

ELEMENTARY

Parent-Student Handbook

Updated May 29, 2023

The Parent-Student Handbook provides basic information about programs, rules, and regulations. Further details are available through the school website and Head of School's office.

Accredited by Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)



our Vision

To inspire lifelong learners to make a positive impact on our world.

Mission

American School in Taichung is an international school which develops global citizens who strive for personal excellence, demonstrate compassion, and live with integrity.

As lifelong learners and global citizens dedicated to personal excellence, **we value...**



Act ethically and responsibly. Stand up for what you believe.



Courage

Accept challenges, take risks, and persevere through adversity.



Be mindful, empathetic, and helpful.



Contribution

Collaborate and lead to serve our communities and planet.

Excited about learning!

AST Student Wide Learning Outcomes (SWLOs) - Students will be able to:

Think critically and creatively
Effectively communicate and collaborate
Utilize and apply technology
Problem solve

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Academics

Western Education

1. Western Education focuses on the student as a whole person.

AST is dedicated to educating the whole person academically, socially, artistically, emotionally, and physically. A western-style education tries to strike a balance so that no single aspect of the student's education excludes another. Some of the ways these are addressed at AST are through our Morning Meetings, Responsive Classroom, and Advisory program.

2. Western Education emphasizes higher-order thinking skills.

The integration, synthesis, and application of material is emphasized in western education. At AST, students learn how to find and apply information to solve problems.

3. Western Education involves parents as team members in the educational process.

At AST, parents, teachers, and students work together for the student's education. Communication with teachers is encouraged and important!

4. Western Education uses fair and consistent consequences to modify inappropriate behavior.

At AST, consequences are meant to be educational and to modify behavior; it is never meant to be degrading, demeaning, or to shame a person.

5. Western Education places a realistic emphasis on grades.

When students, parents, or teachers become overly concerned with grades, the true purpose of education may be lost. At AST, we are nurturing life-long learners who value learning more than the grade received.

Western Education utilizes a variety of assessment tools.

At AST, we believe there are many ways to assess a child's knowledge, growth, and mastery of ideas. Portfolios, projects, group work, oral contributions, and homework are all elements that can be used by a teacher to determine a student's level of understanding and accomplishment.

7. Western Education in an international setting.

At AST, we recognize that we are part of an international community with students and teachers from around the world. We respect each other's cultural differences and native languages, while broadening our understanding of the world.

Standards

The school follows a combination of internationally-recognized standards including the Common Core, NGSS, AERO, ISCA, and WIDA.

Elementary Report Cards

Elementary Report Cards inform parents about their child's social skills, work habits, and academic progress relative to the AST essential grade-level benchmarks or standards for

each subject area at the time of reporting. Students will receive formal reports four times a year. Parents will receive an electronic version of these reports.

Learning is reported using the following descriptors:

| EXPLANATION OF STANDARDS AND EFFORT MARKS | | |
|--|--|---|
| Beginning | Progressing | Achieving |
| Student is in the beginning stages of understanding concepts and procedures and requires consistent support. "I don't get it yet. I need help." | Student accomplishes part of the task independently. Student can sometimes explain or demonstrate the process but may need prompting to complete it. "I almost get it but I sometimes need help." | Student demonstrates proficiency of targeted grade-level standards and is confident and competent. "I get it! I can do it well!" |

Athletic Eligibility

In order to represent AST on an athletic team, students must be in good academic and behavioral standing. For Elementary School students this means they are at the Achieving or Progressing level and having proper behavioral conduct.

Students can be placed on two levels of eligibility. Level 1 means they are not allowed to practice or participate in games. Level 2 allows the student to practice provided they attend mandatory study sessions after school or meet other requirements.

Assessment Agreements (Link to AST Assessment Policy)

Grading Practices for all classes

These policies apply to all Elementary School Courses.

- Homework (defined as practice or preparation for the next class) will be evaluated, assessed, and read, but not count towards the overall grade. Students who do not complete homework will be assigned an appropriate consequence. Chronic failure to do homework will be reported to parents and the principal.
- Reassessments are offered to students who do not demonstrate proficiency on a standard. Students will be offered additional instruction, review activities, or other materials to practice knowledge and skills that will help students be prepared for reassessment. Reassessments are administered in a fair and equitable manner.
- The teacher has the final authority to decide if the evidence is acceptable. The most recent assessment will replace the prior one.

• Late work will not be academically penalized, instead they will be treated as a behavior and may be assigned an appropriate consequence.

Specialized Programs

- Individualized Support -
 - Teachers are not permitted to contract as paid tutors except by arrangement with the school administration. Tutors are expected to adhere to AST's Academic Honesty Policy.
 - Individualized support needs are determined by the Learning and Language Support Departments, in consultation with the Head of School.

Standardized Testing

At AST, we use standardized tests as one tool to measure individual student progress as well as school-wide achievement.

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) — administered to students in grades 1-8
two times each year. The information gained from this test enables teachers to target
instruction to the students. Year-by-year comparisons help us evaluate our program.

Homework

Parents are expected to help their child(ren) by establishing a routine with a set time and quiet place for their child(ren) to complete their homework. Homework is designed to reinforce the work done during the school day or prepare for an upcoming lesson. As a general guideline, students should expect the following amount of homework at various grade levels for ALL courses in total:

| Grade | Homework Minutes Per Night |
|-------|-------------------------------|
| 1 — 2 | 15 to 30 |
| 3 — 4 | 30 to 45 |
| 5 | 45 to 55 |

Reading - Sustained reading in English is one of the best ways to improve both writing and speaking. During school vacations students should continue the habit of daily reading in English. Books at appropriate reading levels are available from the school.

Behavioral Expectations

Behavioral expectations apply to students during the school day, on the school bus, during on- and off-campus school activities such as athletic competitions, events, and school trips, and online.

General School Rules

- 1. English is the language of instruction and inclusion. Other languages in class are only with permission of the teacher and should be focused on improving understanding of the lesson.
- 2. Take proper care of all school equipment, books and property.
- 3. Keep the school clean. Food waste is to be disposed of in the designated bins.
- 4. Food, drinks and gum are not allowed in the theater, gym, libraries, or computer lab. Food, drinks, and gum are only allowed in classrooms with permission of the teacher.
- 5. Outside food deliveries are not permitted on campus.
- 6. Follow reasonable directives of any AST staff member.
- 7. Conduct yourself in an appropriate manner.
- 8. Be on time for all classes and school activities. Students who miss class during the day may not participate in extracurricular activities that day without permission from the Secondary Principal.
- 9. Obtain consent before videoing, voice recording or taking a picture of another individual.
- 10. Follow the ES Technology Pledge. Teachers determine when use of technology is appropriate in the classroom.
- 11. Adhere to expectations regarding academic honesty.
- 12. Students, parents, and teachers should view a correction as an opportunity to learn and grow as per the <u>AST Behavior Policy</u>.
- 13. Students must refrain from physical interactions (eg hitting, pushing, slapping, etc).

Unacceptable Behaviors

- 1. Academic dishonesty
- 2. Fighting, intimidation, bullying, or hazing. This includes cyber bullying or similar activities off- campus.
- 3. Theft, vandalism, or destruction of school or personal property.
- 4. Lying, profanity, or obscenity.
- 5. Possession of guns, knives, or other weapons or items intended to be used as weapons.
- 6. Use or possession of controlled substances such as drugs, alcohol, or nicotine products. This includes Vape pens with or without nicotine.
- 7. Violating consent.

8. Violations of the Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Using English At School

One goal of the American School in Taichung is to encourage all students to use English effectively. The language of instruction and inclusion is English. While the school recognizes the importance of speaking many languages, students should take every opportunity to use English when they are at our school.

The following statements should provide clear guidelines for the use of English at school:

- 1. During classroom instruction and in instructional spaces, English should be used by all students except at times and conditions approved by classroom teachers.
- 2. Outside of classes, all students are encouraged to use English as often as possible, creating an English-speaking environment in our school.
- 3. Parents should encourage their children to use English when they are at school.
- 4. The language on field trips is English. Parent chaperones are expected to speak English when possible.
- 5. Student interactions with classroom aides and school staff should be in English.
- 6. The language of interaction during recess may be the language with which the student is most comfortable. However, in groups of students where the only common language is English, then it must be used. No one should be excluded from an activity or a conversation because of language.

ES Technology Pledge

American School in Taichung provides Chromebooks, Internet access, and other technology resources for educational use. As a student, I must act appropriately online and follow these rules:

- 1. I will respect technology resources and take good care of the equipment.
- 2. I will only use technology resources with teachers' permission and for the purposes specified in class.
- 3. I will stay safe on the Internet sites that ask for information about me.
- 4. I will not share private information or pictures about myself or others, including my home address, phone number, photos, and any other identifying information.
- 5. I will only use my own accounts/passwords and protect this information.
- 6. I will respect copyright laws by citing where I found information and only using others' work if I have permission to use it.
- 7. I will not become involved in cyberbullying. I will be respectful toward others on the Internet and tell a teacher, parent, or trusted adult if I encounter messages or pictures

that hurt, threaten, or embarrass someone.

- 8. I will tell my teacher immediately if I or someone else accidentally opens an inappropriate website or if I see someone breaking any of the rules about using technology resources.
- 9. I will be responsible for my AST Chromebook and stylus pen. My parents will be notified and liable for any loss or damage I have caused.
- 10.1 am aware my teachers can monitor and control my Chromebook activity during the school day.
- 11. When required by the club instructor, I can use my Chromebook for extracurricular activities. I am responsible for returning it to the classroom.
- 12. Personal electronic devices, including, but not limited to, cell phones, tablets, personal laptops, or smart watches, are **not allowed** in school. Using electronic devices during school day will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day. Smart watches are any watches that send/receive messages, play/record media, play games, or provide access to the Internet. Students can still use devices that have health and wellness functions. The school is not responsible for any missing or lost personal electronic devices.

I understand that using the school's Chromebook is a privilege and that it has been provided to help me learn. If I am unable to follow the rules for technology usage, I may lose the opportunity to use technology in class for a period of time and/or face disciplinary consequences.

Library

Reading and books are central to learning and students are encouraged to read a wide variety of books. Students will be reminded to return any overdue books and will be notified and liable for any loss or damage.

Academic Honesty

Academic Honesty is at the core of a successful school program.

Academic Honesty means:

- Submitting work that reflects your current ability or understanding
- Giving credit to others for their work (such as citing sources or crediting peers)
- Supporting others via guiding questions, related examples, and explanation

Academic Honesty allows teachers to best support students in their areas of need. If a student is receiving outside support (such as tutoring), it is very important that their teachers are aware of such support.

Academic Dishonesty is submitting work that does not reflect the effort and abilities of an individual student. This includes:

- Cheating by using or copying materials that are not allowed for an assignment or assessment.
- Plagiarism by taking someone else's (or even your own former) work or ideas and presenting them as one's own--whether intentionally or unintentionally.
- Helping with plagiarism (collusion) by providing your own work or services (such as revision) so that others will not have to do their work.
- Making up data or information that is untrue or misrepresentative.

AST takes Academic Honesty very seriously. Parents will be informed if their student has engaged in academic dishonesty and the Elementary Principal will be notified. Records will be kept of all incidents of violations of the Academic Honesty Policy and students will be required to resubmit the work to be assessed.

Dress Code

Student attire should facilitate participation in learning as well as the health and safety of students and the adults that supervise them. This policy is intended to provide guidance for students, staff, and parents.

Requirements:

- Clothing must cover areas from one armpit across to the other armpit, and should approach the knee. Tops must have shoulder straps that are larger than spaghetti straps. Rips or tears in clothing should not be distracting. Clothing should appropriately cover private areas.
- 2. Shoes must be worn at all times and should be safe for the school environment.
- 3. See-through or mesh garments must not be worn without appropriate coverage underneath that meets the minimum requirements of the dress code.
- 4. Specialized courses may require specialized attire, such as sports uniforms or safety gear.
- 5. Clothing may not depict, imply, advertise, or advocate illegal, violent, or lewd conduct, weapons, or the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, vaping, or other controlled substances.
- 6. Clothing may not depict or imply pornography, nudity, or sexual acts.
- 7. Clothing may not display or imply vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene language or images.
- 8. Clothing may not state, imply, or depict hate speech/imagery targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected classification.

The school reserves the right to determine what constitutes appropriate dress. Students who do not adhere to these guidelines or wear the replacement clothing will not be allowed to attend class. Parents will be called if appropriate clothing is not available or if the student refuses dress-code appropriate clothing.

School Bus Information

Parents/guardians are responsible for taking their children to and from the bus stop. The pick-up and drop-off times are approximations; arrive at least 5 minutes before the listed time. The 3:45PM and 12:00PM (early release) bus routes are the reverse of the morning routes, and the afternoon drop-off location is across from the morning pink-up location.

Any requests for bus route changes or bus stop additions will be evaluated during the first two weeks of the school year. Parents are responsible for informing the bus monitor as soon as possible if the child is not taking the bus on a particular day. Contact GAO if you have any questions.

School Bus Regulations

- 1. Students are to remain seated with seat belts buckled at all times.
- 2. Passengers will ensure the safety and well-being of all students by not distracting the driver in any way, including shouting, moving around, or making loud noises.
- 3. Technology used on the bus is subject to AST's Acceptable Use Policy.
- 4. Students are expected to clean up after themselves when they leave the bus.
- 5. Students should not chew or use gum while on the bus.
- 6. Students should take care not to leave personal property unattended.
- 7. Passengers must follow the directions of the bus monitors.
- 8. Students are expected to use appropriate language on the bus at all times.
- 9. Students with repeat or severe violations will not be allowed to ride the bus.

 I understand if I violate the bus safety regulations, I will receive a verbal warning from the bus monitor. Following the verbal warning will be written warnings that must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the school the following day. Three written warnings per semester will result in a 5 school day bus suspension. Parents will need to provide their own transportation.

Approach to Addressing Behavioral Violations

AST adheres to the model of restorative discipline when addressing misbehavior.

Behavioral Violations Categorization & Consequential Expectations

| | Level 1 Low-Level Disruption | Level 2 Significant Offense | Level 3 Serious Infringement |
|----------|---|---|---|
| Examples | Academic dishonesty (initial) Poor representation of the school Disrupting others in class Inappropriate behavior Pattern of not following teacher instructions | Academic dishonesty-second offense. Skipping class. Aggressive behavior / frequent horseplay. Bullying. Repeated or patterned versions of low-level disruptions. | Any offenses of a potentially criminal nature • Alcohol/Drug / tobacco related offense. • Use of technology to hurt, offend or shame. • Destruction of property. • Theft. |

| | Swearing or inappropriate language Ongoing tardiness Inappropriate technology use Inappropriate clothing in class. Other similar behavior | Repeated or significant poor representation of school. Repeated or significant inappropriate technology use. Repeated unexcused absences. Repeated classroom disruptions. Similar other incidents. | Harassment. Assault. Severe or egregious versions of other offenses. Repeated/severe academic dishonesty. Serious or repeated poor representation of school. Serious or repeated aggressive behavior. Repeated occurrences of skipping class. Similar other serious incidents. |
|--|---|--|---|
| Addressed by | Teacher | Principal | Principal/Head of School |
| Communicatio n and Documentatio n | Teacher & Student One-on-One Conversation Email or phone call to parent Teacher or employee documents in Alma | Teacher reports incident to Principal Email, phone call or meeting with parents Teacher or employee documents in Alma | Teacher reports incident to Principal who informs the Head of School Meeting with parents Teacher or employee documents in Alma |
| Possible Consequence s/ Reparations | ApologyReflectionClassroomDetention | Written Reflection Detention School Service In-School Suspension | Written Reflection Out-of-School Suspension Removal of Student Government or other privileges Expulsion |
| Possible Follow Up | Teacher monitors behavior | Referral to CounselorBehavior Contract | Referral for outside counseling Behavior contract |

| | Increased monitoring of behavior |
|--|--|
|--|--|

The school counselor acts as a support person to the "Addressed by" people described above at every level.

General Policies & Procedures

Attendance

Participation in all classroom activities is an important part of the educational experience at AST.

- Call or email the school registrar (registrar@ast.tc.edu.tw) no later than 8:15 in the morning if your child will be absent from school.
- If the child is absent due to illness for 1 to 3 days, please provide a note from a parent upon return. If an absence due to illness is more than 3 days, please provide a note from a doctor saying the child is cleared to return to school.
- If a student becomes sick during the day, he or she is to visit the school nurse. If the nurse is not available, the student should report to the registrar for assistance.
- Make-up Work Students may have one day for each day of absence to make up missing work. Teachers may establish individual guidelines extending the time.
- Absences resulting from family trips or special occasions are to be cleared through the Head of School's office prior to the trip. Students are expected to communicate with their teachers and make a plan to complete their missed work.
- Planned Absence: Any planned absence of three or more days requires students to submit a Planned Absence Slip three days before the leave. Students are expected to communicate with their teachers and make a plan to complete their missed work.
 Planned absence form is available on the school website.
- Unexcused absences are considered truancy and will be treated as a behavioral issue.

Drop Off / Pick Up

Each school day, parents may drop off their children between 7:30~8:00 AM and pick them up at the end of the school day or after co/extra-curricular activities. Drop-off and pick up location is the LAC parking lot.

Visitors and Volunteers

Visitors, including parents, must have an appointment with an AST faculty or staff member upon entering the campus. Visitors must sign in at the guard house and wear a visitor's badge.

All visitors and volunteers are expected to abide by all child protection policies and procedures.

Lunch

Students have a 40-minute lunch period. Students have the choice of purchasing a catered

lunch through the school lunch plan or bringing lunch from home. Lunch menu is available on the school website.

ES students need to eat their lunch in the cafeteria.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items are kept in a box by the main stairway in the Administration Building. Found items may be discarded periodically if not claimed by the owner.

Lost and found items of high value should be turned in to the GAO office or the Head of School's office.

Communication

It is critical that we have accurate and up-to-date parent contact information, including email and phone number. Please provide updated information to the registrar if your contact information changes.

Alma

Alma is used internally by teachers in the elementary school. Please contact the teachers for student progress.

Scheduled Communications

- **AST Updates** —AST will email periodic updates to all parents. These will include recent events, reminders about upcoming events and updates about athletics.
- **ES Weekly Newsletters:** Homeroom teachers will send out a weekly newsletter to provide parents with an update on students' learning and inform parents of any upcoming events and activities.
- Parent-Teacher Back-to-School Night An informative presentation early in the school year during which teachers will discuss their courses and expectations. This is a very important meeting that sets the tone for the entire year. All parents are encouraged to attend.
- **Report Cards** Report Cards (MS) or Progress Reports (HS) are emailed home at the end of each quarter for all students. Progress reports are intended to inform parents and students about a student's progress toward the semester grade.
- Conferences Conferences are held after the end of the 1st and 3rd Quarters.
 - o Parent-Teacher Conferences The Parent-Teacher Conference is a time to hear a summary of your child's progress and talk to the teacher about the details. Parent-Teacher Conferences are held twice a year, usually at the end of Quarter 1 and Quarter 3. This is an opportunity to speak with your child's teacher about your child's progress at school.

Emergency Days

In the event that school needs to be closed, AST will announce the closure via parent email, parent LINE group and the AST website.

AST will close for any emergency days for which the Taichung Government officially closes

Taichung City Schools.

Communicating with Teachers & Staff

We strongly encourage parents to communicate directly with teachers any time during working hours via official channels (email, Alma etc) if they have questions, concerns, or suggestions related to the classroom. Teachers' and staff contact information is available on the school website and via Alma.

Please keep in mind that staff can address only those questions and concerns related to their area of work. If they cannot help directly, they will listen to concerns and relay information to the appropriate person.

Parents and students need to address any concerns directly to the teacher first before approaching the Principal or Head of School.

Student Expectations Regarding Grades and Assessments

All gradebooks will be updated every two weeks to reflect the current achievement levels.

Health Policy

It is important to remember that students who are sick need to stay home, both to help them get better and to prevent them from infecting others. Your child should stay home if he or she has any of these symptoms:

- Seems very tired and needs bed rest (this is common with flu symptoms)
- Has vomiting or diarrhea
- Becomes short of breath or is wheezing
- Has a cough that disrupts normal activity
- Has distracting pain from earache, headache, sore throat or recent injury
- Has yellow or green drainage from eye(s)
- Breaks out in a rash; now all rashes require that a child stay home, from school. Check with vour child's doctor.
- A fever above 37.5 C
- Has a contagious disease such as chickenpox, flu, strep, "pinkeye" or COVID-19.

Supplements or Inhalers

If your child is taking supplements or uses an inhaler, please notify the teachers via email in advance.

Illness at School

If your child is feeling unwell at school, he/she may rest in the nurse's office for a short period before being asked to return to class. Parents may be contacted to pick up their child if he/she exhibits the symptoms above.

Taking a Sick Day

If your child is taking a sick day off, please contact your homeroom teacher and registrar immediately. You can contact the registrar by phone at 04-22397532 ext. 29 or email: registrar@ast.tc.edu.tw

Medical Information Form

All families should fill out the AST Emergency Medical Form which is located on the AST Website - Community - Forms for each child that attends AST. This form only needs to be completed once, unless something changes.

Outside food and drink

Food or drink are not allowed to be delivered to campus without the permission of the Elementary Principal.

Snack Policy

Students are allowed to bring a healthy snack to eat during recess. Healthy brain foods include fresh fruits, cut vegetables, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, seaweed, yogurt, wholegrain crackers, and cheese. Please do not send processed snacks to school.

Guidelines:

- Processed and sugary foods are strongly discouraged.
- Students are encouraged to drink water or 100% juice. The vending machine is not available to the ES students.
- Please notify your child's teacher of any food allergies.
- Due to health regulations, no food will be stored in the classroom overnight.
- Students cannot share snacks due to health and allergy concerns.
- Snack time is voluntary, and bringing a daily, individual snack is the responsibility of the child.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthday celebrations are an exciting time for students. If parents would like to bring in treats to celebrate for their child(ren)'s class, they must arrange a time with the homeroom teacher at least **a** week in advance. If you are planning to bring treats, please send treats that are easy to distribute.

Child Protection Policy

AST has adopted a Child Protection Policy in line with international standards to protect students. This policy is posted on the AST website. There is a referral form for suspicions or concerns on the website as well.