In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Al Aqsa Islamic Academy

Parent-Student Handbook



1501 Germantown Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19122
Tel: 215-765-6660
https://www.aqsaacademy.org/

Al Aqsa Islamic Academy is accredited by the Middle States Association of Schools & Colleges

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Principal's Office 4

Overview 5
History, Vision, Mission Statement, Objectives, Organizational Structure, Board of Directors, School Committee, Role of Parents.

Program of Instruction 9
Islamic Studies, World Language-Arabic, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science and Technology, Arts, Anti-Bullying Curriculum, Computer & Library Science.

Academics 13
Accreditation, Class Size, Time Allotment, Homework, Make-up Work, Report Cards, Grading, Academic Deficiency Report, Book Fines.

School Policies 16
Admission and Registration, Admission Criteria, Application Form, Tuition and Fees, Smart Tuition, Application Deposit Fee, Books and Learning Materials, Other Expenses/Uniforms, Payment Schedule, Payment Policy, Withdrawal, Delinquent Accounts, Returned Checks, Tuition Assistance.

Health Guidelines 21
Health and Immunization Records, Medications, Medical Problems, Illness and Injury, Communicable Diseases, Child Abuse and Neglect.

Emergency Procedures 23
Emergency Contact Numbers, Emergency School Closings, Fire & Lockdown Drills.

Administration and Staff 24
School Staff, Administration Staff, Teaching Staff.

General School Procedures 25
School Hours, Attendance, Arrival, Tardy Policy, Schoolwide Assembly, Snack, Lunch, Recess, Dhuhr Prayer & Friday Juma'ah, Dismissal, Early Pick-up, Late Pick-up, Absenteeism.

Behavior and Discipline 30
General Philosophy of Code of Conduct, General Rules of Student Behavior, Building Rules and Regulations, Lunch Time Rules, Recess and Playground Rules, Reward for Good Behavior, Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior, Discipline Flow Chart, Roster of Office Visits, Detention, Suspension, Dress Code and Uniform Policy, Grievance Policy.

Student Services **36**
Educational Material, Transportation, Lunch Program, Lockers & Cubbies, Standardized Testing, DIAL-4 Screening, Special Needs, After-School Program, Quran and Arabic Support, Guidance Counselor, Health Services, Student Records, Lost and Found.

Student Recognition Programs **39**
Student of the Month, Exemplary Islamic Character, Principal's Reader Principal's List, Quran Memorization Award, End of Year Attendance Award.

Annual School Events **40**
Back-to-School "Orientation Night", Parent-Teacher Conference, Book Fair, Drama Night, Kindergarten Graduation, Last Day of School, Field Trips, Islamic Week, Eid Celebrations, Community Service, Inter-School Student Exchange Program, Student Presentations & Fundraiser.

Home and School Relations **44**
Communication, Office Telephone, Change of Information, Parking Lot, Visiting School, Fundraising Activities, Parent Volunteers, Parent-Teacher Organization, Continuing Education Support.

Miscellaneous **47**
School Calendar, Slogan, Core Values, Photos, Media, Summer Program. Covid19

Handbook Dissemination & Parent Acknowledgement **49**



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

Assalamu alaikum wb.

Dear Parents, Guardians and Families,

On behalf of everyone at the Al Aqsa Islamic Academy (AAIA), I extend a very warm welcome to all new and returning students.

At AAIA, we aim at providing the best level of education that is rooted in Islamic faith and Islamic traditions.

Our board of trustees, school committee, administration, teachers, and staff are equally committed towards providing a learning environment that is stimulating yet safe, challenging yet accepting, comprehensive in essential skills yet responsive to individual differences. We hope to nurture in our students a passion for learning that will sustain them throughout their lives.

The information in this handbook covers various aspects of our school including, but not limited to, the programs of instruction, administration and staff, student services and school policies. Please invest some time in a careful read of its contents and use it as a first point of reference for any query that may arise during the academic year.

I would like to extend my hand in inviting you to explore ideas or discuss any concerns. We always value your input and continuous support. May Allah SWT guide us towards making this year an educationally invigorating and spiritually inspiring one for our children and help us fulfill our planned goals and dreams, Insha'Allah.

Your sister in Islam,

Sr Shireen
Principal
principal@alaqsaschool.org

OVERVIEW

HISTORY

The Muslim community in Philadelphia, as in other regions in North America, face the challenge of raising children with high academic achievement while maintaining their religious and cultural backgrounds. The weekend schools at various Islamic centers and mosques provide a partial solution to this problem but they do not provide enough learning time to achieve this purpose.

Al-Aqsa Islamic Academy is an Islamic private day school in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, established in 1994. The school consists of a Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade coeducational program. It is affiliated with the Al-Aqsa Islamic Society Mosque/Masjid. Coursework includes four major subjects plus Islamic studies, the Arabic language, and Quran classes.

VISION

Al Aqsa Islamic Academy (AAIA) aims to provide a high-standard curriculum that is comprehensive, balanced, and aligned with educational standards while catering to the diverse needs and interests of students. AAIA provides a comprehensive curriculum education that integrates Islam into all aspects of learning. We consider learning to be a lifelong responsibility. We educate our students to integrate into society as proud practicing Muslims. It is our earnest endeavor to create a learning environment where children develop Islamic behavior, manners, morals, and pride in their Islamic heritage.

The objectives of the academic programs at AAIA are to form minds that are skilled and discerning, which are equipped with logical scientific reasoning, trained in basic skills, full of creativity, and prepared for lifelong learning. AAIA instills students with an awareness of achievements of Muslim scholars in the fields of the humanities, mathematics and sciences. We encourage our students to excel in their education and advance the mission of their ancestors by contributing to modern-day scholarship.

AAIA provides a productive and supportive environment for maximum social, emotional, physical and academic development of each child according to the values of Islam, and challenges students to reach their maximum human potential. AIA guides the children to lead decent contemporary lives, enrich their families, serve their community, tolerate differences, think critically, promote collaboration and respect others. School activities help the children develop individual talents, self-esteem and leadership characteristics and offer an outlet for demonstrating creativity. The entire school community provides high learning and practice standards, preparing the students to live in a complex, technological and multicultural society as proud practicing Muslims.

MISSION STATEMENT

AAIA's mission is to provide students with a safe, nurturing, and uplifting Islamic educational environment that will help them achieve academic excellence and prepare them to become morally and socially responsible and productive citizens rooted in the teachings of Islam and the Sunnah.

OBJECTIVES

1. As an educational institution, we strive to shape the minds and hearts of our students according to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the blessed Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Students are introduced to the importance of the Holy Quran, *Hadith*, *Seerah*, *Fiqh,* the lives of the *Sahabah*, and the lives of the greatest religious, scholarly and historical figures from the history of Islam.

2. Arabic is a core part of the curriculum at AIA. This opens pathways to a deeper understanding of the Holy Quran.

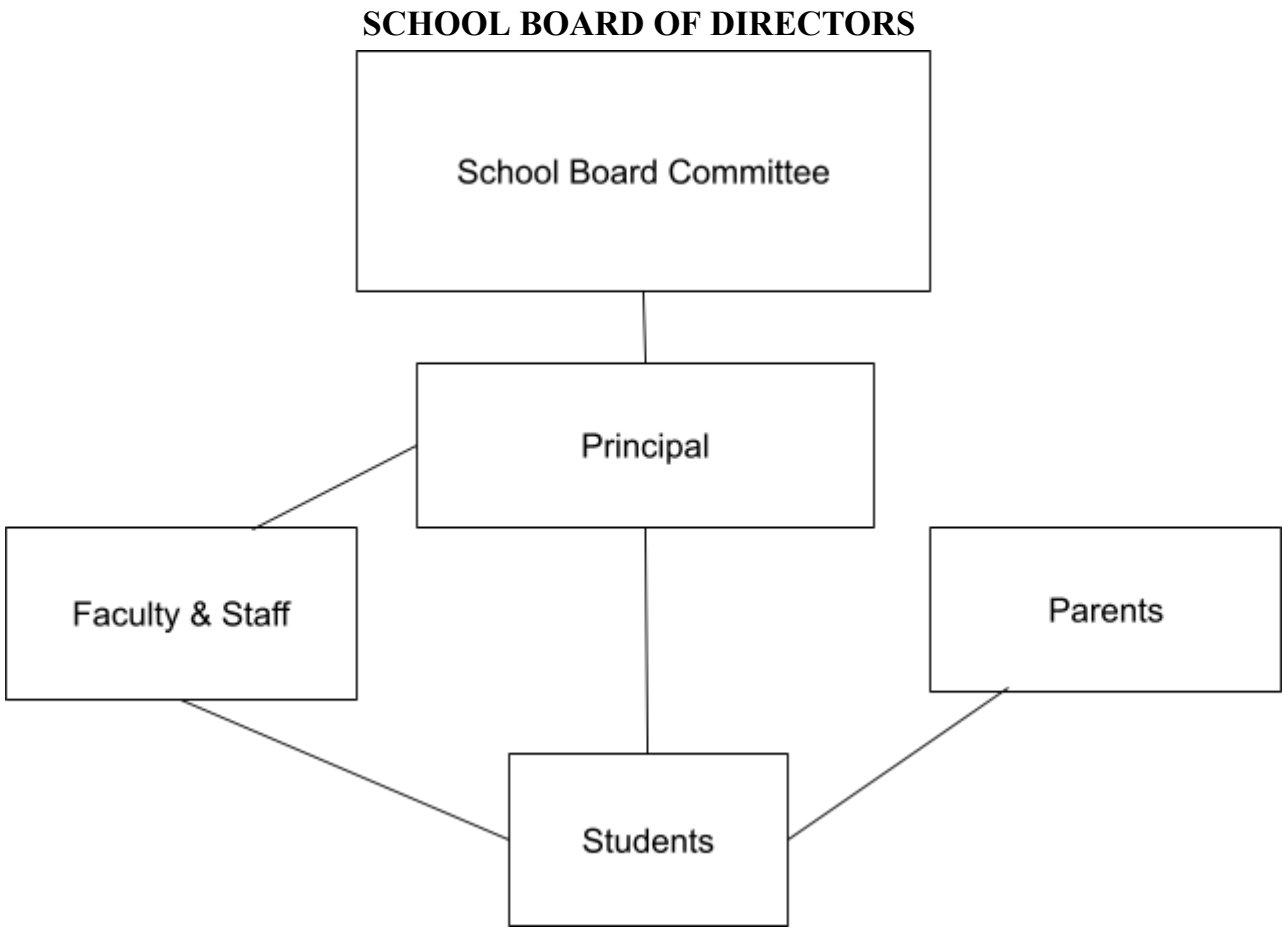
3. As a result of our commitment to an Islamic education, we are stronger in our commitment in providing the best education to our students in all the essential core subjects. We are committed to utilizing a curriculum that maintains an appropriate balance amongst its different components, employing the best textbooks, resources and tools available, and draws upon the most effective teaching methods. We seek to create a love of learning, a spirit of inquiry, and a habit of reflection in our students.

4. The teachers and school staff are educators and mentors for our students. We therefore consider it imperative that they combine the highest proficiency in their fields of knowledge with the character and moral outlook that AIA seeks to create in our children. As such, our teachers are lifelong learners who continue to enhance all necessary skills to provide the best education for our students and must maintain the highest moral character to set an example for our students.

5. Islam teaches us to distinguish between ***Haqq*** *(Truth)* and ***Batl*** *(Falsehood)*, between ***Halal*** *(permissible)* and ***Haram*** *(not permissible)*, but at the same time urges tolerance and respect towards those who practice other faiths. We teach our students to learn to interact effectively and respectfully with people who follow other faiths, to tolerate differences of opinion within their own community, and to keep their minds receptive to knowledge from all sources.

6. The enrichment activities at AIA also reflect Islamic values and traditions. Students are taught recitation of the Quran and Islamic history and visual arts.

Al Aqsa Islamic Academy
Organizational Structure



The AAIA School Board of Directors (the "AAIA School Board") reviews policies and rules regarding the operation of AIA. The school board consists of members from which the AAIA School Committee and other committees are formed. The AAIA School Board is composed of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Comptroller. The President is an elected member of the AAIA School Board The vice-president, treasurer, secretary, and comptroller are appointed by the president and approved by the AIA School Board. The AAIA School Committee works closely with the principal to administer efficient functioning of the school.

The AAIA School Board meetings are scheduled annually or more frequently, if necessary. Decisions of the AAIA School Board are based upon recommendations made by the AAIA School Committee, the principal, or by one or more of other committee members. Decisions are made by consensus or by a majority vote. The members of the AAIA School Board do not receive financial compensation for their activity as board members.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The AAIA School Committee reviews policies and rules regarding the operation of AIA. It supervises and administers efficient functioning of AIA. The chairperson of the School Committee is appointed by the board of directors. Meetings of the School Committee are scheduled monthly or more frequently, if necessary. Decisions of the School Committee are based on recommendations made by the subcommittees, by one or more committee member(s), by consensus or by a majority vote. Activities of the School Committee are reported to the school's Board of Directors. The members of the School Committee do not receive any financial compensation for their activity as committee members.

ROLE OF PARENTS

The ultimate aim of every responsible Muslim parent is to raise his/her child based on the fundamentals of Islam. AIA can provide support and strengthen parents' efforts. At the same time, parents need to partner with AIA in its mission of imparting high-quality formal education embedded in the best traditions of Islamic values. The need for a faithful cooperation between AIA and parents cannot be overemphasized. AIA administration, teaching staff and parents must work together and create an atmosphere of respect and trust for each other. The school administration and staff must value the importance of parents, and the parents must understand the responsibilities and authority of the school administration and staff.

It is as important for parents to provide an Islamic atmosphere at home as it is for them to assure that their children do their best in school both academically and Islamically. Parents must take an active role in seeing that their children complete their homework assignments, that the students respectfully obey their teachers and follow and comply with the rules and regulations of AIA. Parent-teacher conferences provide an excellent forum to discuss concerns, and parents must make the best use of this communication opportunity. Parents must cooperate with teachers and support them in training and disciplining the children in true Islamic traditions. Finally, parents should fulfill their financial obligations and support AIA in its policies, academic and religious programs, fund-raising efforts and other activities.

AAIA believes in a positive and constructive working relationship with family members (defined as parents, guardians, students, or other persons associated with the student.) If a parent or other family member's behavior, communications, or interactions on or off campus (including during school sponsored events) is disruptive, intimidating, overly aggressive, or reflects a loss of confidence or disagreement with AIA's safety procedures, responsibilities or accomplishment of its education program, AIA reserves the right to dismiss the family or family member from the community and refuse the family or family member from entering the school grounds. AIA reserves the right to place restrictions on parents' or other family members' involvement or activity at School, on AAIA property, or at school events related events for reasons that AAIA deems appropriate.

PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION

THE CURRICULUM

A successful and competitive school system must include a highly regarded curriculum, teaching the basic subjects of knowledge. These subjects include Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science and Technology, Health, Arts and World Languages. AIA implements the frameworks of the State of Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Common Core. These curriculum frameworks were developed recently by the most noted educators from the State of Pennsylvania in each of the seven basic subject areas. The frameworks are the first statewide guidelines for curriculum and instruction. They are based on sound research and effective practice. They reflect a vision of how classrooms of the future can and should look like to assist all students to achieve high standards of excellence. These frameworks, or outlines of the basic subject's curricula, are highly competitive.

AIA has also developed an outstanding curriculum for the study of Islamic Education, including Islamic religion and Quran. AAIA has developed curriculum guidelines that are similar to Pennsylvania Department of Education frameworks by studying curricula of other Pennsylvania based Islamic schools. Our educators integrate Islamic principles in the various areas of the instructional programs. For example, Arabic is taught as part of World Languages, and the history and culture of Islamic countries are covered in Religion.

Below are the core subjects of the curriculum. Only the core concepts and strands of each discipline are described.

ISLAMIC STUDIES

Students develop an Islamic morality derived from the teachings of Quran and *Seerah* of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Students develop understanding of the fundamentals of Islamic beliefs and obligations. The curriculum is supplemented by other curricula such as World Languages (Arabic and Quran) and Religion (Islamic history including *Seerah*).

Strands

Students will:

1. Learn to follow Islamic beliefs (*Iman*), practices (*Fiqh*) and worship (*Ibadah*).
2. Develop Islamic morals and behavior (*Akhlaq*).
3. Study the biography (*Seerah*) of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).
4. Understand the teaching of the Quran by reading its commentary (*Tafseer*).
5. Learn the fundamentals of the Sayings (*Hadith*) of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

WORLD LANGUAGE -- ARABIC

Learning more than one language opens doors to new ways of thinking and doing, believing and communicating, and through that process, students learn more about themselves. The World Language discipline is about communicating and making connections to other cultures. Teaching of the fundamentals of Arabic Language as part of the World Language is an important part of the AAIA curriculum. It supplements our Quranic studies as part of the Islamic Studies core concept.

Strands

Students will:

1. Be able to communicate in English and Arabic.
2. Learn to read and recite the Quran.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Students are taught to be lifelong learners and they need the necessary skills to infer, analyze, and apply knowledge and experiences for a variety of purposes, audiences, and situations. Muslim students must develop proficient language and communication skills to effectively present the message of Islam to society.

Strands

Students will:

1. Use effective strategies to read, write, speak, listen, view, and present.
2. Understand and use conventions required for a variety of purposes, audiences, and situations.
3. Respond critically to a variety of oral, written and visual texts.
4. Engage productively in discussions as listeners and speakers.
5. Understand and respect the dynamics of languages and dialects.
6. Become critical users and producers of a variety of communication media.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics is a vehicle for discovering the universe of order and reasoning in Allah's creations. Achieving mathematical power through problem solving, communication, reasoning, and connections is a key to succeeding in this modern and technological society.

Strands

Students will be able to learn:

1. Number Sense and Basic Facts
2. Patterns, Relations and Algebraic Functions
3. Geometry, Measurement and Spatial Sense
4. Statistics and Probability
5. Critical Thinking and Word Problems

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social Studies promotes inquiry and independent thinking and empowers students to become socially responsible participants in a diverse and democratic society.

Strands

Students will learn about:

1 People, Places and Environments
2 Cultures and Identities
3 Time, Continuity and Change
4 Production, Distribution and Consumption 5 Power, Authority and Governance

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

If students are to become able to master the questions of science and technology, they need to engage with them the way scientists and technologists do. Asking questions and evaluating evidence are central to this inquiry. The students discover the signs of Allah in the physical world of science. They learn to understand that technological skills are needed to help mankind as mandated by Allah.

Strands

1 *Inquiry*: Lifelong learners are able to use the methods of inquiry to participate in scientific investigation and technological problem solving.
2 *Domains of Science*: Lifelong learners are able to understand and apply the principles, laws, and fundamental understanding of the natural sciences.
3 *Technology*: Lifelong learners are able to understand and apply the design process and the use of technology in society.
4 *Science, Technology, and Human Affairs*: Lifelong learners understand questions and problems of science and technology in the context of human affairs.

ARTS

Learning in the arts is grounded in production and performance. Learning in, about, and through the arts requires an understanding of cultural and historical contexts to develop imaginative, critical, and reflective thinking. Islamic architecture, calligraphy, *Tajweed* and *Qiraat* (recitation of Quran) are emphasized. Examples of arts from Islamic cultures are also introduced.

Strands

1 Use the arts as a way of expressing ideas, feelings and beliefs.
2 Gain satisfaction from learning the essential skills and technical demands unique to each art form.
3 Participate in the arts for enjoyment and personal growth.
4 Integrate their understanding of the arts by seeking connections and parallels among various disciplines of art.
5 Understand the dynamics of the creative process and gain insight into their work through reflection.
6 Observe, discuss, analyze and make critical judgements about the artistic work of others.

7 Turn to the arts to further their awareness of people and cultures.
8 Are knowledgeable about the ways in which technology and invention have historically influenced artists and offered them new possibilities for expression.
9 Contribute to their communities by sharing their expertise in the arts and by participating in the activities of cultural institutions.

ANTI-BULLYING CURRICULUM

In accordance with the Pennsylvania Anti-bullying law, Al Aqsa Islamic Academy has adopted the Pennsylvania Aggression Reduction Center Pre-K-12 Anti-bullying curriculum, which can be found at https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/bullying/Pages/default.aspx. Students and teachers explore the various scenarios that may occur in their daily lives, which constitute bullying and cyber-bullying.

Delegation of Responsibility:

- Each staff member shall be responsible to maintain an educational environment free of bullying and cyberbullying.
- Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of his/her fellow students and to ensure an atmosphere free from all forms of bullying and cyberbullying.
- Students shall be encouraged to report bullying or cyberbullying complaints to any staff member.
- Any staff member who receives a bullying or cyber bullying complaint shall refer the matter to an administrative official in order to determine if bullying or cyberbullying has occurred. If the behavior is found to meet the definition of bullying or cyberbullying, the administration will complete the appropriate written documentation.
- The Administration will inform the parents or guardians of the victim and also the parents or guardians of the accused.

Complaint Procedure:

A student shall report a complaint of bullying or cyberbullying, orally or in writing, to a staff member. If a parent initiates the complaint, the appropriate staff member will follow-up with the student.

The staff member will either refer the matter to an administrative official in order to determine if the alleged bullying or cyberbullying conduct occurred.

After the information has been gathered, the administration will determine the need for further investigation or the appropriate intervention, which may result in

administrative discipline to ensure that the conduct ceases. If the behavior is found to meet the definition of bullying or cyberbullying, the building principal will complete the appropriate written documentation.

A violation of this Policy shall subject the offending student to appropriate disciplinary action, consistent with the student discipline code, which may include suspension, expulsion or notification to the appropriate authorities as provided below.

Zero-Tolerance for Bullying:

In the situation that bullying occurs, the bully will be held responsible for his/her actions. A student who bullies will be subjected to the following: immediate parent notification, documentation of incident will be placed in student's permanent record, as well as suspension from school for three consecutive school days. NO EXCEPTIONS. All missed work will be an automatic ZERO. Any further bullying action will result in automatic EXPULSION from the school. If the matter rises to the level of a criminal offense, the student will be referred to the appropriate authorities.

COMPUTER-INTERACTIVE PROJECTORS AND LIBRARY SCIENCES

Our classrooms are all equipped with smart boards and computers that teachers use periodically to enhance instruction of core subjects and teach students how to use technology throughout their studies.

ACADEMICS

ACCREDITATION & NEASC

Al Aqsa Islamic Academy is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

TIME ALLOTMENT

Subject	Minutes/Week
Language Arts (Reading, Language, Spelling and Handwriting)	450/225
Mathematics	225
Science & Technology	110/225
Social Studies including history and culture of Islamic countries	110/225
Physical Education/Art/Library/EC	225
Arabic	225
Religion/Quran	225
Recess	150
Breaks (including snack, lunch and prayer time)	200

HOMEWORK

Homework is an essential element of a student's educational progress at AIA to support mastery of skills; greater understanding of materials covered in class, and effectively promotes independence, creativity, and self-discipline in learning.

Teachers will regularly assign well-developed homework assignments that are directly related to lessons covered in class. Parents are expected to monitor their children's progress and ensure completion of all homework assignments. Parents can help the academic progress of their children by providing a suitable atmosphere for completing homework on time, by checking to see if it is done properly, by making sure the homework is brought to class when due, and by providing assistance and advice as needed.

MAKE UP WORK

Students who miss classes due to appointments or other reasons are required to complete the missed classes and homework. Adequate time is allowed for completion of such work. For those students who may be absent for an unusual length of time due to extended illness or emergency (vacation time does not apply), the teacher and Principal will discuss the situation with their parents and formulate a strategy for the missed work. Students are responsible to complete all work assigned by their teacher by or before the due date.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued at the end of each **quarter** to inform parents of their child's academic progress and are posted online via our JupiterEd student portal. In addition, progress reports are also posted online on JupiterEd in the middle of each quarter to update parents as to their children's academic development.

At the end of the school year, the complete full-year report card will be posted on JupiterEd for parents' easy and safe record. In case a child is relocating or transferring to another school, all report cards and progress reports will be released to the parents once they have signed a release form for the documents; otherwise the transcripts will be sent directly to the child's new school once an official request is received from that same school.

If a student is excessively absent, this will impact student's academic performance and grades, particularly if the absences lead to missed assignments, tests, and classroom participation. This will lead to failing or lower scores egarding grades and report cards.

GRADING

Grading Policy

Grades K-2	%
TESTS	45
QUIZ	20
CLASSWORK/PARTICIPATION	10
HOMEWORK	5
End of Term Assessment	20
GRADES 3-6	%
TESTS	45
QUIZ	20
CLASSWORK/PARTICIPATION	10
HOMEWORK	5
End of term Test	20
GRADES 7-12	%
TESTS	45
QUIZ	20
CLASSWORK/PARTICIPATION	10
HOMEWORK	5
End of Term Exam	20

Grade Level	Grading Categories
K - 2	4 Advanced
	3 Proficient
	2 Developing

	1 Beginning
3-12	A+ 97%
	A 93%
	A- 90%
	B+ 87%
	B 83%
	B- 80%
	C+ 77%
	C 73%
	C- 70%
	D+ 67%
	D 63%
	D- 60%
	F 0 - 59%

As educators, we recognize that all aspects of our student's daily learning are important, not just test grades. Thus, for grades 1 through 5, students will receive a computed percentage score for each core subject based on performance in:

Assigned Projects
Quizzes
Tests

JUPITEREd - ONLINE SCHOOL PORTAL

Each student registered at school will be assigned a unique student identification (ID) number and an account on JupiterEd will be set-up to contain the child's contact information, academic, health and behavioral records. Teachers will upload quiz, test and

project scores in a timely manner to help provide immediate feedback on students' understanding and mastery of taught concepts and skills. Parents can monitor their children's academic performance online through the JupiterEd grade portal.

ACADEMIC AND/OR SOCIAL DEFICIENCY REPORT

Teachers may issue a weekly or bi-weekly report for students experiencing difficulty in any academic area or having problems with behavior. These reports will help to closely monitor such students' progress and will be sent home. These reports must be signed by the parents and returned to the teacher on the following school day. Parents are encouraged to set up a conference to discuss these reports with the teachers at mutually-agreed upon intervals.

BOOK FINES

Parents are required to pay for the cost of repair of books damaged by students. Books damaged beyond repair or lost are to be replaced immediately. Any student who loses his/her book will be responsible to pay the original cost of it to the office. An unusually large occurrence of such incidents by a student may result in further disciplinary actions including fines as determined by the Principal.

SCHOOL POLICIES

ADMISSION

Al Aqsa Islamic Academy does not discriminate on the basis of color, ethnicity, gender, or religion for enrollment. The school offers an outstanding opportunity for students with the ability and willingness to benefit from an academically intensive school program within an Islamic environment. The curriculum and other activities combine the best training in core subject areas with the practice of Islam; so that our students can grow up to be conscientious Muslims. AIA requires all its students to take all core courses including Arabic, Islamic education and Quranic reading.

When reviewing a new student application, the admission committee takes into consideration the student's academic grades from the previous school, his/her standardized test scores, character, available remaining seats in the class for his/her grade level and the potential of parents' active involvement in future school activities.

ADMISSION CRITERIA

AIA is not equipped for teaching students that might need special education or might have behavior problems. Students in need of special care are referred by parents or school personnel to the local public school district.

Currently AIA is open to students from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12. The following are the age limits for admission into these grades:

Grade	Admission Age
Pre-K3	3 years by Sept.1st
Pre-K 4	4 years by Sept.1st
Kindergarten, KG3	5 years by Sept.1st
1st	6 years by Sept.1st
2nd	7 years by Sept.1st
3rd	8 years by Sept.1st
4th	9 years by Sept.1st
5th	10 years by Sept.1st
Etc.	

REGISTRATION

Returning Students

All returning students must register to be enrolled in the new year. Returning students registration starts in February and new students can register in March. This allows AIA to determine the number of available seats for new students to accept in each grade.

We reserve the right to not accept any student who has excessive absences, low performance and behavioral issues.

Online Registration

Al Aqsa Islamic Academy offers the convenience of a secure online registration on its website at https://www.aqsaacademy.org/

Registration Fee

A **non-refundable fee of $300** for returning, and **non-refundable fee of $400** for new students is applicable with each and every application for admission every year. Students will not have a spot reserved if the fee has not been paid.

Registering your child and paying a fee does not guarantee the child has been accepted into the school. Decisions will be made by the administration whether or not a student is accepted.

Birth Certificate, Academic Transcripts, Immunization and Health Records

A copy of the candidate's birth certificate, social security card, immunization and health records, current and previous academic transcripts must be submitted to the Registrar along with the relevant application forms and fees.

Non-submission of these required documentation may result in the candidate's application being denied.

Interview

The Registrar will schedule an interview for the applicant. This gives us a chance to learn more about candidates and their families, as well as allows their families to learn more about AIA. In addition, the Registrar will contact the candidate's previous school for original transcripts. No interviews will be set up before the completion of all registration requirements.

Review of Application

After completing the interviews, the admission committee reviews each application carefully. All accepted candidates are communicated either verbally or in writing about their acceptance.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition and fees at Al Aqsa Islamic Academy do not reflect the actual cost of educating a student at the school. Every effort is made to reduce the cost of tuition below actual cost so that the school is affordable to as many families as possible.

If you choose to pay in monthly installments extra fees will apply.

Tuition for all Students Grade KG to 12th	**Tuition Fee**
1st Child	$5,500
2nd Child	$ 5,000
3rd Child	$ 5,000
4th etc.	$ 5,000

AAIA has partnered with ***Blackbaud Tuition Management*** to service your child's tuition account.

To enroll online, please follow these instructions.

1. Go to https://enroll.blackbaud.school **(Al Aqsa Islamic Academy school ID: 15260)**

Please Note:

1. Non-Refundable Registration Fee for returning or new students
2. If you choose the Monthly payment, you must submit the required amount before the 5th of each month, for nine months, September to May. The monthly payment amounts reflect full price for the first child, and sibling discount for second, third, fourth, and additional children.
3. Any late payment will result in a late fee of $50

If parent decides to pay full amount and opt out of blackbaud monthly installments AAIA school office will not accept any payment unless you agree to pay a FULL amount at once before the start of the school year.

Admission After the Start of the Academic Year

Admission after the start of the school year is processed on *case by case basis* only. However, if the student is admitted, the following tuition policy applies:

1. Full tuition is charged if the student is admitted on or before October 31st.
2. 75% of tuition is charged if the student is admitted between Nov 1st and Dec 31st.
3. 50% of tuition is charged if the student is admitted on or after January 1st.

Tuition

BOOKS & LEARNING MATERIALS

All books and learning materials are computed into the tuition and may include daily/weekly homework packets, daily classroom worksheets, quizzes/test papers, manipulatives, craft materials, etc. **Textbooks and Laptops are loaned to students, and they are responsible for returning them at the end of the year in good condition.** A fine may be assessed for lost and damaged materials. The school may require students to purchase other materials on their own. Any student who wants their own personal set of books and learning material may purchase them directly from the suppliers. Kindly contact the school office for more information.

OTHER EXPENSES

UNIFORMS - Online Order

The school uniform may be purchased directly from the school. Or an AAIA assigned online vendor. Refer to Al-Aqsa Islamic Academy Uniform for more information.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Tuition and fees must be paid according to one of the following payment plans. The method of payment for each family is determined after discussion between parents/guardians and the School Finance Subcommittee. A payment contract is signed by a parent/guardian and an academy official

Plan A *One Payment* Payment of the entire amount and fees
Plan B *Ten Payments* Payments are paid monthly by the 5th of the month through Blackbaud.

Payment Policy

1. Payments are due by the 5th of the month as determined by the payment schedule.
2. A late fee of $50 will be charged if payment is made after the 5th of the month.

WITHDRAWAL

Any student withdrawn from AIA for whatever reason may not re-enroll in the same academic year and may not be considered a new candidate the following year. Withdrawal requests must be submitted in writing to the office.

Withdrawal Policy

1. Parents will forfeit the deposit paid if the student(s) withdraw before September 1.
2. Parents will be liable for 25% of total tuition if student(s) withdraw during September.
3. Parents will be liable for 50% of total tuition, if student(s) withdraw during Oct-Nov.
4. Parents will be liable for 100% of total tuition, if student(s) withdraw after Nov 30.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

Al Aqsa Islamic Academy must receive scheduled payments promptly in order to meet its projected expenses. Late payments or "bounced" checks will be charged a processing fee of $50 a month. It is the responsibility of parents to pay on time.

Payments are considered "past due" if not received 30 days past their due date. The account is then considered delinquent. **Students with delinquent accounts are not admitted to class unless the amount is fully-settled or a mutually-agreed upon payment plan is made.** Students with past delinquent accounts are not eligible for readmission.

RETURNED CHECKS

Any check returned by a bank must be replaced immediately, along with a $30 returned check fee. If more than one check is returned during a semester, AIA may require future payments to be made by money orders or certified checks.

SCHOLARSHIP ASSISTANCE

Scholarship information available for our school on the following website:
http://www.csfphiladelphia.org/scholarships
Online applications are found at this site. This is a Kg to 8th grade scholarship for the school year. Many of our children (grades Kg to 8th) are receiving anywhere from 25% to 75% tuition discount. Lastly, there is an annual income eligibility requirement which is on the website. We encourage our parents to check out this opportunity.

HEALTH GUIDELINES

HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

All parents are required to provide Pennsylvania School Health Record -Private Physician's Examination by their family physician at the time of registration each school year. The immunization records of children are checked by the Health Department regularly.

MEDICATIONS

No prescription or non-prescription medication will be given to a student without the written request and permission of the student's parent or guardian. All medications, dosage instructions, prescription information (if any), and permission slips must be turned in to the office by a parent or guardian, not a student. **At no point in time should any form of prescription or non-prescription medication be brought to school by the student without the office's knowledge.**

MEDICAL PROBLEMS

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to inform the office and the class teacher of any allergies or medical problems your child may have that need attention while at school. Also, parents should provide in writing any immediate action (first aid) that your doctor may have recommended.

ILLNESS AND INJURY

Any type of illness, accident or injury that occurs in school is reported immediately to the Office. First Aid guidelines allow the school to only attend to minor cuts and abrasions with soap and water, and/or apply a dry sterile dressing (e.g. band aid) thereafter. A note about the incident is posted on Jupiter. In case of any questions, parents may contact the Office.

In case of illness or injury that is more serious, the parent or guardian is contacted at the emergency number provided to the school. Parents should also consider providing the Office with the contact number of their family physician who will be contacted if no one is available at the emergency numbers.

In case of a medical emergency, standard procedure will be followed, and the office will call the local emergency number 911. The parents will also be contacted at the emergency contact number provided. All possible initial care will also be provided by one of the teachers trained in first-aid procedures including CPR.

It is therefore extremely important that any changes in address, home and office phone numbers, emergency contact numbers and family physician numbers are reported to the school office immediately.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

A student with a communicable disease should not be sent to school. It is important to safeguard our students against communicable diseases, therefore, any student suspected of carrying one will be sent home. A note will also be posted with all students about any such occurrence in the school.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Pennsylvania General Laws Chapter 119, Section 51A, requires all cases of suspected child abuse or neglect be reported to the appropriate office of the Pennsylvania Department of Social Services. Teachers, child-care providers, school counselors and administrators are required to follow the guidelines of this law.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

All parents are required to complete an "Emergency Contact Form" at the time of registration. This information is used to contact the parents in case of any emergency. In case of medical emergencies, the local emergency hospital will also be informed. Standard emergency procedure is followed by paramedics and emergency medical personnel.

This Emergency Contact Form is an important document, and it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that the office is informed immediately of any changes in home address, phone numbers and email addresses.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS, DELAYS & "School Messenger"

At times it may be necessary to close AAIA or delay openings due to inclement weather. The decision to close AAIA will be made in consultation with state and town authorities. The announcement will be made as early as possible. The AAIA typically follows the Philadelphia School District closing schedule, which is announced on local radio and TV stations.

Parents will also be notified via JupiterED automated system and School Messenger no later than 5.30am for same day closing or delayed opening. In the event of inclement weather during the school day, AAIA may choose to cease operation and dismiss students early. Parents should contact the office for confirmation if an emergency closing is suspected.

FIRE & "A.L.I.C.E." EMERGENCY RESPONSE DRILLS

In accordance with State Law, fire and lockdown drills are conducted periodically. Amongst the important drill highlights are:

- Every drill must be treated seriously as if it were REAL.
- Drills may take place at any time during regular school hours.
- Teachers must inform students on drill procedures, the specified fire exits for their class and the designated rally sites in the event of an evacuation.
- Students should strictly follow the teacher's instructions upon drill activation.
- Teachers should have an attendance sheet readily accessible for their classes so they can take attendance when it is safe.
- For fire drills, it shall be the responsibility of the teacher to make sure that all children leave their rooms and the class doors closed behind them.
- For evacuation drills, teachers must ensure students exit immediately and proceed to rally site(s) for safety.
- The principal will give the clear signal once the fire or evacuation drill has concluded.
- Classes will promptly resume upon conclusion of the drill.

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

SCHOOL STAFF

The school staff is selected based on educational qualifications, certification, proficiency in English, Islamic values, and relevant experience. All Al Aqsa Islamic Academy staff have a high degree of commitment to Islamic values supplemented by sound academic backgrounds and experience.

The principal supervises all activities of the school under the rules and regulations set by the AAIA School committee. The teachers, other school personnel, and volunteers work under the supervision of the principal.

ADMINISTRATION

The administrative staff of AAIA is composed of the principal, assistants, registrar and office manager.

TEACHING STAFF

Basic Subjects

All grades, preschool through grade five have full-time homeroom teachers that are responsible for teaching all basic subjects like Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies to their students.

Religion and Quran

A qualified Islamic scholar directs the Islamic studies and religious education. AAIA also engages other knowledgeable scholars as part of its religion staff to teach Quran memorization and Islamic studies.

Arabic

AAIA has a highly qualified & experienced Arabic department under the direction of the Head of the Arabic department.

Support Staff

Teacher Aides help the classroom teachers in some lower elementary as needed. The school is also fortunate to have committed volunteers to support our staff in various tasks.

GENERAL SCHOOL PROCEDURES

SCHOOL HOURS

The school office is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 4 pm, except holidays.

Regular official instruction hours for students are from 8 am to 3:15 pm.

Arrival is conducted from 7:30 am to 8 am (Free Breakfast provided in the cafeteria).

Dismissal is at 3:10 pm grades KG to 6th 3:15 pm grades 7th to 12th

Students should not enter the school premises prior to 7:30 am
No students are allowed to leave the school premises after being dropped off for any reason without expressed permission from school administration.

ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for academic success. Regular attendance is expected of all students. However, illness, non-routine doctor's appointments (e.g MRI), serious illness or death in the family, or absences approved in advance by the school principal are considered as valid "excuses" for absences. *Annual physical is not a valid excuse*. A doctor's note is required in case a student needs to report to school late or if a student needs to be dismissed early from class for an appointment. A note from the doctor is also required if a student is absent from school for two or more days.

The school office must be notified **by 9:00 am** if your child is going to be absent and/or dismissed early. A written note, dated and signed by a parent, must accompany the child when he/she returns the next day and/or when the child is picked-up respectively.

Parents are responsible for knowing the school calendar and planning vacations or trips ahead of time. Overseas trips anytime during the school year and/or immediately before the end of the school year are not permitted. Other than the above instances of valid "excuse", such absences are not excused and will affect student's eligibility forgraduating or getting report cards any monthly and/or end of year awards. AAIA is not obliged to accommodate the student(s)' end of year testing nor can it be held responsible for releasing student report cards early to accommodate the student(s).

Parents will receive automated phone calls if a student is absent or late to school.
Additionally, school staff may make personalized outreach for students at each absence via phone call, parent email or Jupiter Message.

ARRIVAL

Drop-off time for all the students is between 7:45 to 8:00 am. Students should not be dropped-off before 7:30 am as there is no scheduled supervision for the students before. For our children's safety, **under no circumstances should a parent, guardian or designated driver leave behind a child unattended outside the school buildings prior to 7:30 am.**

Morning Drop-off at School Parking Lot

- At 7:40 am, parents or designated drivers may safely drive up to the parking lot of the building to drop-off our students.
- If parents choose to park their car to personally walk his/her child to the front doors, kindly park at the designated parking lots.

Parents should hold their child's hand closely while walking from the parking lot to the school's front doors at all times since the morning traffic is typically heavy.

Morning Drop-off at Pre Kindergarten & Kindergarten Section

- At 7:45am, students must be safely dropped-off in the classroom.

TARDY POLICY

Punctual arrival to the school is part of AAIA's code of conduct. Students are expected to arrive between 7:45-8 am. The tardy policy is as follows:

- Any student who arrives late will be marked late. A late sign in record is kept at the office to track how many times a student is tardy.
- A **third tardy** will be followed up by a phone call to parents.
- After a **fifth tardy**, parents will be called in for a meeting with the principal or dean. At such meetings, further action will be discussed.
- The number of tardy days will appear in the student's report card.

SCHOOLWIDE ASSEMBLY

Every morning, students and staff gather for a schoolwide assembly in the school hall. The time for assembly is 8 am. During assembly, all students are expected to repeat the Athkar and Quran after the teacher and listen attentively and remain quiet to any instructions or announcements. Students who arrive while assembly is being conducted should immediately join the assembly and avoid any further interruptions of the assembly. Once assembly has concluded, students should wait for their homeroom teacher to instruct them to walk back to their classrooms.

FUNDRAISERS

AAIA will have various fundraisers that students may partake in. Letters, announcements, and the monthly calendar will state when and what will be sold.

LUNCH

Students are offered free lunch, or they can bring lunch to school daily. There is no re-heating of student lunch at school. Grades 7th to 12th are allowed to purchase meals at the Masjid store located in the rear of the parking lot. No one is allowed to order or buy from outside.

PIZZA & PRETZEL SALES

Pizza and pretzels will be sold once a week to students. Money will be accepted the Monday before the sale. Teachers and/or office staff will send reminders through Jupiter and the monthly calendar.

OTHER SALES AND EVENT

All other Sales and events will be posted by the office and/or teacher on Jupiter and monthly calendar.

RECESS

AAIA is blessed to have a vast play area in addition to a designated playground and basketball court.

Students enjoy one morning recess before the start of school (7:30 am to 8am) and another afternoon recess, weather-permitting. During recess, students are allowed to play on the basketball court, in the age-appropriate playground and in adjacent areas. Teachers and parent volunteers are responsible for supervising the students and in making sure that they play carefully to avoid any incidents.

In the event of rain, snow, and/or poor weather conditions, students are allowed to creatively spend recess in the classroom or in the school cafeteria, while observing all safety rules.

DHUR PRAYER & FRIDAY JUMAAH

Dhur prayer is established on a daily basis in the school. AAIA students observe the prayer either in the Masjid, prayer/social hall of the school or in their classrooms depending on their age and weather permitting.

Students are expected to proceed to the prayer/social hall with their teachers. Once students arrive in the prayer/social hall, they should perform their sunnah prayer. All students are expected to uphold the highest standards of behavior at all times in the school, but especially when gathered for prayer. Thus, students should quietly sit and observe the etiquettes of the mosque and prayer area.

Prayer should begin at dhur time. Once prayer is completed, students take turns saying the supplications and thereafter the sunnah prayer should follow. When sunnah prayer is

completed, all students should wait for the teacher who will be leading them back to the class. Students are not allowed to come down to the school on their own without their teacher.

On Fridays, students will observe the congregational prayers in the prayer/social hall accompanied by their respective teachers. Students will recognize that the sermon constitutes part of the prayer and should observe complete silence while the sermon is being delivered.

DISMISSAL

Dismissal begins at 3:10 pm for Elementary students, and 3:15 pm for Upper school students. All students must wait to be dismissed by their homeroom teacher and students grades Kg to 6th grade cannot leave their teacher until their parents or arranged transportation has arrived at school. Students who take the bus should follow the regular procedure at dismissal time, they will be escorted to the bus by the Bus Coordinator.

Classrooms should be left in good condition: no textbooks or workbooks should be left under the desks and all trash should be picked up from the floor. Lights, fans and air conditioners should be turned off.

Parents must notify the office on Jupiter if they plan to have their children dismissed to another parent or guardian. Parents with children traveling to and from the school by means of public/private vans must submit this information in writing to the school office. If bus students are not riding the bus that day, the student's teacher must be notified through Jupiter prior to dismissal.

Please take extra note on this point since school officials are not allowed to dismiss your child to anyone other than the designated parent, guardian and/or van.

In addition, parents wishing to speak to their child's teacher(s) are encouraged to schedule an appointment during or after the school day. Teachers have extensive supervision duties during dismissal and are not available for all-inclusive feedback about an individual student.

EARLY PICK-UP

A note must be sent to the teacher at least a day ahead of time if a student needs to be dismissed early. This enables the student to be prepared to leave on time and allows the teacher to adjust the day's program accordingly.

When parents arrive for early pick-up, they must report to the office first and sign out their children. A member of the staff will bring the child(ren) being dismissed to the office so they can be pick-up by the parent. ***There is no early pick-up after 2pm***

Early Dismissal Policy

Any student who needs early dismissal must have a **valid reason** and a **parent or authorized contact** listed on the pickup form.

- **Important:** Only the student listed on the form may be picked up. Other students are **not allowed** to leave with you.
- **Appointments:** Please try to schedule appointments outside of school hours whenever possible.
- **Repeated Violations:** Continued early dismissals without valid reasons may result in the student being removed from the school.

LATE PICK-UP

Unless otherwise noted, dismissal begins at 3:10pm sharp and ends by 3:20pm. Thereafter, parents will be contacted by phone if their child is still in school.

Beyond 3.00pm, students who are not picked-up will be automatically entered into the after-school program. The late pick-up policy is that parents arriving after 3.00pm are responsible financially to pay for this after-school service. The fee will be $1 per minute.

ABSENTEEISM

AIA does not encourage long-term absences during regular school time. Parents and guardians are reminded to take note of all school days as specified in the school calendar when planning family trips and vacations.

Our policy establishes a 10-day limit of absent days in any trimester.

Long-term absences (other than due to illness, hospitalization or bereavement) during the school year will not be excused, and the office must be informed formally in writing. Academic grades for all subjects will not be included in the report card for absences beyond the 10-day limit per trimester as the grading would be considered incomplete.

Absences of more than one week must be approved at least two weeks in advance. Parents may consult with relevant teachers to ensure assignments are to be completed and brought back on the first day the student returns to school after the leave of absence. Students must take responsibility to ensure that all lessons missed will be studied and reviewed to ensure smooth transition upon return to class.

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

GENERAL PHILOSOPHY ON CODE OF CONDUCT

Discipline is an important part of the Islamic way of life. Muslims are expected to demonstrate their best behavior at all times. The purpose of discipline at AIA is to help students acquire the skills and habits that will assist them to become well-adjusted and successful individuals. The discipline rules at AIA follow the spirit of Islamic guidance, understanding and concern.

It is realized that young students need guidance in the process of learning self-discipline and that mistakes along the way must be brought to their attention. Students are encouraged to learn the code of conduct and follow the rules and regulations. Our goal is to work with students and their parents to produce the type of Muslims that will make us all proud.

All students are expected to demonstrate a high standard of Islamic conduct at all times. Any behavior that violates AIA's code of conduct is not condoned nor allowed. Students are expected to accept the responsibility to discipline themselves, and parents must fulfill their obligations by properly training and disciplining their children at home. AIA expects parents to take corrective measures with their children for any breach of discipline. Any student whose behavior is detrimental to the well-being of the class or the Islamic environment of AIA will be excluded from AIA.

Any mixing of genders is prohibited.

AIA's code of conduct and rules and regulations of student behavior are outlined below. At the beginning of the school year, all students and their parents are required to sign a form describing AIA's rules of conduct and the consequences of breaking those rules.

GENERAL RULES ON STUDENT BEHAVIOR

- Maintain punctual and regular attendance.
- Bring all necessary materials to school and class.
- Do not bring toys, electronics, or non-related books into the classrooms.
- Dress according to the school dress code.
- Observe the code of conduct while traveling to and from the school.
- Treat others with kindness, courtesy and respect.
- Respect authority and be attentive at all times.
- Use only proper language and good manners.
- Stay out of book bags and desks of other students and respect each other's personal space and property.
- Put materials away neatly, pick up scraps, put up chairs and leave quietly and orderly at the end of the school day.
- Complete all homework assignments neatly and hand them in when due.
- Behave appropriately in the restrooms and take safety precautions.

BUILDING SAFETY RULES AND REGULATIONS

Both the lower and upper elementary school buildings are equipped with outdoor and indoor surveillance cameras to monitor and better secure the premises for our students, staff and community. Students are expected to observe the following safety guidelines:

- Enter the building in an orderly fashion.
- Walk in the corridors and classroom in an orderly fashion.
- Take good care of school property by not marking books, furniture, lockers or any other part of the building.
- Take permission before leaving and entering the classroom.
- Do not chew gum or food during lessons other than during snack or lunch.
- Speak in an appropriate voice according to the situation and place.
- Work quietly without disturbing others.
- Students are not allowed to leave the school building at any time without adult supervision.
- Students are not allowed to open the main doors of the school building without adult permission.

Students will be responsible to pay for any damaged school or masjid property.

LUNCH TIME RULES AND REGULATIONS

- Remain seated while eating, follow the Sunnah, and chat at moderate volume.
- Obey lunch supervisors and speak to everyone with respect.
- Throw your trash in the trash cans. Line up quietly and proceed outdoors behind the appointed supervisors after lunch for recess and/or prayer.

RECESS AND PLAYGROUND RULES

- Remain in the assigned area of the playground with your supervisor.
- Report problems to your own supervisor.
- Play properly and safely with only approved playground equipment. Do not play contact games, tackle others, climb on each other's back, play-fight or sword-fight.
- Do not throw snowballs, stones, sticks, or other objects not provided by AAIA for play.
- Treat others as you would like to be treated by others.
- Line up quietly and quickly with the supervisors when recess time is up.
- Walk in quietly behind the supervisor, hang up coats, and enter the classrooms and be seated.

Students are not allowed to sell or distribute personal items at any time.

REWARD FOR GOOD BEHAVIOR

Encouragement and rewards provide positive reinforcements and install a strong feeling of self-pride and responsibility. Teachers at Al Aqsa Islamic Academy ensure that all acts of good discipline are duly noted and advertised. Students with exemplary behavior throughout the year are recommended for monthly Core-Value awards.

CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Discipline Flow Chart

To address incidents of misconduct, a discipline flow chart was drafted by the principal, revised by the staff and approved by the school committee. Each incident will be considered within the context of its situation and the developmental level of the child carrying out the act. The discipline flow chart is shown below:

Level 1: Classroom level consequences include warnings, a note sent home, time out, detention and a reflection sheet.

- Repeated class disruption
- Being out of class without permission
- Teasing others, including probable bullying and/or cyber-bullying
- Chewing gum, eating candy or food at unauthorized time
- Loud conduct
- Littering

Level 2: Repetition of a Level 1 offence or any of the listed offences will result in parental contact through a discipline report sent home, phone call, and/or parent conference. The teacher will also issue a classroom consequence.

- Cheating or inappropriate copying of other's work
- Disturbing student's property
- Disrespect to an adult
- Backbiting and spreading rumors amounting to bullying and/or cyber-bullying
- Instigating others amounting to bullying and/or cyber-bullying
- Inappropriate physical contact, including play fighting and/or bullying
- Throwing an object at a person and/or throwing a heavy object
- Repeated refusal to follow directions

Level 3: Repetition of a Level 2 offence or any of the listed offences will result in a climate meeting with the student and parent, as well as additional steps such as a behavior contract, detention, or suspension.

- Obscene or otherwise inappropriate language, including bullying and cyber-bullying
- Using slurs, profanity in language or gesture, whether written, verbal or electronic (cyber-bullying)
- Fighting, including bullying and cyber-bullying
- Hurting another person or threatening to do so, including bullying and cyber-bullying
- Bringing a dangerous object to school
- Intentional damage of school or other's property, including bullying
- Running away from or skipping school or class
- Unlawful entry of the school

Level 4: Repetition of a level 3 offence or any of the listed offences will result in suspension and a review by the school committee and principal for further consequences, which may include long term suspension or expulsion.

- Fighting and harming another student
- Stealing from the school, staff or student
- Bringing to school any firearm, weapon, explosive, or any item that resembles or is intended to imitate such objects is strictly prohibited
- Harming or attempting to harm another person with a weapon
- Using, Possessing, selling, or distributing controlled substances including cigarettes and vapes
- Any sexual offenses, engaging in inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature (e.g., indecent exposure, inappropriate texts of a sexual nature).

ROSTER OF OFFICE VISITS

In an attempt to better coordinate discipline efforts and minimize office visits, a roster will be kept in the office to monitor how many times a student is sent there for behavior infractions and/or redirections. There are three categories within the roster: Health, Discipline, and Uniform. Students sent to the office for any of these categories will be marked in the roster accordingly.

DETENTION

This policy indicates that a child with consistent inappropriate behavior may be detained for a specified period during lunch or after school and will be given specific assignments to be completed during that period under strict supervision.

Parents will be notified 24 hours in advance about their child's detention. Siblings of students will be dismissed at the regular dismissal time and should be picked up accordingly. Please note that the late pick-up policy will be strictly enforced for the siblings of detained students that are not picked up on time.

SUSPENSION

This policy indicates that a child with consistent inappropriate behavior may be issued with either an in-school or whole day(s) suspension for a specified period and will be given specific curriculum-related assignments to be completed during that period while being away from classroom instruction.

Parents will be notified in advance about their child's in-school or whole day(s) suspension. A repeat of inappropriate behavior may result in immediate expulsion.

DRESS CODE AND UNIFORM

Care in personal grooming habits is an important part of an Islamic education. A proper school uniform fosters scholarship and self-esteem, promotes good conduct and encourages respect for others' property. The class teacher and/or principal have the authority to decide whether clothing or an item of clothing is appropriate or not and parents are expected to cooperate.

The following general guidelines for dress must be followed at all times at AIA:

- Clothing must be in accordance with the Islamic dress code for boys and girls.
- Clothing must be neat, clean, and properly ironed.
- Clothing should not be tattered, ragged, short, revealing, or tight-fitting.
- T-shirts and jackets displaying inappropriate images, decals, messages, or insignia are not permitted. Offensive items of clothing will be confiscated and given to parents/guardians directly.
- **No hooded items** (sweaters/sweat-shirts), no caps, bands or similar items.
- No excessive jewelry (chains, rings, bracelets, etc).
- All students should have clean, short nails and **nail polish is not allowed**.
- Hair must be natural color and combed, well-kept and reasonable in length without hindering vision.
- Slippers, open-toe, "wheelies" and high heels are not allowed. Shoes must be plain solid black.
- Special care must be taken to dress suitably on field trips.
- No jeans allowed on any occasion.

UNIFORM

Students attending Al Aqsa Islamic Academy may purchase their grade-level uniforms

Al-Aqsa Islamic Academy Uniform

Boys Uniform

Gray Pants (No Cargos)

Navy Blue Polo shirt (Must have Al Aqsa logo)

Plain Black Shoes

Boys Gym Uniform (MUST be bought from school)

Navy Blue Shirt

Navy Pants

Plain Black Sneakers

Girls Uniform

Plain Navy Blue Abaya

Plain White or Gray Hijab/Kimar/Head piece

Plain Black Shoes

Girls Gym Uniform

Navy Blue Long Tunic (up to knees)

Navy Blue Loose Pants (No tights/No Skinny Jeans)

Plain Black Sneakers

All students at AIA are required to wear the school uniform and to comply with the school's dress code guidelines. A proper school uniform fosters scholarship and self-esteem while also promoting good conduct and encouraging respect. Consequences for students not wearing the uniform will be as follows:

- Students not wearing uniform or complying with our dress code will not be allowed to attend classes.

Please note that students may be detained and redirected at office administration's discretion if their dress and appearance is deemed inappropriate and violates the general dress code (e.g. tight-fitting clothes, clothes with logos, make-up, nail polish, etc).

Students have the choice to purchase a school uniform from the school or wait till parents bring proper school uniform.

Right to search students' belongings

The school reserves the right to search student cell phones, when there is reasonable suspicion that the device contains material that violates school policies or poses a threat to the safety and well-being of students and staff. Searches will be conducted in accordance with school policy and may include reviewing text messages, photos, videos, and other content on the device. Students are expected to comply with any requests to surrender their cell phones for search. Refusal to comply may result in disciplinary action.

The school reserves the right to search student belongings, including but not limited to backpacks, lockers, and vehicles parked on school property, when there is reasonable suspicion that the belongings contain material that violates school policies or poses a threat to the safety and well-being of students and staff. Searches will be conducted in accordance with school policy and may include inspecting the contents of backpacks, lockers, and vehicles. Students are expected to comply with any requests to surrender their belongings for search. Refusal to comply may result in disciplinary action.

GRIEVANCE/COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

AAIA believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between the school and family members (defined as parent, student, or other person associated with the student) is critical to ensuring the academic development of our students. If the parent or other family member's behavior, communications, or interactions on or off campus (including during school sponsored events) is disruptive, intimidating, overly aggressive, or reflects a loss of confidence or disagreement with AAIA's safety procedures, responsibilities or accomplishment of its education program, AAIA reserves the right to dismiss the family or family member from the community. AAIA reserves the right to place restrictions on parents' or other family members involvement or activity at the school, on school property, or at school related events for reasons that AAIA deems appropriate.

It is the desire and expectation of the AAIA Board that the entire school family – parents, students, committee members and staff – function in a God-pleasing, caring, and understanding manner. We must all remember the Islamic teaching of forgiveness and follow Allah's instructions in our dealings with each other to avoid misunderstanding, rumors, suspicion, and undue criticism.

Nonetheless, difficulties and misunderstanding do sometimes arise. These concerns are best resolved by the parties involved and on the smallest possible scale. In the event that a student and/or parent has a grievance, the following procedure should be followed:

- Discuss the concern with the other party involved (teacher, secretary, administrator or other school staff). Both parties should make every effort to resolve the matter.
- In the event that the matter is not resolved, an appointment may be made with the principal to discuss and seek a resolution of the problem. The principal will then take the necessary steps to correct the situation that prompted the grievance.
- In the event the parent is dissatisfied with the outcome, the parents may submit a detailed description of the grievance in writing to the AAIA Committee -- with a copy forwarded to the principal. The president of the AAIA committee may decide to form a subcommittee to investigate the matter and suggest remedial actions so as to help resolve the problem according to the teachings of Islam and in view of the best interest of the school and all concerned parties. In addition, the Director, Mr. Chukri Khorchid may decide to involve the school board in resolving the matter.
- In case the matter does not reach a resolution at this point, the AAIA Arbitration Committee[1] will be consulted and responsible for the final decision. The recommended resolution by the Arbitration Committee is final and binding on all parties.

STUDENT SERVICES

EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

Each student is provided with textbooks, workbooks and instructional material. A user fee is computed into the annual tuition for textbooks, workbooks and materials. An Interactive Projector is provided as part of the class instructional tool for grades 1 through 5. Chalkboards, bulletin boards and display areas are in the classroom. Adequate space in each classroom is available for students' and teachers' supplies.

Textbooks and educational materials have been selected by comparing five publishing companies: Addison-Wesley, Scott Foresman, Houghton Mifflin, Silver Burdett and McGraw Hill. Islamic and Arabic books were also selected after considering many curricula from other Islamic schools in the USA and Islamic countries.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to and from AIA is the individual responsibility of all parents. Yellow Bus Transportation is typically provided for students in grades 1 through 6 who live 1.5 miles or more from the assigned school. Students in grades 7 through 12 who live 1.5 miles or

[1] *The Arbitration Committee is formed by Muslim scholars who base their judgment on the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) as recognized by the four schools of Fiqh.*

The committee's decision is final and binding.

farther from school are eligible for free Student Trans-Passes. More details about bus arrival and dismissal will be provided after the school receives information.

https://www.philasd.org/transportation/for-parents/faqs/#1571852684602-984feec7-0c99

LUNCH PROGRAM

Breakfast and lunch are served to all students. Students are also allowed to bring their own breakfast and lunch; however, this food must not require warming. 7th to 12th graders are also allowed to purchase lunch at the Al-Aqsa Supermarket "Al-Amana" during their lunch period only. Pizza will be offered by AIA one day per week for a minimal fee.

•

STANDARDIZED TESTING

All students are tested at least once during the academic year using nation-wide standardized examinations, namely the PSSA & KeyStone Edition, to determine areas of strengths and areas for improvement for all core subjects.

BEGINNING OF THE YEAR, MID-YEAR & END OF YEAR ASSESSMENTS

AAIA provides exceptional instructional services; however, students may require additional support. As a result, Aqsa has developed a plan for the use of beginning of the year, mid-year, and end of year assessments to measure the development of student-centered instruction and match instruction with students' strengths and needs, which will ensure all Aqsa students can master grade-level standards.

The assessments provide teachers, administrators, students, and parents with the necessary data required to develop deliberate and intentional academic decisions, strategies, and support that ensure all students can master grade-level standards. In addition, assessments enable building-level administrators to develop strategies for supporting teachers' instructional practice as they monitor student learning. Data obtained from assessments allows schools to provide evidence-based instruction and interventions that address the needs of all students.

The assessments are designed from curriculum-based resources and include materials that are familiar to students and teachers, and the assessments can be used easily to inform instructional practice. The assessments take a short amount of time to administer.

QURAN & ARABIC SUPPORT

AAIA strives to provide Quran and Arabic support to supplement the students' learning. Students may be given Quran memorization references to practice and revise at home the Surat that they are working on. Parents can also be referred to local Arabic classes from time to time as well as to online and computer resources that they can access to support their children's learning of the Arabic language.

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

AAIA may have a licensed guidance counselor on staff. The counselor, in coordination with parents, children, teachers, and administrators will provide individual and group counseling. In the interim, specific concerns that may arise with our students are directed by the teaching staff to the principal.

HEALTH SERVICES

AAIA is blessed to have a school Nurse as part of our school management who can provide expert advice on any emergency that may arise. Further, a good number of our teaching and administrative staff are trained in First Aid and/or CPR to attend to our students' needs.

STUDENTS RECORDS

All student records are kept as confidential material and are only available to administrative and teaching staff. These records include academic, health records, and attendance records in easily accessible forms. Parents do have the right to see such records. In order to check their child(ren)'s records, parents need to schedule an appointment through the office. Parents are responsible for updating any medical information.

LOST & FOUND

There is a designated area for students and parents for lost and found items. Parents are encouraged to label all their children's personal belongings (e.g. sweaters) for easy identification. The lost and found bin will be emptied at the end of the month and any items not claimed will be donated accordingly.

STUDENT RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

Each month students will be chosen from Grades 1 through 5 and awarded **Core-Value Awards of "Ilm" (Knowledge), "Ibadah" (Worship), "Adl" (Justice) and "Ihsan" (Excellence)** in recognition of their exemplary efforts. The criteria was developed to encompass high academic achievement and exemplary behavior inside and outside the classroom consistent with our school's mission. This criterion has been put in a checklist format to assist teachers in selecting the deserving students.

*Students must consistently be in proper school uniform to be recommended for any award.

MONTHLY "CORE-VALUE" AWARD

1. "Ilm" (Knowledge)

This award recognizes students who are conscientiously putting the effort towards improving their academic grades in all subjects. The selection is based on:

- Effort in Classwork, Improvement in Tests, Homework is completed timely and neat
- Pride in Assignments and Projects
- Contributes positively to class, no classroom disruption, and uses time wisely

2. "Ibadah" (Worship)

The award aims to recognize students with outstanding manners who embody and practice Islam to the best of their abilities. The selection is based on:

- Respect - Adults and Peers, Class & School Rules
- Excellent Prayer Manners, always ready with wudu'
- Speaks the Truth, Uses Low Voice, Avoid Idle Talk and Backbiting Helpful, Generous, Pleasant Disposition

3. "Adl" (Justice)

This award aims to recognize students who:

- Supports his/her friends at all tasks either through positive kind words and/or actions
- Encourages smart choices amongst peers and standby the truth in any situation
- Offers help without being asked

4. Ihsan" (Excellence)

The is the highest exemplary award aims to recognize students who have consistently been modelling all the above qualities. As such, a student will receive this award if he/she has successfully been awarded with all of the above three awards of "Ilm", "Ibadah" and "Adl".

IN-CLASS END OF YEAR QURAN MEMORIZATION CELEBRATION

Students are encouraged to memorize our holy Quran throughout the school year. As an incentive, students are recognized for completing and exceeding their grade level curriculum at the end of the year.

ATTENDANCE TROPHY

Each month, students are recognized as a group if their class has the best attendance rate with very few absenteeism in an effort to impart good work ethics and emphasize the importance of punctuality as a life skill.

ANNUAL SCHOOL EVENTS

BACK TO SCHOOL "ORIENTATION" New students: (8/24/2022) Returning students 8/25/2022

The school will open its doors to all parents and families to visit their child's classroom to meet our teachers, gain familiarity with the curriculum and establish an open home-school connection. There will also be one on Zoom for parents who can not attend in person.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE

A Parent-Teacher conference will be held at the end of each term. Dates are found in the school calendar. Parents may request for an alternative meeting time/date for a detailed review and discussion of their child's progress.

BOOK FAIRS

Each year, AAIA provides the students with a wide range of books by different literary authors at various times of the school year through our internal book fairs. The fair lasts for an entire week during which time students and parents can browse and purchase various books at very reasonable prices. In addition, Arabic books will also be featured to help facilitate the concept of owning new and "easy-to-read" Arabic books for all levels of readers.

SCIENCE PROJECT DAY

Students in all grades will be engaging in Science exploratory activities and parents will be invited to view students' collaborative curriculum-related work on a special day at the end of March as specified in the school calendar.

INTERNATIONAL/CULTURE DAY

Students in all grades will be engaging in a time-honored school tradition—a day of food, clothing, and fun celebrating all the cultures represented at our school

SPELLING BEE

Students in grades 1 through 5 will participate in our school wide Spelling Bee every year.

PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH) EVENT

Students will enjoy a month of learning and discussing the life of "the mercy to mankind". They will do a project, essays, poems, PowerPoints etc. and parents will join in the event.

KINDERGARTEN, 8TH GRADE, AND 12TH GRADE GRADUATION

A special graduation ceremony is held near the end of the school year for our students to mark their achievement.

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

On the last day of the school year, students will be dismissed early at 11:00 am. Students will participate in several year-end activities/projects to celebrate the successful completion of the academic year.

FIELD TRIPS

Homeroom and special subject teachers organize field trips that are both educational and fun throughout the academic year. During these field trips, students visit places of scientific, sports, public service, historical, and/or religious interest.

ISLAMIC WEEK

This week-long school wide event. Students will engage in various activities and presentations to celebrate our Islamic history, identity and rich culture. There typically will be an Islamic fashion show and a joyous international food festival.

MINI-HAJJ

During the month of Dhul-Hijjah, our school will hold a mini-hajj event to include special lectures given on various aspects of Hajj and a simulation of the Hajj rituals will also be performed by our students in an effort to concretely "experience" and gain perspective on what the actual pilgrims would have to encounter and persevere when they visit our holy land of Mecca.

EID CELEBRATIONS

Eid celebrations are observed in creative and joyful ways! As a tradition, if school is in session, all grades will decorate their classrooms and students will exchange small gifts.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

AAIA constantly encourages students to participate and organize charity drives for collection of donations (food, clothing, money) to help the poor and the needy. One occasion is during the month of Ramadan for the collection and distribution of *Zakat*.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS & FUNDRAISER

Students of AAIA proudly participate in various presentations for parents and the community on special benefit evenings like the school's annual fundraiser.

HOME AND SCHOOL RELATIONS

COMMUNICATION

Communications will be through Jupiter from the Principal and staff to parents, guardians and members of the community regarding recent school events, upcoming special programs, and/or other pertinent announcements. This effort has been successful in strengthening timely communication between home and school.

OFFICE TELEPHONE

The school telephones are for business purposes only. Students are not allowed to use the telephones for personal reasons. Students may get permission to use the phone for emergencies only.

Delivering messages to students during class time disturbs the teaching atmosphere. AAIA does not encourage messages to the students while at school except in the case of an emergency. Only emergency messages will be delivered to individual students through and by the office.

CHANGE OF INFORMATION

Any changes in home address, home and office phone numbers, emergency contact numbers and family physician should be communicated to the school office immediately.

PARKING LOT

There is a designated parking lot on the side of both buildings of the school. The lots are reserved for staff and parents. Cars should use the indicated entrances and exits to the parking lots. The speed limit is 15 mph and should be strictly observed. Parents are advised to take caution as this speed limit is lowered to **10 mph** as you pass the intersection of Chase Drive and Manomet Drive.

Parents using the entrance of the parking lot as a loading/unloading zone of passengers should be considerate of others and not block the entrance or other cars. Please observe the posted speed limit at all times to ensure the complete safety of our students.

VISITING SCHOOL

AAIA welcomes all its visitors. All visitors must email office (office@alaqsaschool.org) or call (215-765-6660) to make an appointment. Visitors must visit the office as soon as they come. Your cooperation in this matter will help keep our school safe from any harm.

Parents may contact the teacher through Jupiter for any concerns or questions.

Visitors must respect school dress code and wear proper Islamic clothing if they want to enter the building or join any school events.

Parents may not bring other children or adults with them, unless prior permission has been granted by the principal. Parents may not send other children to school to spend the day with their enrolled child at AAIA.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

The tuition and fees at AAIA are kept low to make the school accessible to a large number of community members. The tuition alone does not fully cover the cost of educating a child at AAIA. In addition, AAIA offers financial assistance to the deserving students. Since private schools do not get any federal or state funding for their operation, AAIA depends on various fundraising activities held throughout the year for its functioning. Parents are expected to support AAIA during those events by participating and encouraging others to participate. They may also choose to donate items needed by the school or money to a particular fund such as the Library or Science Resource Center.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Parent volunteers are always needed and appreciated. Parents can volunteer their time and talent in various areas in service to the school. In accordance with the best school safety practice regarding minors, a parent volunteer will be required to undergo the standard criminal background check. Kindly contact the school office for more information.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Parents play an important role in achieving the instructional goals set by AAIA for its students. Parents, teachers, administrators, and the school board members are part of a single team working together to provide the best education and training for their children. The Parent-Teacher Organization provides support to AAIA by relaying general concerns of the parents, providing helpful suggestions and by helping to organize fundraising events and other Academy functions. The council also works closely with the principal and the school board to find solutions to the concerns of the parents. The council ensures that suggestions and initiatives are brought to AAIA's staff and school committee in a supportive Islamic manner.

CONTINUING EDUCATION SUPPORT

AAIA receives various requests for access to the students, staff or school programs from individuals completing internships or graduate study requirements. These requests are evaluated on an individual basis and may be accommodated within the scope and limited resources of the school. Individuals wishing to complete an internship or research project with the school are encouraged to contact the principal directly. They may be asked to submit a written description of their proposed project.

MISCELLANEOUS

SLOGAN

AAIA's slogan is ***Knowledge through Faith***.

SCHOOL CALENDAR & HOLIDAYS

AAIA observes the following holidays and will be closed:

- Eid al-Fitr
- Day of Arafat
- Eid Adha
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Veteran's Day
- New Year
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day

CORE VALUES

AAIA four Core Values are:

- "Ilm" (Knowledge)
- "Ibadah" (Worship)
- "Ihsan" (Excellence)
- "Adl" (Justice)

MEDIA

In general, AAIA encourages students and staff to help provide the community with accurate information about Islam. When AAIA becomes the focus of the media, we ensure that no member of the media will directly observe or sit with a student without prior consent from the parent/guardian. Likewise, no photography or videotaping where the identity of the child can be determined will be permitted without parental consent.

PHONE POLICY

Students should never have a cell phone on them between 8 am and 3:20 pm. They must be collected by Homeroom teachers at the start of first period.

Cell phones are not allowed for school students between the hours of 8 am and 3:20 pm and this policy will be extended to all students. The students will either need to choose not to bring the phone to school or it must be stored in the office from 8 am until 3:20 pm. Phones visible during the hours of 8 am to 3:20 pm will be retained and be returned according to the school phone policy.

The consequences are as follows:

1. First offense the cell phone one week loss of the phone, serve 3 days of detention and phone will only be returned to a parent between 3:20 pm and 4:00 pm.
2. Third offense is a one month loss of the phone and it will only be released to the parent between 3:20 pm and 4:00 pm.
3. Fourth offense is a loss of phone till the end of the year and it will only be released to the parent.
4. Continuous incidents with the phone will result in expulsion of student.

The consequences are as follows:

If any student is caught with their phone it will only be returned to parent after meeting with the Dean and or principal. Continuous offenses of phone will result in expulsion of student.

THE END

HANDBOOK DISSEMINATION AND PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A copy of this handbook is available online on the school website at www.alaqsaschool.org .

Additionally, at the start of each academic year, a soft-copy will be emailed directly to parents of all registered students by school administration.

Unless written notice is given to the office on non-receipt of the emailed copy of the handbook, it is deemed that parents have read the handbook in its entirety and commit themselves to following the school regulations on behalf of their children including, and not limited to, policies on academic grading, attendance and pick-up policy, health and safety, emergency and lockdown procedures, code of conduct, school closings, detention, suspension and expulsion.

_____ Date: _____
Student Signature

_____ Date: _____
Parent/Guardian Signature

_____ Date: _____
Parent/Guardian Signature

NOTES