions is the limit of the sessions that can be delivered. If there is a need to continue following the student's request, referrals for external therapists can be provided. The school's clinician and external therapist must communicate in the student's best interests, and parents will be asked to sign the relevant consent form.

2. Designated Safeguarding Lead /Officer

Whenever ACS Athens staff members have reasonable cause to believe that a student is suffering or is at significant risk of suffering abuse or neglect, they must report the suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to appropriate school personnel. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Officer are responsible for the procedures that ACS Athens follows, which may include physical examination and psychological evaluation. In such a case, consent to examine or evaluate the student is not a requirement, and the newly updated local laws will be strictly followed. The liaisons are responsible for reporting the incident to the authorities.

3. Parent's request

Parents can also place a request (via e-mail kougiumzogloue@acs.gr) for their children to book an appointment with the clinical psychologist. At first, the parent(s) will have to book an appointment themselves with the clinician to address the request and to receive the developmental history before the clinical psychologist sees the student, with the condition that the student is willing to receive such services. Parents are guided when addressing their concerns and volition to make this appointment.

As soon as the first one or two sessions are conducted with the student, the clinician should call the parents for another meeting to explain his findings and recommendations. If the case is only managed internally by the school's psychologist, nine (9) sessions is the limit of the sessions that can be delivered. If there is a need to continue due to the student's request, referrals for external therapists can be provided. The school's clinician and external therapist must communicate in the student's best interests, and parents will be asked to sign the relevant consent form.

4. Student's request

A student at any level can request to see the school's clinical psychologist. During the first meeting and after having a first clinical impression of the student's request, the student is required to have parental consent. The distinction between parental consent and confidentiality is to be clear. After comprehensively assessing a student's need(s), a referral for external therapy might be made if the difficulty is more perplexing.

5. Psychological Emergency

A psychological emergency is an acute disturbance of a student's behavior, thought, or mood, which, if untreated, may lead to harm, either to the individual or to others in the environment. Under the umbrella term “psychological emergency,” you can have both majors, where there is a danger to life either of the student or to others in his/her environment, or minor, where there is no threat to life but causes significant difficulty (Sudarsanan et al., 2004).

Suicide, Parasuicide, Non-Suicidal Self Harm (NNHS): these conditions are major psychological emergencies, and consent won't be requested before the intervention. Instead, an assessment will be conducted once such a case is reported. If the student is not willing to follow the school's procedure, parents will be asked to come and pick the student up. During this time, students will not be left without supervision.

As parents, you might be requested to follow very specific recommendations relevant to the outcome of the assessment, such as visiting an external public or private professional. If the case is identified as critical according to the outcome of the assessment, the student may return to campus only with a medical note stating that there is no immediate danger towards himself/herself and others.

Indicatively, other major and minor psychological emergencies are as follows:

Major emergencies	Minor emergencies
Suicidal Ideation	Panic attack
NSSI	Acute grief reaction
Parasuicide actions	Disaster
Psychotic episode	Tantrum

Psychological assessments conducted by the school's clinical psychologist are confidential and for internal support purposes only. They are not formal diagnoses. Referrals to external professionals may be recommended when needed.

Lastly, the school's clinical psychologist can visit classes and observe with or without CST's request. He can also participate in parent meetings to consult if and when needed.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Attendance

Regular attendance at school is a key element of academic success. Parents are asked to plan outside activities (dental appointments, family trips, etc.) around the school schedule and calendar. Students are expected to arrive at school by 08:50 as classes start at 9:00 and run until 13:00 or 15:45 daily.

Tardiness

We expect students to be in their classrooms ready to learn at 09:00. **Chronic tardiness** interferes with classroom routines and causes children to miss important learning activities. Students coming to school at 09:15 or after will be marked as an unexcused tardy. For students who arrive after 11:00 will be marked as a half day absence.

Daily Absences

For any absence, please email the Assistant Principal and the homeroom teacher. Include the nurse for any illness, and transportation if applicable.

- If a student is absent for the day or part of the day, email the Assistant Principal (mamasc@acs.gr) and the homeroom teacher **stating the reason for the absence**.
- If the student is sick, Ms. Gargali, School Nurse, gargalia@acs.gr, should also be included in the email. If a student is sick during the school day, he/she is not allowed to participate in any after school activities. For absences of **three or more days**, a doctor's note is required. Absences due to health problems or family loss are considered excused absences.

Extended Absences

An extended absence severely disrupts a student's learning program. However, we acknowledge that extended absences are sometimes unavoidable. Please inform the teacher and the principal well in advance of any anticipated extended absences (five days or more) by email. If a family decides to take additional vacation time, the Daily Learning Journey on Moodle reflects the daily lessons. Please be aware that extended absences could prevent us from making a proper assessment or *any* assessment on your child's report card. Many of the learning engagements require the student's presence for completion and, thus, may have to be modified due to missed class time. If a child has accumulated many absences, the Child Study Team reserves the right not to promote him/her to the next grade level.

Early Dismissal from School

Parents who need to pick up their children early from school must inform the homeroom teacher, the Assistant Principal at mamasc@acs.gr and the ES Main Office at nikolarelisi@acs.gr by 10:00. Parents must check-in at the guard's booth at which point the students will be brought to the gate to meet their parent(s). If a child is picked up by a parent or other primary caregiver, out of the routine schedule (as in case of separation, divorce, or travel), the homeroom teacher and the Assistant Principal must be notified via email.

Dress Code

Cleanliness, appropriate grooming, and proper dress are important in promoting a positive atmosphere for school and social conduct. The standards of dress for school should reflect proper hygiene. Students are always expected to dress in an appropriate manner. In particular, the following items are not allowed at school: any clothing with obscene or suggestive words or patterns; torn clothing. For safety reasons students should wear comfortable shoes to school.

Parents should be sure all clothing and items worn or brought to school are labeled with the child's name. Please check our Lost & Found located in the cafeteria periodically. Unclaimed clothing is given to charity throughout the school year.

Personal Devices and Items

Greek Law: Use of mobile phones on campus

Students are not allowed to have their mobile phones on campus. Electronic devices for teaching purposes can be used in the classroom under teacher supervision.



Personal music players, cameras, cell phones and smartphones are not permitted for elementary students on campus or buses. Failure to respect this policy will result in the confiscation of the item. Students are not permitted to use any type of electronic signalling devices during class time, passing periods or breaks within the classroom. All communication between students and parents during the school day must go through the Main Office. **Videotaping within the ACS Athens Campus is not only inappropriate but ILLEGAL.** Students who act in violation of this policy shall be subject to ACS's progressive discipline outlined below. If a school faculty or staff member finds it necessary to confiscate a device, parents will be notified, and the device will be returned in accordance with school rules after the Citizenship Coordinator has consulted with the student's parent/guardian. The school is **not** responsible for lost or stolen devices that are brought to school.

The consequences below represent a guideline. The school administration has the right to apply logical consequences at its discretion.

1st Infraction—Loss of mobile phone for the day. The parent may pick up their phone at the end of the school day.

2nd Infraction—Loss of mobile phone for the day. **A parent meeting** will be held, and the phone will be returned to the student's parent or guardian.

3rd Infraction—Loss of mobile phone for the day. The phone will be returned to the student's parents. The student will **lose privileges**, such as a field trip, recess, and will also reflect during lunch.

4th Infraction—Loss of mobile phone for the day. The phone will be returned to the student's parents. The student will lose privileges and will **stay home for one day to reflect**.

If a student uses any electronic device to **capture video and/or sound**, the following consequences will apply:

1st Infraction—Reflection day at home.

2nd Infraction—Possible change of (withdrawal from) school.

Toys, playing cards, fidget spinners etc. are not allowed on campus either, unless recommended by a learning specialist.

For safety reasons and to ensure the protection of school property, rollerblades, heelys, skateboards, etc. are not allowed on campus.

Selling of items during school hours is prohibited through any school accounts or hand to hand.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents Agree to:

1. **Bring** your child(ren) on time in the morning by 08:50. School begins at 09:00.
2. **Provide** your child with a meal plan either with a Gefsinus school lunch card or packed lunch from home.
3. **Send** your child to school with a healthy snack.
4. **Call or email** the Assistant Principal at mamasc@acs.gr and the respective homeroom teacher when your child is absent. If your child is sick, Ms. Gargali, School Nurse, gargalia@acs.gr, should also be included in the email. For absences of more than three days, a doctor's note is also required. Parents are responsible to communicate with the classroom teacher and access missed homework, which can be located in Moodle's Platform (under Learning Journey).
5. **Notify** the Elementary School Office and school nurse of any child recovering from an illness and should not return to school until he/she is well enough to participate in the full, regular school day, including recess, lunch, and PE classes. Students must be fever free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
6. **Respect** the guidelines of the assigned transportation protocols. Mr. Marios Nikolis, Head of Transportation, needs to be included in communication regarding changes in your child/ren's arrival or dismissal plans at least 1 to 2 hours in advance.
7. **Contact** the homeroom teacher first for questions or concerns. If concerns are not resolved after consulting with the teacher, the chain of command is as follows: Principal, Dean of Academics, and finally, President of ACS Athens.
8. **Schedule** an appointment with the teacher following school processes and procedures.
9. **Promptly** pick up your child/ren at dismissal 3:45 pm.
10. **Adhere** to the School Calendar when planning family/personal events such as vacations, etc.

Greek law: Disrespectful behavior towards professionals

Article 33 law 5090/23-2-2024 (ΦΕΚ 30, τ.Α')

Those entering the school premises and disrupting school life by arguing loudly, using inappropriate language towards teachers and staff, cursing, or creating noise will suffer the consequences of imprisonment of up to one year and a monetary penalty. Those who also exhibit physical aggression will suffer the consequences of imprisonment for a minimum of two years and financial repercussions.

Emergency Drills

Evacuation drills are conducted regularly and have undergone a review by the Regional Security Office of the U.S. Embassy. Students are taught to leave the buildings quickly and safely for any type of campus emergency. Students are expected to:

- Be familiar with exit routes
- Respond quickly, cooperate, and give attention to their teacher or supervisor
- Walk quickly and silently
- Stay in formation to the left and right sides of the corridor and staircase as they proceed to the exit
- Remain clear of the building as directed by teacher or supervisor
- Remain quiet once outdoors and cooperate fully with attendance taking procedures

It is imperative that we have your current address and phone number/s (including cell phones) plus the number of someone else to reach, on file, in case of an emergency. If any of your numbers (home, work,

emergency) change, please alert us *immediately* by email to the administrative assistant and your child/ren's teachers.

Emergency Temporary School Closure

The obligations of the School under this Agreement may be suspended immediately without notice during the periods that the School must close of Force Majeure events including, but not limited to, fire, acts of God, war, governmental action, terrorism, epidemic, pandemic, outbreaks of infectious disease, any other public health crisis, or any other event beyond the School's control. If such an event occurs, the School's duties and obligations under this Agreement may be suspended or postponed until such time as the School, in its sole discretion, may safely re-open. A Force Majeure event will not entitle the parent(s), guardian(s), or other financially responsible party/parties to a tuition refund. The aforementioned explicitly waive their claims of unjustifiable enrichment.

Whenever possible, official announcements of school closure will be made in advance through email, SMS text, and/or on the school's website. The Elementary School Office maintains an emergency phone tree, which will allow administration and faculty members to contact all Elementary School families in the case of an emergency closure.

In addition, parents can call the school at 210 6393 200 between 8:00 and 16:00, or the ACS Athens Security Office at 210 6393 555 before or after these hours for information. To this end, each parent should ensure that an up-to-date phone number and email address are accurate in their PowerSchool parent portal.

Administrative Decisions Affecting Students, Updated: September 24, 2021

ACS Athens operates based on its own set of procedures and policies, as defined by the school Board of Trustees, the school President, and the USA Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools guidelines. The USA Middle States Associations also approves the school policies and procedures by accrediting ACS Athens.

Educational decisions affecting students are made by the school principal after consultation with the appropriate faculty and counseling personnel. For financial issues the applicable administrator will be involved. All such decisions must be approved by the ACS Athens President.

The ACS Athens Conscious Citizenship Model

Our citizenship model aims to further develop through reflection many attributes of our ACS Learner profile. We expect our students to be **inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open - minded, caring individuals, risk- takers, balanced, reflective and decision makers**. Students are expected to show responsibility, leadership, service and to lead by example.

In a school community defined by a culture of respect:

- We shall be curious about and understand peoples' cultural differences, gender differences, age differences, learning differences, as well as their unique abilities and talents.
- We shall respect learning and the learning process.
- We shall practice good manners.
- We shall treat each other politely.
- We shall cultivate and exhibit self-discipline and self-respect.
- We shall respect personal and school property.
- We shall build relationships based upon open communication and mutual respect.

- We shall work to overcome stereotypical thinking, biases and prejudices and actively promote cross-cultural awareness and understanding.
- We shall ensure that everyone feels physically and emotionally safe.
- We shall respect, follow, and enforce the rules of the community.
- We shall respect each person's uniqueness and individuality.
- We shall practice good citizenship in and out of the classroom.
- We shall promote the values of good sportsmanship.
- We shall commit ourselves to teaching the principles of respectful behavior and good citizenship in a focused and on-going manner.

The ACS Athens 3 R's

At ACS Athens Elementary School, we are committed to an ethic rooted in deep caring. It is our philosophy that any disciplinary actions or interventions should be grounded in the idea that the purpose of that intervention should be to **hold students accountable for their behavior** and ultimately **change the behavior** rather than administer "punishment".

In this way, we work with students in a **Positive Behavior Support** model so that they may become managers of their own attitudes and actions.

This is taught and reinforced through the ACS Athens 3Rs:

1. Be **Respectful**
2. Be **Responsible**, and
3. Be **Ready**

We discuss with students how they can become better students and cooperative members of our community through respect (of ourselves, each other, and the world around us), responsibility, and readiness. These characteristics are discussed within the classroom as well as in school-wide assemblies and reinforced daily within the context of a school-wide program.

Research shows that **positive relationships help children learn** (American Psychological Association and Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2014). When our homes, schools, and communities are free from fear, anger, and other distractions, students are more likely to succeed and develop as whole human beings.

Classroom teachers and school community members use a variety of other strategies to promote the positive behaviors that set a scaffold for children to: care deeply, support each other and make good choices. This includes positive reinforcement, specific praise, class meetings, assemblies, reflective listening by adults on campus to let children know they are heard and understood, and timely communication and partnership with parents.

The ACS Athens 3 R's and Digital Citizenship

As Technology has started to play an increasing role in students' life, in and out of school, Digital Citizenship skills are necessary for them to succeed as learners, leaders and citizens in the digital world. At ACS Athens Elementary School we guide our students to develop those skills implementing the Digital Citizenship curriculum by CommonSense which is framed around the following six core themes: Media

Balance, Privacy and Security, Digital Footprint and Identity, Cyberbullying, and Digital Relationships and Communication.

For more information, please visit the CommonSense website (linked [here](#)).

We believe that access to technology equipment and resources (computers/laptops/ internet) is a privilege and not a right, so students are required to use the 3 Rs in their digital life too.

Be **Respectful**

- Do my best to keep technology and equipment safe and secure
- Do not make any changes to technology equipment or settings without permission
- Protect and clean your computer/laptop

Be **Responsible**

- Use technology ethically and responsibly by following teachers' guidelines and instructions
- Respect digital privacy of others
- Use technology for educational purposes avoiding online resources that are inappropriate, offensive and illegal.
- Take responsibility for your assigned device's activity

Be **Ready**

- Keep my usernames and passwords private
- Use the laptop/computer that has been assigned to me and be responsible for this equipment
- Log out of computers/laptops before leaving a computer or device
- Keep my documents and data secure

Ways Parents Can Support with The ACS Athens 3 R's

Education is a partnership. We work hard to create a harmonious, challenging, and positive learning environment. We are unable to accomplish this without parental support. Working together as members of a caring and concerned team, we can successfully guide your children / our students on the path to academic achievement and responsible citizenship in preparation for successful and meaningful lives.

Being Respectful. We can help our children be respectful of others face-to-face and online by modeling basic social interactions, saying "please", "thank you", and "excuse me" to each other, our children, and people we come in contact with physically and virtually. Also, modeling respect for others even when we disagree with them is a valuable way for children to successfully adopt respectful behaviors.

Being Responsible. Teaching responsibility makes your children more self-reliant and independent. Some ways you can do this is by assigning children some age-appropriate accountability including self-care such as dressing themselves or washing their hands, picking up after themselves, or having another age-appropriate "job" at home. Responsible online behavior should also be encouraged through discussions about online communication, privacy and security, digital footprints, media balance. Certainly, modeling any skill, in this case that of responsibility, is the best way to teach it. By the upper elementary level, students should be encouraged to discuss their concerns with their teacher themselves rather than rely on parent intervention. We do this in order to build important self-advocacy skills from a young age.

Being Ready. This skill goes along with becoming more self-reliant. To promote readiness, please create opportunities for your child to practice this, such as packing their own backpack, signing out of their devices. You can also begin to use timers at home that give them clues for how much longer they have, for example, until it is time to get their shoes on, turn off their device, get in the car to go to school, or when homework time needs to begin. One very important way to help your child be ready is to get and keep them organized so they know where everything is and can easily “get ready” when it is time.

Using the Language of the 3 R's. Please reinforce these concepts by using the language we are using in school. Tell your child when they are doing a good job being Respectful, Responsible, or Ready. Please be specific in your praise for that praise to be most effective.

Giving Life to Learning – Through the Restorative Process

At ACS Athens Elementary School, we believe in **restorative justice**, meaning that anyone who engages in misconduct should be given the opportunity to "**Make It Right**" again.

For more information about this philosophy, please see the book "Kids are Worth it!" (Harper Collins, 2010).

The four-step “Make It Right” process is followed:

1. **Own it.** Accepting responsibility for the action.
2. **Fix it.** Figuring out a plan for how to make the situation "right".
3. **Learn from it.** Within every action and choice, we have an opportunity to learn how to better handle a similar situation differently in the future.
4. **Move on.** We recognize that we are not the total sum of our mistakes, and once we own it, fix it, and learn from it, we also have the opportunity to move on from it.

Student Conduct

Parents and students are required to carefully review the following Code of Conduct, so that there is no confusion regarding the Elementary School's behavioral guidelines and expectations, as well as implications for students who disrespect school policies.

The Code of Conduct is in effect within the campus, on all school related student transportation i.e., on the school bus, and during every ACS Athens official activity off campus.

All new Elementary School parents are required to sign and submit the agreement form, which is attached at the end of this document, in order to declare that they have carefully reviewed the Code of Conduct, discussed it with their child, and that they agree to honor all Elementary School's regulations as described in this document.

These agreement forms are our contracts with you, for the entire ACS schooling of your child. The Acts of Misconduct and Levels of Consequences listed below apply to students who continue to demonstrate behavioral misconduct.

Depending on the seriousness of the misconduct, consequences may begin at a different level based on the administrative team's decision.

For any dangerous acts of misconduct such as use of weapons, use of fire, destruction of property, life threatening actions etc., we reserve the right to take immediate and preventive actions based on administrative decisions for the safety of our students.

[Student Conduct & Consequences Ladder](#)

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Learning Enhancement Program

The After School Learning Enhancement Program is a program that extends beyond the school day and provides a supportive environment to our students at ACS Athens. The program is designed to help students develop a strong sense of their own learning processes and to provide them with a strong academic, social, and emotional foundation for their schoolwork. All the programs have been designed to improve and maximize each student's learning potential. All the courses are led by instructors with a background in special education who have the knowledge and expertise to enhance learning. Students will learn to apply basic skills and learning strategies to their work in their academic classes, so that they may be successful. After-school classes target discrete student needs and give emphasis to specific learning outcomes in mathematics, reading, writing, and completion of homework. A description of the full range of offerings will be emailed to all in the beginning of the school year and will also be available on our website.

Elementary Sports After School Program (ESAS) & Elementary School Arts Academy

ACS Athens believes that participation in a co-curricular activity is important to a student's development. The ESAS and Arts Academy programs are primarily run by teachers or other professionals. Parents provide their own transportation for Elementary Students. Classes typically run once a week from 16:00 to 17:00 and we strongly encourage all ACS Athens students to get involved. Many of the programs culminate with an exciting exhibition of some kind. If there is an activity you would like to suggest or lead, please let us know!

Supervision for students attending after school programs and academy lessons will meet in designated locations at 15:45 - 16:55. Students will be escorted to after-school sessions so they can begin promptly at 16:00. This will ensure all students are monitored and safety precautions are adhered to during transitions.

All ESAS information will be made available on our website at the beginning of each semester. Information on registration, fees, and the exact schedule of the activities will be made available online. For more information call the Athletic Office at 210 607 0294. **A yearly updated physical is needed for children to participate in P.E. and ESAS.**

An example of what a weekly ESAS schedule might look like:

Arts Activities (16:00 - 17:00)					
GRADES	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
KG-2	Ballet		Ballet	Coding & Robotics	

1-5		Musical Theater	Chess		
3-5			Guitar	Jazz & Hip Hop	
Recreational Activities (16:00 - 17:00)					
GRADES	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
JK-KG		Grow Up with Sports			
1-2	Active Kids	Basketball			Soccer
3-5	Basketball	Soccer	Archery	Kids Athletics	Volleyball
		Karate			
Swimming (16:00 - 16:45)					
GRADES	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
JK-KG	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group A	Group B
1-5	Grades 3-5	Grades 1-2	Grades 3-5	Grades 1-2	Grades 3-5

Staying After School

All students must leave campus at 15:45 unless they are staying for an activity that starts immediately after school. Buses depart campus at 16:00.

Students are **not allowed to wander around school grounds or play outside without parental supervision**. Parents must pick up their child(ren) on time and must always be near their children to supervise them appropriately. **School playgrounds are off limits at dismissal.**

It is important to note that only parents or guardians listed in **PowerSchool** can take their own child/children off school grounds. Permission in writing must be provided to the ES Administrative Assistant, Assistant, homeroom teacher, and transportation in advance for any changes in pickup.

Additionally, no Elementary School students are allowed to leave school grounds by themselves. Lastly, Elementary School students are **NOT** allowed to ride the “late” bus.

STUDENT LIFE

Student Council

The Student Council plays a significant role in the life of the Elementary School. Student Council representatives are selected by their classmates in grades 3-5. Meetings are held once a week. Student Council representatives work with faculty and are encouraged to assume the position of spokespeople for their classmates. Students are encouraged to make suggestions to their representatives concerning the school.

Honor Code

The Elementary School Honor Code consists of students who are selected from each homeroom in grades 3 – 5. These students are living examples of positive behavior and stewardship in our school community. The Honor Code’s motto is “Doing the right thing, even when no one is watching.” Meetings

are held once a week and members work closely with their advisers to organize and promote activities which benefit the school and the wider community.

Health Office



The health and safety of your child at school are of utmost concern. Registered full-time nurses administer emergency first aid treatments and care for sudden illnesses on campus. In addition, several elementary staff members including the PE Teacher are trained and certified in CPR/First Aid.

The nurse conducts regular vision, hearing, and lice checks and maintains a health record for every student. If the child needs to be taken home, the nurse will call you directly. If the student is severely injured and we cannot reach anyone at home, the student will be taken directly to the nearest hospital for proper treatment. The School Nurse can be reached at 210 6070 217.

All students are required to have a physical examination by their family physician within thirty (30) days of their enrollment which must be updated yearly. Any students who do not have their physical examination completed will not be allowed to participate in physical education classes, After School Activities, or attend school field trips.

Please note the following: Prescription medication can only be administered by the Health Office to students of any age if the medication is provided by the parent and accompanied by a note which clearly states the dosage and time the medicine should be given as well as the reason it was ordered. Non-prescription medication may be administered to JK-5th grade students in the nurse's office *only* when parental consent has been obtained by written communication/email on each occasion.

A child recovering from an illness should not return to school until she/he is well enough to participate in the full, regular school day, including recess, lunch, and PE classes. **Students must be fever-free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.**

Students cannot attend any After School Activities or P.E. including swimming without an updated physical examination form.

Please also refer to the [Health Office Handbook](#).

LUNCH PROGRAM

Students are offered a complete, balanced hot meal. A detailed menu will be posted monthly on the school website. Each lunch menu will have a set price. For convenience and smooth operation of the lunch line, parents should pre-pay for their children's lunches monthly. Parents who do not wish to purchase lunch from the cafeteria should send a balanced, healthy meal with their child every day. In the extreme case a child comes to school without lunch or money parents will be notified.

Proper behavior in the cafeteria/outdoor eating area means exhibiting good dining manners. Students must use hand sanitizer or wash their hands prior to eating. Once they have received their food, they are to remain seated until they are done eating. All students are expected to dispose of their own trash before leaving the eating area.

Please be aware that elementary students are **not allowed**:

- to purchase items from the Academy/Middle School Cafeteria or off-campus shop while at school. If your child is staying for after-school activities, please have them bring a healthy snack or drink from home.
- to share food with one another.

TRANSPORTATION



Bus services are contracted by ACS Athens parents and cover virtually the entire Athens area. Students are transported by professional drivers and are supervised on the bus by a monitor. Bus monitors regularly communicate and collaborate with the building principals regarding discipline issues.

Mr. Marios Nikolis, Head of Transportation, can be reached by phone 210 6070 239

or email transportationoffice@acs.gr

Bus Procedures

Students must be at the assigned bus stop at the scheduled boarding time.

- Students must disembark only at the scheduled stop.
- Any requests for your child to take a different bus than the one normally assigned or get off at a stop other than the one normally assigned, a written parent request must be submitted to the transportation office for approval 24 hours in advance and presented to the monitor before boarding. Permission to ride on a different bus might not be granted due to safety restrictions.
- Change of address resulting in a change of route or bus stop should be mailed to the ES Office and Transportation Office two days prior to the change.
- Students who do not pay for the use of the school bus are not allowed to ride the bus as occasional visitors.
- Failure or considerable delay of the bus in arriving at the scheduled pick-up point entitles students to secure alternate transportations to the school. The Transportation Officer will make reimbursement of any costs incurred.
- Concerns regarding the bus monitor or driver must be registered with the Transportation Officer.
- Bus monitors reserve the right to assign students to a specific seat and all passengers must comply with these directions.
- Students are expected to follow the Bus Code of Conduct to ensure a safe ride for everyone.

Consequences are clearly spelled out for students. **Please review the transportation code of conduct, talk with your child about these rules, and let transportation know if there is a concern or problem.** Making sure your students are feeling safe and happy during their commute is important to us. Should students not follow the Bus Code of Conduct, they will receive a bus referral and meet with the Assistant Principal. If the behavior is repeated a second time, they will be asked not to ride the bus for a day. If the behavior is repeated for a third time, they will not be allowed to ride the bus for up to 3 days. If the behavior is repeated for a fourth time, they will not be allowed to ride the bus for up to 1 week. Finally, if the behavior is repeated for a fifth time, this may lead to not being allowed to ride the bus for the remainder of the school year. Students' safety is a serious issue.

There are no after-school activity buses (ESAS, Elementary School Arts Academy, Learning Enhancement Program, and Institute for Innovation and Creativity) **for elementary students.** Parents must provide transportation after school on these days as students need to be picked up at the end of the activity.

Bus Code of Conduct

- School rules apply on the bus.
- Students must follow the directions of the bus monitors, adults, and drivers always.
- No eating or drinking is allowed.
- Students must always wear their seatbelts.
- Respectful language must always be used.
- No weapons/toy weapons or incendiary devices are allowed at any time.
- Personal devices including music players, cameras, and cell phones are not permitted for elementary students on campus or buses. (See Student Expectations above for details)



Approval For Online Learning

Approval Process for Online Learning and Expectations of Students

ACS Athens aims to have all students on campus while maintaining the safest of circumstances for everyone. ACS Athens is not an online school and the goal is to conduct learning on campus as much as possible for all students. Online learning may be offered for situations related to short-term emergency circumstances. For the request to be approved, the request must be accompanied by a specific short-term timeline for return to face-to-face instruction.

Approval for online learning will be considered only in the following circumstances:

- High-risk medical factors related to the circumstance and validated by a certified physician;
- Students who have been identified as a close contact;
- For the request to be approved, the request must be accompanied by a specific short-term timeline for return to face-to-face instruction.

Requests for online learning must be submitted at least 24 hours in advance.

Students who are not feeling well (such as light flu and/or cold symptoms) must stay home, rest, and return to school after their symptoms have improved. If the symptoms persist, the family may request short-term online learning, providing medical documentation.

Requests in the Elementary School must be submitted via email to the Principal, Assistant Principal, Director of Early Childhood, and school nurse.

Parents and Guardians of students approved for online learning must realize the courses are offered in real-time and students are obligated to join the classes, with their cameras and microphones fully functioning, through Moodle and Zoom during the scheduled classroom time. Online students will follow the synchronous schedule. Only homeroom and Foreign Language/ESL will be available for synchronous lessons while Specials (including music, art, P.E., and technology) will remain asynchronous.

Attendance will be taken based on student presence in the virtual sessions and excessive absences and/or disruptions will result in a discontinuation of the approval for virtual learning.

Expectations for Students Approved for Online Learning

- It should be noted that instruction is designed for the face-to-face classroom. Students who attend classes virtually must be very focused and able to learn with limited interaction and contact with their peers and teachers.
- Students must have their cameras on. If there is a technical issue preventing the use of cameras the parent must contact the school's IT department to resolve the issue. Otherwise, the session will be ended.
- Students must demonstrate digital citizenship skills during online and hybrid lesson(s). Parents will be notified if digital citizenship behaviors are not respected during online and/or hybrid lessons.
- Online learning taught simultaneously in the face-to-face setting presents unique challenges that may render the lessons less effective than what occurs in the face-to-face classroom, especially for younger students. Thus, we recommend that students make every effort to attend their classes face to face.

SPECIAL TRADITIONS

In addition to our curriculum activities, the Elementary School enjoys its own special traditions. Please understand that some of these events are subject to change.

First Trimester (September - December)

- New Family Orientation
- Back To School Orientation
- Early Childhood Meet-and-Greet
- Back to School BBQ - PTO partnership
- School Photos
- M.A.P. Testing Grades 3 - 5
- OXI Day Celebration
- Halloween Carnival / Pumpkin Patch / Halloween Parade
- First Trimester Parent-Teacher Conferences / Report Cards

We're Going Back To School



Second Trimester (December - March)

- Winter Concert
- 100th Day Celebration (JK – 2)
- Second Trimester Parent, Teacher / Student Conferences
- Greek Independence Day Celebration
- Second Trimester Parent-Teacher Conferences / Report Cards
- Literacy Festival

Third Trimester (March - June)

- Grades 1 – 5 Field Day
- JK/KG Field Day
- Student Art Show
- M.A.P. Testing Grades 3 - 5

- Spring Fair
- Kindergarten Graduation
- Student-Led Conferences / Third Trimester Report Cards
- Fifth Grade Step-Up Ceremony
- End of year grade level celebrations

ROLE OF PARENTS

Due to the rigor of our programs, parents need to take an active role in guiding schoolwork and organizational skills. Besides creating a quiet study area, parents can help to foster a positive academic attitude by engaging their children in dinner discussions about what transpired during the day's classes. Having resource materials handy and limiting T.V. viewing and non-academic computer use can also help. It is vital to not allow screen time at least an hour before bedtime. Encourage your children to read for pleasure. Take time to share responses to books and articles you have read in common. The Home/School Connection is a vital one as it sends a clear message to students that we are all working together for their success. In short, we need to be on the same team. If you have concerns or questions, go to the teacher, and talk with him or her **first**. Should there be any further concerns after consulting with the teacher, the chain of communication in elementary school is as follows: Division Chair and/or Coordinator, Principal, Dean of Academics, and, finally, President of ACS Athens.

PTO

ACS Athens has an active and enthusiastic Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO). A combined PTO serving all three schools meets bi-monthly after the Principals' Coffee and works collaboratively to support the respective schools. There are representatives who serve each school. The PTO organizes social activities for the families at ACS Athens, parent and staff functions, fund-raising events, and informational programs. All parents are invited to participate in the PTO in some capacity and attend monthly meetings. Big PTO Events include: Welcome Back Barbeque, Halloween Carnival, Christmas Bazaar, Spring Fair and Campus Beautification. More information on the ACS Athens PTO can be found on the ACS Athens website. Please do participate!

Personal Property

The school cannot assume responsibility for the loss of personal property, and the school does not carry insurance to cover the loss of student property. To avoid losing personal items, students should not bring expensive jewellery, large sums of money, iPods or other valuable or personal objects to school. All personal items and clothing should be clearly labelled.

Lost & Found

Label, label, label all clothing and personal items!!! And when this fails, check the Lost & Found located in the ES Cafeteria for items that are missing. We will set up a Lost & Found table during Winter Break, the Parent/Teacher Conferences and at the end of the school year. Unclaimed items are given to a charity. Expensive toys, electronics, and valuable items should not be brought to school.

VEHICLES OF COMMUNICATION

Report Cards

Report cards are posted in **PowerSchool** for Family Access three times a year at the end of each trimester. Parents can view their child's report card online in **PowerSchool**. ACS Athens will report on each student's achievement and progress at the conclusion of each 60-day trimester. A student must be enrolled at least five weeks to receive a complete report card.

In the event a child leaves ACS Athens prior to the last day of school, the final report card may be emailed to the family (or new school) at the end of the academic year.

Conferences

Throughout the year our Elementary School hosts two Parent-Teacher Conferences. Conferences are short meetings that take place mostly between the parent and teacher (children may be invited to participate). This is a great opportunity to discuss a child's progress and address academic, social, or behavioral growth and development.

We also encourage you to arrange for a conference at any time throughout the year to gather more information about your child's learning experience and find out ways you may be able to help at home. Please make arrangements with the teachers in advance via the email or the student passport.

Student-Led Conferences

ACS Athens culminates the year with student-led conferences during the spring. Students and teachers jointly select finished work to be shared, and the students independently take the lead to tour their parents through a portfolio of their yearly learning and through a variety of learning activities in Homeroom and Specials classes. Students and parents reflect upon the successes achieved and challenges ahead. Students take ownership of their academic progress while parents open positive dialogue with their child about the student's growth over the course of the year.

Passports

Each student in Grades JK – 5 is issued a color-coded notebook, called a Passport, at the beginning of the school year. Students are expected to write down assignments and organize their homework in these notebooks DAILY. Teachers will often write special messages for parents in the Passports and parents are encouraged to use the Passport to communicate with the teacher. We also use Passports to help students keep organized and ask that you do the same. Students must bring their Passports to and from school DAILY. Parents are expected to sign the passport should a message be written from the teacher to indicate that they have seen it. Replacement Passports will be issued to students with a small fee available in the Main Office.

PTO Parent and Principal Meetings

Parents are welcome to join the monthly Elementary School PTO Parent and Principal meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to communicate upcoming events, to address parent questions, introduce educational innovations, school-wide developments, approaches to teaching and more. PTO Parent and Principal meetings are another form of communication at ACS Athens and have proven to help introduce new community members. Dates will be announced in advance for families to plan, and, if held virtually, recordings are shared with parents afterwards.

Website

The ACS Athens website www.acs.gr can be accessed by parents and students. Under the elementary section you will be able to find the following: Principal's Corner, Faculty and Staff, School Supply Lists, Student-Parent Handbook (JK-5), Class Reading Lists, Report Card Legend, Lunch Menu/Costs, School Calendar, Photo Gallery, After School Program Links, and summer assignments to be completed prior to the next academic year.

Should there be an announcement for emergency school cancellation/closing the school will send an SMS to all parents, post the announcement on the website, and homeroom teachers may also send emails to parents notifying them of the closing of school.

Telephone/Email

Please remember that a teacher's day is quite full and may extend into the evening. Therefore, teachers will respond to email inquiries within 48 hours. Do not expect responses in the evening or weekends. Emails can be found on our ACS Athens website. Additionally, the phone is another way of getting in touch with a teacher or staff member.

Call the Elementary School Administrative Assistant at 210 6070 229 to leave a message. The teacher or staff member will return your call as soon as they are able to do so. Therefore, it may take a day to get back to you.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

School Photos

Individual and class school photos are taken by a professional photographer every fall. Parents may choose to purchase the photo package, but there is no obligation to do so. More information is sent out prior to the school photo day and the class pictures are included in the annual yearbook.

Field Trips

During the school year, field trips are directly connected to specific curriculum per grade level. Field trips extend the classroom studies allowing students to collect data as they apply and connect learning to the real world. We expect all students to attend. There are usually three to four field trips a year for each grade.

All children must have signed parental permission in order to attend via the permission slip provided prior to the trip. Students are expected to exhibit the 3Rs as representatives of ACS Athens Elementary School. Students may be requested to wear their House colors, or PE attire for the field trips. If the Child Study Team feels that a student's behavior and/or decision-making is questionable, the student may be required to remain at school/at home during the trip.

Birthday and Holiday Celebrations

In School Birthday Celebrations:

If your child wants to celebrate his/her birthday with the class, we ask that you provide enough **individually wrapped** treats for the entire class. These celebrations are short (usually celebrated at snack time or in the last fifteen minutes of the school day), as we need to keep all non-instructional class minutes to a minimum. Teachers must be informed well in advance of any celebrations planned. **"Nut free"** cupcakes, cookies or individually wrapped treats are appropriate and should be provided with paper plates and napkins. Please be aware of any allergies in your child's grade level.

Out of School Birthday Celebrations:

ACS Athens promotes inclusion and empathy. When planning a birthday celebration off campus for your child only **invitations for every child can be distributed in class**. The school cannot be responsible for handing out party invitations. **Please be willing to teach your child discretion for the feelings of those not invited.**

ENROLLMENT

Admissions/Registration

Please see Student Admission Policy at www.acs.gr for detailed information or contact the admissions office at 210 6070 251/273 or tottasf@acs.gr

Junior Kindergarten students *must* be three or four years old on or before December 31 of the year they register at ACS Athens. **No exceptions will be made.** Junior Kindergarten is a two-year program.

Kindergarten students *must* be five years old on or before December 31 of the year they enter school.

No exceptions are made.

Parents applying for admission must first contact the admissions office to receive guidance as to how to proceed with the application and the school visit. The school carefully reviews the student's academic history/portfolio (K to Fifth Grade only) and conducts an assessment and interview before acceptance into the program (JK to Fifth Grade). Prior to interviews it is essential to submit student report card/s and records, samples of student work, if available, passport/s and/or birth certificate, and a residence permit with them when registering their child(ren).

Financial

Each year, the school follows a student re-registration process in all grades. Parents must have no outstanding tuition and fee balances to re-register their children in the following year. Please refer to the Parent Financial responsibility statement for a detailed explanation of financial policies.

The school has the right to restrict student participation to "non-curricular" school activities if the

parents have outstanding tuition or fees for a period of more than 4 months. For example, such activities may be: extracurricular after school activities and programs, school trips, participation in celebrations or ceremonies.

Parents who face temporary financial difficulties may request payment arrangements with the Financial Office or may apply for financial aid, following the school-defined rules and processes.

FORCE MAJEURE: The obligations of the School under this Agreement as stated in this handbook may be suspended immediately without notice during the periods that the School must close of Force Majeure events including, but not limited to, fire, acts of God, war, governmental action, terrorism, epidemic, pandemic, outbreaks of infectious disease, any other public health crisis, or any other event beyond the School's control. If such an event occurs, the School's duties and obligations under this Agreement may be suspended or postponed until such time as the School, in its sole discretion, may safely re-open. A Force Majeure event will not entitle the parent(s), guardian(s), or other financially responsible party/parties to a tuition refund. The aforementioned explicitly waive their claims of unjustifiable enrichment.

Transfers From Our School

Given the transient nature of many of our families, it occasionally becomes necessary for a student to withdraw from school during the year. If your child is moving to another school, please let us know at least two weeks in advance so that we can efficiently collect and prepare needed transfer materials. Records will be mailed if the request is immediate and urgent. A forwarding address will be requested in either case. The receiving school will receive student report card/s and records. If there is anything else we could provide to ensure proper placement and success for your child, please let us know.

Child Safety Statement

Greek law: Child safety

ACS Athens is a student-centered international school, embracing American educational philosophy, principles and values. Through excellence in teaching and diverse educational experiences, ACS Athens challenges all students to realize their unique potential academically, intellectually, socially and ethically – to thrive as responsible global citizens.

ACS Athens works diligently to provide a place of belonging, trust and care for all its students. Staff members are committed to educating students and the community about child safety and responsible personal and social behaviors.

Child abuse and neglect are violations of children's human rights and are obstacles to the child's education as well as to their physical, emotional and spiritual development. Whenever ACS Athens staff members have reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering, or is at significant risk of suffering abuse or neglect, they must report the suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to appropriate school personnel. Authorized personnel, within the parameters of best educational practices, school regulations and local law, will follow up on all referrals.

According to the Greek law, article 23N 3500/2006, any school staff member (teachers, staff, specialists, counselors, nurses) who is informed or confirms in any way that minors are subjected to family violence/abuse is obliged to report it immediately to the respective authorities.

Those described above who have reported family crimes are not legally involved, disciplined, or dismissed from their jobs or suffer any other consequences for reporting the incident while on the job unless their report is not true.

Bring Your Own Device - laptop to school BYOD - Policy

ACS Athens, committed to provide the best educational experience to its students, implements the technology policy "Bring Your Own Device - BYOD".

The school policy across the grades is as follows:

- All new and existing students entering grades 6-12 are required to bring and use their own laptop in the school, always according to the class guidelines and rules of each teaching instructor and the technology policy of the school, as outlined in the Academy and Middle School Program of Studies.
- All new and existing students in Elementary School must have access to a computer/laptop at home, when classroom activity requires it, and according to the teacher guidelines.
- All new and existing students entering grade 5 only may be required to bring their own laptop in school always according to the class guidelines and rules of each teaching instructor.

Specifications

The ideal BYOD device needs to comfortably run a modern browser and have a good battery life.

- **Operating System:** Any operating system is acceptable as long as it supports the **latest version** of a modern browser like **Chrome, Safari, Edge, or Firefox**.
- **Battery Life:** A battery capable of lasting **at least 2 hours**.
- **Hardware Features:** A functioning webcam, microphone, and a physical keyboard for typing assignments.

Please Note:

Although students are welcome to bring tablets, school related applications or assignments may require features like typing or survey type activities that aren't easily performed on such devices. Therefore, we require that tablets be equipped with an external keyboard accessory.

Description of the BYOD program

Our primary goal regarding the use of Technology in Education at ACS Athens is:

To envision, design, materialize, support, and operate physical and virtual learning spaces, as students live in a world where they can learn anywhere, any time and from anyone.

Context of the BYOD Policy

Today's students are all digital natives and live and operate in a multimedia world. All media they use in their everyday school life is all in color and they prioritize based on visual learning. They don't just need, but they demand to have creativity in their learning process. They learn best through trial

and error, and they constantly connect and collaborate. Most importantly, they expect and know how to access information that is live and interlinked.

ACS Athens Virtual

In case a situation arises, that students need to work and study from home (as we experienced during the COVID-19 outbreak in the Spring of 2020), BYOD ensures that all students are able to use tools and resources required for an uninterrupted virtual teaching and learning process. ACS Athens Virtual provides the necessary resources, platforms and methodologies that allow students to continue their study in a synchronous and asynchronous mode, for as long as it is required. For more, please see the ACS Athens Virtual story of the Spring 2020 at https://www.acs.gr/news_events_virtual_news/ and at <http-s://www.acs.gr/virtual/>

Advantages of "Bring Your Own Device"(BYOD) Technology Integration model

- A device for every student covering his educational needs, offering access to technology at anytime
- Specialized technical staff of the school ensures uniform operation of devices and platforms
- State-of-art firewall and security protocols safeguards network access
- Robust network WiFi infrastructure with large bandwidth ensures optimal connectivity
- Technology Department continues to support students with devices on a special case basis

How BYOD can be used

School-wide implementation of the i2Flex methodology (see www.isguaredflex.gr)

- Access educational/instructional libraries
- Research online becomes easier and more personalized
- Coursework and assignments are easily accessible and managed
- Access data organization tools
- Web-based applications for classroom polling & quick tests
- Easier production of Audio/Radio podcasting and video projects
- Promoting Digital storytelling
- Easier Language learning
- Easier access of Course companion sites

BYOD Benefits

- Learning anytime, anywhere without schedule or access restrictions
- Allowing school to devote much-needed funding to other programs or technologies
- Personalized devices
- Devices are commonly more up to date with newer features
- Allows for immediate application in the classroom
- Competitive pricing of tablets, smartphones, and laptop computers-BYOD a viable option for many families
- Replicates a technology-rich environment already common in higher education and business
- Flexibility-support different learners with different needs

BYOD Educational Impact

- Catalyst for more engaged and motivated students
- Students are held accountable for their learning, puts them in charge
- Encourages continued learning outside of the classroom walls
- Students tap into their individual learning preferences
- Helps students identify skills that will make them life-long learners
- Gives students a preview of how their future workplaces will operate
- Provides the necessary tools for uninterrupted teaching and learning

ACS Athens School Policy on the Use of AI in School-Code of Conduct

Policy Statement

At ACS Athens, we are committed to fostering a student-centered learning environment that embraces American philosophy, principles, and values. In alignment with our mission to challenge students academically, intellectually, socially, and ethically, and our vision of empowering individuals to thrive as conscious global citizens, we recognize the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education. This policy outlines the ethical and responsible use of AI technologies within our school community.

Objectives

- **Enhance Learning:** Utilize AI to personalize and enhance the educational experience, ensuring each student can achieve their unique potential.
- **Promote Ethical Use:** Ensure that AI is used ethically and responsibly, reflecting our commitment to social and ethical development.
- **Support Educators:** Provide resources and training for educators to effectively integrate AI tools into their teaching practices.
- **Prepare Students:** Equip students with the knowledge and skills to navigate and leverage AI technologies as responsible global citizens.

Guidelines for AI Use in Education

1. Personalized Learning:

- AI tools may be used to create customized learning experiences tailored to individual student needs, learning styles, and progress.
- Data-driven insights should be utilized to identify areas where students need additional support or enrichment.

2. Academic Integrity:

- Students must use AI ethically, avoiding plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty.
- AI tools designed to assist with assignments or projects should be used as learning aids, not as a means to circumvent genuine academic effort.

3. Privacy and Data Security:

- The school will ensure that all AI applications comply with data protection regulations and safeguard student privacy.
- Personal data collected by AI tools will be used solely for educational purposes and not shared without consent.

4. Transparency and Accountability:

- The use of AI in the classroom will be transparent, with clear communication to students and parents about the purposes and benefits of AI tools.
- Educators, as role models, will maintain accountability for the educational outcomes of AI-assisted learning.

5. Ethical Development:

- AI should be integrated into the curriculum to promote understanding of its ethical implications and societal impact.
- Discussions on the ethical use of AI, including biases and fairness, will be included in relevant courses.

6. Professional Development for Educators:

- Continuous professional development will be provided to educators to ensure they are proficient in using AI technologies.
- Educators will be encouraged to share best practices and collaborate on AI-related initiatives.

7. Equitable Access:

- The school will strive to provide equitable access to AI resources for all students, ensuring that no student is disadvantaged by a lack of technology.
- Efforts will be made to bridge any digital divides and support students with varying levels of technological proficiency.

8. Continuous Evaluation:

- The impact of AI on student learning and development will be regularly evaluated.
- Feedback from students, parents, and educators will be used to refine and improve AI usage policies and practices.

Implementation

- This policy will be implemented through collaboration between school administration, educators, and IT professionals.
- Regular workshops and training sessions will be conducted to familiarize the school community with AI tools and ethical considerations.
- The school will establish an AI oversight committee to monitor compliance with this policy and address any emerging issues.

Conclusion

By integrating AI into our educational framework, ACS Athens aims to enhance learning, uphold ethical standards, and prepare our students to thrive as responsible and informed global citizens. This policy ensures that AI is used to support our mission and vision, fostering a dynamic and inclusive learning environment.

ACS Athens Student Philosophy on Safe and Ethical Use of Generative AI

At ACS Athens, we are dedicated to providing a learning environment that embraces innovation and the responsible use of emerging technologies. As students, you are encouraged to explore and utilize generative artificial intelligence (AI) in ways that are safe, ethical, and educationally enriching. Our philosophy is grounded in the following principles and ideal applications for K-12 education:

Principles

1. Ethical Responsibility:

- Use AI technologies responsibly, ensuring your actions respect the rights and privacy of others. Always be transparent about your use of AI and understand its potential biases and limitations.

2. Safety and Security:

- Your safety and security are paramount. When using AI tools, ensure that your personal data is protected and that you do not misuse AI in ways that could harm others. Always follow school policies and data protection regulations.

3. Learning Enhancement:

- AI should enhance your learning experience. Use AI to support your studies, foster creativity, and develop critical thinking skills, but remember that it should not replace the fundamental interactions with your teachers and peers.

4. Equity and Inclusion:

- AI applications should promote fairness and inclusion. Use AI to ensure equal opportunities for all students, and be mindful of not perpetuating existing inequalities through the misuse of AI technologies.

5. Continuous Learning and Adaptation:

- Stay informed about the latest developments in AI and its implications for your education. Take advantage of opportunities for learning and training to use AI tools competently and responsibly.

Ideal Applications for K-12 Education

1. Personalized Learning:

- Use AI to create customized learning plans that adapt to your individual needs, strengths, and learning pace. AI can provide targeted resources and exercises to help you succeed academically.

2. Creative and Critical Thinking:

- Explore generative AI tools for creative projects, such as writing, art, and music. Use these tools to enhance your creativity while critically analyzing AI-generated content to understand its potential and limitations.

3. Language Learning and Support:

- Utilize AI-driven language tools to support your multilingual education. AI can assist with translation, speech recognition, and personalized language practice to improve your proficiency and communication skills.

4. Data Analysis and Problem Solving:

- Engage with AI tools to analyze data, identify patterns, and solve complex problems. This experience will prepare you for future academic and career endeavors by developing your analytical and problem-solving skills.

5. Virtual Tutors and Assistants:

- Take advantage of AI-powered virtual tutors and assistants to receive additional academic support, ask questions, and get explanations. These tools can complement classroom instruction and extend your learning opportunities.

6. Responsible Usage:

- Always use AI tools responsibly and ethically. Do not use AI for cheating, plagiarism, or any form of academic dishonesty. Understand that AI is a tool to aid your learning, not a substitute for your own efforts and integrity.

Implementation and Oversight

As a student at ACS Athens, you are expected to integrate these principles and applications into your daily academic activities. The school's AI Ethics Committee will oversee the implementation and use of AI technologies, ensuring they align with our ethical standards and educational goals. If you have any concerns or encounter issues related to AI use, report them to the committee for review and action.

By embracing generative AI responsibly and ethically, you can enhance your educational experience at ACS Athens, preparing yourself to navigate and contribute positively to a rapidly evolving technological world.

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ADDITIONS TO 2025-2026 HANDBOOK

Updated Elementary School Scheduled Courses Grades 1-5 P 14

Elementary School Scheduled Courses Grades 1-5				
Core Classes			Specials	
English Language Arts	Reading/Writing/Phonics/Grammar	5x/week	Foreign Language (FL)	3x/week
			Art	2x/week
Mathematics	Number Sense/Operations/Measurement/Algebra/Geometry/Statistics	5x/week	Music	2x /week
Science	(NGSS)-Next Generation Science Standards	3x/week	Physical Education	2x/week
Social Studies	Unit Themes	3x/week	Technology	1x/week
			Drama (Grade 5)	1x/week
			Science Lab	1x/week
			Library Media Center	1x/week

Drama (Grade 5, 2025-2026) P 16

The Grade 5 Drama program is designed to help students analyze text and express themselves through movement, voice, and action, using imagination and creativity. Through engaging activities and

performances, students build confidence, strengthen communication skills, and learn the value of collaboration—important life skills that extend far beyond the stage.

Elementary School Media Studio P 17

The Elementary School Media Studio, located in the Library, is a creative, inclusive space where students explore storytelling and media production through hands-on projects like news shows, skits, and tutorials. By engaging in imaginative themes and real-world topics, students develop technical skills, confidence, and cultural awareness in a supportive environment.

Innovation Lab: Empowering Personalized, Innovative, Creative Program (EPIC) P 17

The **EPIC Program** in the Elementary Innovation Lab empowers advanced learners in grades 3–5 to explore personalized, milestone-driven projects that integrate core subjects into real-world solutions. Through structured weekly sessions and collaboration with classroom teachers, students develop critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills, culminating in a showcase that celebrates their innovation and growth.

Advanced Learners Program (ALP) P 19

ACS Athens is dedicated to supporting the unique strengths and potential of its students through the **Advanced Learners Program (ALP)** in Mathematics. Designed for students in Grades 3–5 who exhibit exceptional mathematical aptitude, the ALP is a structured, three-phase program that offers increased academic challenge and enrichment. Each phase includes specific eligibility criteria, guiding students through progressively advanced content and skill development. Successful completion of each phase may qualify students to accelerate by one grade level in mathematics for the following academic year, ensuring they are both supported and challenged at an appropriate level.

Literacy Interventions: Support & Enhancement Programs P20

The Literacy Intervention program provides targeted support in reading and writing to help students meet grade-level expectations or further develop their literacy skills. Services may include both push-in and pull-out sessions, allowing for a flexible and responsive approach to each student’s needs.

ACS Athens School Policy on the Use of AI in School- Code of Conduct P44

Policy Statement

At ACS Athens, we are committed to fostering a student-centered learning environment that embraces American philosophy, principles, and values. In alignment with our mission to challenge students academically, intellectually, socially, and ethically, and our vision of empowering individuals to thrive as conscious global citizens, we recognize the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education. This policy outlines the ethical and responsible use of AI technologies within our school community.

Objectives

- **Enhance Learning:** Utilize AI to personalize and enhance the educational experience, ensuring each student can achieve their unique potential.
- **Promote Ethical Use:** Ensure that AI is used ethically and responsibly, reflecting our commitment to social and ethical development.

- **Support Educators:** Provide resources and training for educators to effectively integrate AI tools into their teaching practices.
- **Prepare Students:** Equip students with the knowledge and skills to navigate and leverage AI technologies as responsible global citizens.

Guidelines for AI Use in Education

1. Personalized Learning:

- AI tools may be used to create customized learning experiences tailored to individual student needs, learning styles, and progress.
- Data-driven insights should be utilized to identify areas where students need additional support or enrichment.

2. Academic Integrity:

- Students must use AI ethically, avoiding plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty.
- AI tools designed to assist with assignments or projects should be used as learning aids, not as a means to circumvent genuine academic effort.

3. Privacy and Data Security:

- The school will ensure that all AI applications comply with data protection regulations and safeguard student privacy.
- Personal data collected by AI tools will be used solely for educational purposes and not shared without consent.

4. Transparency and Accountability:

- The use of AI in the classroom will be transparent, with clear communication to students and parents about the purposes and benefits of AI tools.
- Educators, as role models, will maintain accountability for the educational outcomes of AI-assisted learning.

5. Ethical Development:

- AI should be integrated into the curriculum to promote understanding of its ethical implications and societal impact.
- Discussions on the ethical use of AI, including biases and fairness, will be included in relevant courses.

6. Professional Development for Educators:

- Continuous professional development will be provided to educators to ensure they are proficient in using AI technologies.
- Educators will be encouraged to share best practices and collaborate on AI-related initiatives.

7. Equitable Access:

- The school will strive to provide equitable access to AI resources for all students, ensuring that no student is disadvantaged by a lack of technology.
- Efforts will be made to bridge any digital divides and support students with varying levels of technological proficiency.

8. Continuous Evaluation:

- The impact of AI on student learning and development will be regularly evaluated.
- Feedback from students, parents, and educators will be used to refine and improve AI usage policies and practices.

Implementation

- This policy will be implemented through collaboration between school administration, educators, and IT professionals.
- Regular workshops and training sessions will be conducted to familiarize the school community with AI tools and ethical considerations.
- The school will establish an AI oversight committee to monitor compliance with this policy and address any emerging issues.

Conclusion

By integrating AI into our educational framework, ACS Athens aims to enhance learning, uphold ethical standards, and prepare our students to thrive as responsible and informed global citizens. This policy ensures that AI is used to support our mission and vision, fostering a dynamic and inclusive learning environment.

ACS Athens Student Philosophy on Safe and Ethical Use of Generative AI P46

At ACS Athens, we are dedicated to providing a learning environment that embraces innovation and the responsible use of emerging technologies. As students, you are encouraged to explore and utilize generative artificial intelligence (AI) in ways that are safe, ethical, and educationally enriching. Our philosophy is grounded in the following principles and ideal applications for K-12 education:

Principles

1. **Ethical Responsibility:**
 - Use AI technologies responsibly, ensuring your actions respect the rights and privacy of others. Always be transparent about your use of AI and understand its potential biases and limitations.
2. **Safety and Security:**
 - Your safety and security are paramount. When using AI tools, ensure that your personal data is protected and that you do not misuse AI in ways that could harm others. Always follow school policies and data protection regulations.
3. **Learning Enhancement:**
 - AI should enhance your learning experience. Use AI to support your studies, foster creativity, and develop critical thinking skills, but remember that it should not replace the fundamental interactions with your teachers and peers.
4. **Equity and Inclusion:**
 - AI applications should promote fairness and inclusion. Use AI to ensure equal opportunities for all students, and be mindful of not perpetuating existing inequalities through the misuse of AI technologies.
5. **Continuous Learning and Adaptation:**
 - Stay informed about the latest developments in AI and its implications for your education. Take advantage of opportunities for learning and training to use AI tools competently and responsibly.

Ideal Applications for K-12 Education

1. **Personalized Learning:**
 - Use AI to create customized learning plans that adapt to your individual needs, strengths, and learning pace. AI can provide targeted resources and exercises to help you succeed academically.
2. **Creative and Critical Thinking:**
 - Explore generative AI tools for creative projects, such as writing, art, and music. Use these tools to enhance your creativity while critically analyzing AI-generated content to understand its potential and limitations.
3. **Language Learning and Support:**

- Utilize AI-driven language tools to support your multilingual education. AI can assist with translation, speech recognition, and personalized language practice to improve your proficiency and communication skills.
- 4. **Data Analysis and Problem Solving:**
 - Engage with AI tools to analyze data, identify patterns, and solve complex problems. This experience will prepare you for future academic and career endeavors by developing your analytical and problem-solving skills.
- 5. **Virtual Tutors and Assistants:**
 - Take advantage of AI-powered virtual tutors and assistants to receive additional academic support, ask questions, and get explanations. These tools can complement classroom instruction and extend your learning opportunities.
- 6. **Responsible Usage:**
 - Always use AI tools responsibly and ethically. Do not use AI for cheating, plagiarism, or any form of academic dishonesty. Understand that AI is a tool to aid your learning, not a substitute for your own efforts and integrity.

Implementation and Oversight

As a student at ACS Athens, you are expected to integrate these principles and applications into your daily academic activities. The school's AI Ethics Committee will oversee the implementation and use of AI technologies, ensuring they align with our ethical standards and educational goals. If you have any concerns or encounter issues related to AI use, report them to the committee for review and action.

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