



KG PARENT HANDBOOK 2011 - 2012

American Bilingual School

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The Kindergarten Program

At the American Bilingual School, we offer three levels of instruction in the Kindergarten department. Pre-K, KG1, and KG2 provide the foundation for social and academic learning for children between the ages of three and six. Our nurturing Kindergarten staff provides an atmosphere in which life-long learners develop in a safe and secure environment. Students are encouraged to take risks and to share their ideas, thoughts, and problem-solving strategies during class lessons, small group activities, and individual projects.

The ABS Kindergarten department is committed to both providing a variety of learning opportunities and experiences that are based on the interests, strengths, and needs of the children, and to laying the foundation for success in learning. The Kindergarten years are an important time in a child's total development. The American Bilingual School helps the whole child grow and develop physically, socially, emotionally, cognitively, and linguistically. In order to address the full range of each child's developmental needs, the Kindergarten program provides opportunities for learning in a variety of areas.

Pre-Kindergarten:

A positive first year is important to establish a life-long love of learning. The focuses of the Pre-K program are social, self-help, language, and fine and gross motor skills. Children are introduced to academic skills such as pre-reading instruction and pre-math skills, as well as, basic computer skills in a fun, engaging and developmentally appropriate way.

Kindergarten 1:

In KG 1, children are exposed to math and reading readiness activities building on the skills they learned in Pre-K. KG1 uses a child-friendly phonics and literacy program.

Kindergarten 2:

In KG 2, children continue to build their reading, writing, and math skills in a more structured way in preparation for grade one. Children are encouraged to be self-reliant and more independent in the classroom. Science and Social Studies skills are introduced at this level, as well as, a **Home Reading Program**. Parents play an important role in this fun experience. Children and parents read to each other at home. After reading, the book is recorded by the parent. The child draws a picture and writes about the story in their journal.

Daily Schedule

Activities vary from level to level and classroom to classroom. Half the day is spent with an English teacher and the other half is spent with an Arabic teacher. The following are activities that all children participate in during the school day:

Morning Assembly:

On Sundays and Thursdays, the KG Department begins the day with morning assembly in the area by gate 7. Please make sure your child is at school by 7:30 so they do not miss this important part of the day. We begin by reading the Quran. Then students sing the Kuwait National Song. Then they sing songs in English and Arabic. This is also the time that we recognize birthdays and honor our "Super Star" students.

Calendar/Circle Time:

Each morning begins with attendance and Calendar Time. Introducing students to the concepts of time, seasons, and weather is the main objective for Calendar Time. Teachers also review letters, numbers, counting, patterns, and colors using thematic units.

Lesson Time:

Stories, group discussions, games, and activities using creative instructional techniques teach important concepts related to the curriculum. Lessons are interactive and allow for maximum participation by all children.

Structured Activity Time:

Planned activities, designed to implement the curriculum, take place within the numerous learning centers where small groups of children work individually, together, or with the teacher or teacher assistant.

Center Time:

Children are able to make guided choices about their activities in the classroom. The teacher provides areas that focus on a particular skill the children will need to develop

successfully. Center Time provides the children with opportunities to develop social skills, creativity, independence, and oral language skills.

Snack/Lunch Time:

Children have a snack and lunch in their classroom. The classroom teacher and assistant stay with them to teach them important life skills that are an integral part of the curriculum. Table manners, eating politely, washing hands before and after eating, as well as, tidying up after eating are all part of the snack and lunch routines. Teachers sit with the students and discuss daily activities, encourage conversation, and reinforce proper eating habits. Healthy eating is encouraged. Fizzy drinks, chips, chocolate, and sweets are not allowed at school.

Outdoor play:

Children will play outdoors at least twice each day. Teachers and assistants supervise and circulate among the students during this time ensuring safety on the playground.

Field Trips:

Field trips are scheduled throughout the school year for each grade level and notification of these plans will be made to the parents by way of the monthly 'What's On' calendar. Children will receive a permission slip a few days before the scheduled trip. This form must be signed and returned to the teacher the next day. Children who do not have a signed permission slip are not permitted to go on the trip. Non-participation is very hard on the child, so parents are strongly urged to return all field trip forms in timely manner. If a child is not attending a field trip they must be kept at home on that day.

Islamic Education:

During the time they spend with their Arabic teacher, the children will also be receiving Islamic education.

Special Classes:

Children will visit the library and the computer lab on a weekly basis. The children will alternate between PE and swimming throughout the year. They may also have music and art classes on a regular basis.

Kindergarten Information, Policies, and Procedures

School rules, schedules, and policies are important and remain consistent for everyone. It is important to support and follow these procedures and policies as a means of providing a positive example for the children.

KG Hours:

(Pre-K, KG 1, and KG 2)

School starts each morning at 7:50 AM and ends at 1:00 PM for all KG Students Pre K – KG2. The Kindergarten gate will not be open until 7:10 AM so please do not bring the children before this time as teachers are not available for supervision. It is very important that children are picked up on time. Young children can become quite anxious if they are picked up late from school. The second time a child is left late at school a written warning will be sent home. If it happens a third time, the parents will be contacted to come in to the school to have a meeting with the teacher and the Principal.

Aftercare:

KG runs an Aftercare program; this is solely for KG students that are registered at ABS. The Aftercare program starts at 1PM and finishes at 2.30PM, please do not be late collecting your children. The program comprises of art, computers, story time, science and many more activities that will keep your child occupied during this time. If you are interested in putting your child in Aftercare, please contact the Cashier at main reception who will guide you through the process of enrolling your child in this program. Spaces are limited.

ID Cards for Pick-Up and Drop-Off:

When parents, maids, or drivers drop off and pick up a child, they will be asked to present their ID card in order to pass through the security gates. It is very important that the parents be consistent in sending the same person to drop off and pick up the child each day. For the child's safety and protection, no child will be released to anyone without an ABS ID card. Parents will be asked to provide a list of names they give permission to pick their child up from school. If someone arrives at school to pick up the child and he/she is not on the permission list, the child will not be released to leave. If a child will be picked up early by someone not on the permission list, the parent must send a note to the teacher to alert her of the early dismissal and to give the school permission to release the child to an adult that is not on the permission list.

If a child needs to be released early from school, the person picking up the child must first obtain a pass from the Kindergarten secretary before going to the child's classroom.

Attendance:

All children must be in school by 7.30 a.m. Children arriving after this time will be marked as tardy. Parents should notify the school before 8.00 AM if the child is going to be absent, include the reason for the absence. If a child misses three consecutive days, they must bring a written note of explanation from the parent or a doctor. Success in school depends, to a great extent, on regular attendance and punctuality. Students who arrive late or who are often absent miss important information and contact time. Tardiness and absences may interfere with your child acquiring the skills and concepts necessary to succeed at the next grade level.

Illness/Medications:

Children who have a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or a contagious disease such as: measles, chicken pox, strep throat, head lice, or conjunctivitis **MUST** remain at home. Your child must have been fever-free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

Teachers do not administer medications to students. The school nurse will administer any medication that a student must take during school hours. Any medicine sent to school must be accompanied by a note with the name of the student, the name of the medicine, the dosage, and the time the medicine is to be administered.

Toilet Training:

The American Bilingual School **requires** that **ALL** Kindergarten children attending the school **MUST** be toilet trained. ABS reserves the right to suspend or terminate enrollment if a student is not toilet trained. Occasional accidents, however, are normal, particularly during the first weeks of school. Please send a complete change of clothing (including socks) to school to be kept in your child's classroom in case of an emergency. These clothes should be clearly labeled and placed in a plastic bag.

Uniforms:

All Kindergarten students attending ABS are required to wear the prescribed school uniform, which can be purchased at the school uniform shop on campus.

Jewelry:

Kindergarten students may not wear jewelry or watches to school. Girls may wear small earrings that do not dangle.

Toys:

Toys should not be brought to school unless the teacher permits it on a special occasion.

Money:

Students should not bring money to school except when it is requested by the school for special excursions or events.

Parties/Birthdays:

Birthday parties may be celebrated with your child's class in our Party Room, but only with prior permission from the classroom teacher and a reservation made at the KG Reception. Parents should arrange parties a week in advance so they do not interfere with scheduled lessons and activities.

The following guidelines must be adhered to in order for your child's party to run smoothly.

- * Parties are to be booked at the KG reception with Sarah
- * Parties are to be held in the Pre K party area ONLY.
- * Parties are to be held during your child's snack/lunch break only. We must strictly adhere to this rule so that classroom instruction is not interrupted.
- * Parents will be allowed access to the snack room half an hour before the party to set up.
- * We ask that you bring healthy food/snacks and drinks for your child's special day. Birthday cakes or cupcakes are allowed but we ask that you refrain from bringing candies unless part of a goodie bag for classmates to take home.
- * Parents are responsible for all clean up after the party.
- * Please provide forks/spoons and paper plates.

School Bags:

It is important to check your child's school bag each day. There may be important notes sent home by the teacher. Bags must be clearly marked with the child's name and class.

Communication between Home and School

Monthly Newsletters:

Every first Thursday of the month, your child's teacher will send a newsletter home informing parents of activities of the previous month, as well as, what will be going on at the school and in the classroom for the following month. This newsletter will include theme topics, academic skills being taught, reports on special projects, and events with pictures. Parents are encouraged to check the school website weekly for Weekly Overviews, grades for the previous week, and specific academic issues raised by teachers.

Thursday Folders:

Kindergarten children at ABS will bring home a plastic folder containing work that was done during the week. Please look over school forms or information along with your child's work. This provides an excellent opportunity for parents and their children to review and reinforce concepts and skills taught at school.

Homework:

Each Sunday, KG1 and KG2 students will have homework sent home for the week. Please make sure that your child completes their assigned homework each night. The homework sent home will review the lessons that were taught that day in class. Each Sunday, the ELA homework for the next week will be sent home in a folder.

Website:

To assist the parents' involvement in their child's education, the ABS provides access to each individual child's program and progress through the website at www.abs.edu.kw.

This year KG student grades will be posted on Powerschool. The website provides a copy of the teacher's lesson plans. Parents will be able to reinforce, at home, the skills being taught at school. Parents will be given their own user name and password to ensure privacy.

Open House:

The KG department will hold an open house from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM at the beginning of each year. Parents will meet the Principal and learn about the Kindergarten programs goals and objectives. They will meet their child's teachers and see the environment where their child will spend many hours of the coming year. This is a very informative and important event. Parents are warmly encouraged to attend.

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

Two formal parent conferences are scheduled prior to the delivery of both the first and second report cards. The teacher will outline the child's strength and areas for improvement, and offer suggestions for possible courses of action. The teacher or the parent may initiate additional meetings at other times. Parents may be called, for example, if a child displays moderate to severe behavior problems, academic difficulty, or if a change in the child's normal behavior occurs. Parents may request an additional conference by means of a note or call to the teacher or Kindergarten Secretary.

Teachers can meet with parents between the hours of 2:30 PM until 3:00 PM, but parents need to make an appointment 24 hours in advance to give teachers time to properly prepare and to ensure that they have not scheduled other meetings. Most difficulties can be resolved by speaking directly with the classroom teacher. If meetings with the teacher do not resolve the concern, parents are invited to schedule an appointment

with the Kindergarten Principal, who will make every effort to resolve any difficulties or concerns. These appointments can be made through the department secretary.

Report Cards:

The academic year is usually divided into four quarters. A formal report card will be sent home at the end of each quarter. They indicate student progress in meeting curricular goals, both academically and socially. Parents must remember that each child develops at a different rate and they should encourage and support them as they discuss their report card.

Superstar Awards:

Each Thursday, Superstar Awards are handed out to students who have shown positive performance, whether academic or behavioral. One student from each class is chosen and their photo will be placed on display. Each week, this group of Superstar winners is brought to the Principal's Office where the Principal reads them a story. This program is great for building our students' self-esteem.

Behavior Expectations

At The American Bilingual School, we expect children to be able to perform some activities *independently*. Please help your child by encouraging them to get dressed, use the toilet, wash and dry their hands, tidy up after themselves, and fasten their shoes on their own. Children should not come to school wearing shoes with laces unless they know how to tie them by themselves. At ABS, we expect everyone to be polite, take turns, listen carefully, and be helpful.

Student Discipline

In Kindergarten, discipline means helping children practice acceptable behavior. We believe that children learn self-discipline when they are treated with respect. We do not use the same disciplinary techniques in every situation as we recognize that each child and situation is unique. However, all staff follows the same general disciplinary techniques endorsed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

- Set clear, consistent and fair guidelines for classroom behavior and remind children of these guidelines when necessary.
- Redirect children to a more acceptable behavior or activity.
- Listen carefully to what children have to say about their feelings.
- Regard mistakes as opportunities for learning.
- Help children to develop the skills to solve their own conflicts.
- Model appropriate and respectful treatment of people and materials.

In cases of inappropriate behavior, the staff member first tries to determine what happened, then uses professional judgment to decide how best to handle the situation. Children are encouraged to use words to talk about what is bothering them. Staff members try to involve children in the resolution of their conflicts. Staff members also try to encourage the children to see each other's points of view, which is a first step in the development of empathy, an important pro-social behavior. Discipline and showing courtesy to others is expected of the students during field trips and other school related activities.

On occasion, the teacher may need to direct a child away from a group or activity, but this redirection is not used as punishment. It is an attempt to change a situation that is leading to inappropriate behavior. 'Time-out' is used if redirecting a child's activities is not effective. Students are brought to the Kindergarten Principal when their behavior is dangerous to themselves or others, or if all other attempts to solve the problem have failed. Parents will be notified in these cases and a parent conference may be scheduled.

At ABS, we believe a consistent and positive approach to discipline is best. Staff members do not, under any circumstance, hit, criticize, or make hurtful comments to the children. Relating positively to the students at all times is the primary goal at ABS.

Thank you for your support and cooperation. We hope that your child will have an enjoyable and successful academic year here at The American Bilingual School in Kuwait.