



أكاديمية الإبداع الأمريكية

American Creativity Academy

Kindergarten Student and Parent Handbook



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Welcome to the American Creativity Academy

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The American Creativity Academy is a private school that delivers a standards-based American curriculum within an environment in which Islamic values are respected and practiced. The school is dedicated to preparing students for university success

The American Creativity Academy Core Beliefs were developed in partnership with students, parents, teachers, and administrators and represents our commitment to education. *We believe:*

- Practicing Islamic values develops character within honesty, integrity and responsible behavior
- Education requires a partnership among parents, students and staff
- Students learn and thrive in a healthy, safe, orderly, and caring environment
- In challenging students to think critically and creatively
- In developing the whole child – intellectually, spiritually, socially and physically
- In Preparing students to contribute constructively to global society
- Effective communication is essential for a cohesive school community and a positive school climate
- Learning is a life – long process
- In inspiring excellence

The Kindergarten Program-Information, Policies, and Procedures:

The Kindergarten Program at the American Creativity Academy (ACA), called the “KG”, is one of the largest in Kuwait with 567 students, among 25 classes, with 67 educators and staff members. The three levels of instruction are: Pre-K, Kindergarten I, and Kindergarten II. ACA provides the foundation for social and academic learning for students between the ages of three and six.

ACA follows an American curriculum taught by a mainly North American staff that teaches to the highest academic standards to attend to the social needs of young children. The KG provides a quality early childhood program that includes comprehensive learning experiences in a planned environment. We work closely with parents to ensure that the children’s school time can be reinforced at home. Our Kindergarten is not a day care. It is an environment that employs appropriate practices to meet the early developmental needs of children in a consistent and secure setting.

Our program focuses on the needs of the whole child: physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and familial. Activities and routines are based on sound educational practices and are built on children’s natural curiosity and problem-solving abilities. Children participate in many play and language activities and have opportunity to work and play in small and large groups as well as individually. Our child-centered approach reflects an understanding of the needs of children in a complex society.

KG students:

1. Must be 5-years old on or before December 31 of the school year enrolled for KG-2.
2. Must be 4-years old on or before December 31 of the school year enrolled for KG-1.
3. Must be 3-years old on or before December 31 of the school year enrolled for Pre-K.
4. Must have a passing score on the entrance exam.
5. KG2 and KG1 students are administered the entrance exam in **English Only**.

The ACA KG program delivers a fully-aligned, standards-based curriculum, adopted and adapted from the early childhood education curriculum standards of the USA as per below:

<p>Curriculum concepts presented in KG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters – words/reading skills development • Phonics – sounds (blending/decoding skills) • Numbers • Shapes • Colors • Sequencing • Patterning • Opposites • Field trips • Technology 	<p>KG Program goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An active learning format of instruction • Interactive / hands-on approaches and activities • Student-lead/teacher-facilitated methods • Teaching through an multitude of resources • Use of hands-on manipulatives and resources • Testing/assessment match curriculum benchmarks • Skills-based methods of assessment incorporated • USA curriculum standards implemented • Curriculum revision performed on an annual basis • Incorporation of teacher-made materials
<p>Daily Schedule:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival Routines • Morning Meeting (discussions/show & tell) • Calendar & Movement (intro. core subjects) • Language Art (reading/academic concepts) • Centers (review core subjects) • Specials - PE & Library (2 days/50 minutes) • Lunch/Recess • Arabic (5 days days/50 minutes) • Quiet Time/Dismissal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiated instruction based on student needs • Language acquisition skills development • Phonics program • Whole-language and thematic-based instruction • Student-participative / child-oriented learning • Oral language development – songs, poems, role-play, interactive presentations • Whole-group, small-group, and individual instructional styles incorporated • Social/emotional skills development

Pre-Kindergarten

Our Pre-K program is designed for three and four-year olds whose third birthday falls on or before December 31st of the academic year. Pre-K is usually a child’s first school experience, so a positive first year sets the stage for future dispositions towards learning. The focus in Pre-K is on social skills development, self-help, and language development. Academic skills such as the concepts of counting, recognition of colors and shapes, and basic use of the computer are introduced. Children are exposed to a variety of pre-reading activities in fun, age-appropriate and developmentally-appropriate methods.

Kindergarten I

Our KGI program is designed for four and five-year olds whose fourth birthday falls on or before December 31st of the academic year. KGI is still a transition year from home to school, and is the first school experience as well for children who have not attended Pre-K. In KGI children are exposed to hands-on, fun, and age-appropriate concepts and skills that will be built-upon in the Kindergarten II program, in a more structured way. Our expectation is that your child has developed some English-language and is able to communicate simple needs.

KGI continues to focus on the development of social skills, self-help, and further English and Arabic language development. Pre-reading and pre-writing concepts include recognition of numbers, letters, shapes, and colors, as well as the correct use of classroom tools such as the pencil, scissors, and glue stick. Name recognition and Handwriting are introduced. Students learn to love and take care of books. Notions of science are presented through hands-on activities exploring concepts of the five senses, seasons, plants, space, water and matter. Social studies activities include the concepts of global citizenship, a community, and recognizing Kuwait on a large map.

Kindergarten II

Kindergarten II is the equivalent of a Kindergarten program in the United States. KGII is designed for five and six-year olds whose fifth birthday falls on or before December 31st of the academic year. The KGII curriculum continues to focus on oral language, listening, and social skills, while offering more structured approaches to academic concepts in preparation for Grade One. Children learn to recognize all upper and lower-case letters, initial consonant, and long and short vowel sounds. Handwriting is continued and expanded upon. Children at this age are encouraged to be self-reliant and independent in the classroom. The expectation of the students attending the KGII program is a reasonably developed level of English-language proficiency, including oral, reading and written skills of fairly comfortable communication.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support or PBIS is a proactive approach to strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behavior to create positive school environments. The PBIS focus is to consistently encourage and recognize positive characteristics, in the various school settings. At ACA, we work together with all students from Pre-K to Grade 12 to support positive school behavior through common characteristics in a variety of school settings. PBIS focuses on:

PBIS Characteristics – matrix of understanding includes these behaviors:

- Be Responsible
- Be Respectful
- Be Safe
- Be a Learner

PBIS Settings – matrix of understanding includes these school environments:

- classroom
- playground
- hallways
- special areas – Library/PE/field trips

Students are reminded of the expectations of positive behavior and supported in the process by being recognized for this positive behavior.

Parent and Visitor Access on Campus

In order to ensure that the campus is secure so students, staff, and visitors are safe while on the grounds of the school, we have limited access for **all parents** and **visitors** during instructional time. Upon entering the school all parents and visitors must present their civil ID to the security guards(s). Parents are asked to sign in the guest book kept at the Security Guards' desk. The parent or visitor is given an ACA Visitor's ID Badge to wear. This badge should always be visible. The parent or visitor will then proceed to the Receptionist who will contact the staff member about the appointment. The parent or visitor must remain in the Reception Area until the staff member has arrived to escort them onto the campus grounds.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES is a parent or visitor to pass the Receptionist desk without a staff member as an escort and an ACA Visitor's ID Badge in the parent or visitor's possession and visible. If a parent or visitor is on campus without an escort and/or ACA ID Badge the parent or visitor will be asked to return to the Reception Area.

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

ACA is a closed campus providing safety for your children. Students are not allowed to leave the grounds during the scheduled school hours. If you wish to pick up your child early you must request to check your child out of school directly with the Principal's secretary. Parents must give written notice first before a child will be released from the school to anyone else during the school day. It is recommended that parents whenever possible send a note to the teacher indicating the time they intend to pick up their child so that we can make every effort to have the child ready in time.

KG Hours:

The school bell rings at 7:00AM to start off the day with recitation from the Holy Quran and the Kuwait National Anthem, The Pre-K and KG1 program runs from 7:15AM-12:30PM daily. The KG2 full-day program runs from 7:15AM-2:15PM daily. ACA expects students to be on time daily and stay all day. The KG gates open at 6:30AM with teachers on duty supervising children starting at this time. **The school is not responsible for children who are left at the school before 6:30AM, and parents are strongly advised not to bring their students early.**

Pre-K and KG1 students end their day at 12:30PM, while KG2 ends at 2:15PM. Parents are urged to be punctual in picking up children at the respective dismissal times. Children are sensitive to waiting after the other children have left.

Parents, relatives, maids, and drivers are to sign the "sign-out sheet" for the release of children at the end of the day. It is very important that parents be consistent in sending the same person to collect the child after school. If a child is to go with a different driver, relative, or other

individual, who normally does not collect the child, parents must telephone the KG secretary or send in a note with the child. For the students' safety and protection, no child will be released to anyone unknown to the staff unless a notice or call has been given to the school.

If a child needs to be released early from school, the person picking up the child must first obtain a hall pass from the KG Secretary or receptionist, who must in turn, obtain approval from the KG Principal. Once a student is picked-up, they should not be left unattended, and should leave. Students with parents may stay after school on the playground, **but may not with nannies or drivers** as if an accident occurs, household staff cannot administer the necessary medical attention an injured child may require.

School rules, schedules, and policies are important and remain consistent for everyone. Please help us to ensure that the policies and procedures are followed in order to be a role model for our students.

Daily Schedule:

The daily schedule is broken down into different activities and varies from year to year and from classroom to classroom. The following are the activities that all children participate in during the school day:

Calendar/Circle Time/Greeting Time:

Each morning begins with attendance and Calendar Time in English. Calendar time introduces students to the concepts of time, seasons, and weather. During this morning meeting, teachers also review numbers, shapes, counting, colors, patterns, and thematic units. It is very important that your child attend this session daily and on time.

Lesson Time:

Lesson Time includes: stories, group discussions, curriculum instruction within the academic areas of numbers, shapes, colors, letters, letter-sounds, and word recognition, with general to specific academics introduced, along with games, and activities that teach important

concepts directly related to the curriculum. Lessons are interactive, and the English and Arabic experiences, between students and teacher, allow maximum participation for all children.

Structured Activity Time:

Structured Activity Time consists of planned activities designed to implement the English-language curriculum. These activities usually take place within the numerous learning centers where small groups of children work individually, together, or with the teacher and assistant. Structured activities take place during this time include math games, pre-reading and reading, fine motor skills, pre-writing and writing practice, science, social studies, integrated-computer lessons and interactive activities, art, and gross motor skills exercises and development.

Center Time/Circle Time/Greeting Time:

Center Time is also conducted in English and is structured to allow children to make choices about their activities in the classroom. Centers (as varied stations) are areas of the room that focus on particular skills. The focus of learning in centers may include math, library, computer, science, art, reading, writing, puzzles and motor skills, blocks, imagination and creativity, the home center, and current theme activities. During center time, teachers and assistants interact with and observe the children, moving from center to center as needed. Learning centers give children opportunities to develop social skills, creativity, independence, and, most importantly, oral language skills.

Arabic/Islamic Studies:

The Arabic/Islamic studies classes are scheduled for 50 minutes a day in PreK, KGI, and KGII. The curriculum includes stories and discussion of a variety of topics, with emphasis on vocabulary enrichment, Islamic studies including: daily prayers (Dua'a), and Quran memorization. The Arabic lessons include a supplementary math component: instruction in numbers, counting, and concepts of size, shape, and measurement, all presented in a fun and exciting manner. KGII students also do simple addition and subtraction practice during Arabic class. Islamic studies accounts for nearly two-hours in the KGII weekly schedule and is rich in stories about Al-Seerah and Islamic stories and lessons about the

Prophets. An annual Holy Quran recitation competition is held in KG. Use of technology, with computer integrated activities is included in all Arabic and Islam classes.

“Specials”:

Children at all levels also take physical education and visit the Library on a weekly basis. Outings are planned around educational concepts that reinforce a skill, theme, or topic that is being covered in class.

Snack: Promoting Healthy Eating Habits – see attached letter, page 24
Snack Time is 20-30 minutes long and is scheduled during mid-morning and is also an integral part of the curriculum. Please send healthy, energy foods like fruits, vegetables, cheeses, sandwiches, yogurt, milk, juice, water, and other healthy snacks; **NO chips, chocolate, candy, or soda.** Specific life skills are taught during snack time: table manners, eating politely, cleaning up, and washing before and after are all part of the routine. Teachers sit with the students during Snack and discuss daily activities, encourage English conversation, and reinforce proper eating habits. KGII students have an additional lunch break during the full-day program.

Recess:

Outdoor activities on the playground, during which teachers and students interact, is a specifically scheduled and integral part of the ACA KG curriculum that totals 30 minutes daily (45 minutes for Pre-K). During recess, teachers circulate among the children, encouraging, and ensuring safe play on the playground area. Accidents can happen. Children bite, hit, and even fall down, and although we take extreme care to prevent such mishaps, we cannot guarantee that they will not occur. All jackets and toys need to be labeled with the student's name and **NO hard balls** will be allowed for play in KG.

Admission Requirements:

The American Creativity Academy enrolls students regardless of gender, nationality, or race who demonstrate an ability and desire to benefit from ACA's academic program. The school may not admit students with special needs or behavioral problems.

Pre-K Admissions:

- Must be 3 years old on or before December 31st of the school year for which enrollment is requested
- Must be toilet trained by the first day of the school year enrolled
- Must have a passing score on the entrance exam (Pre-K students may take the entrance exam in Arabic or English)

KG I Admissions:

- Must be 4 years old on or before December 31st of the school year for which enrollment is requested
- Must have a passing score on the entrance exam, which also indicates age-level proficiency in English (The KG I entrance examination is given only in English.)
- Must be able to tend to their personal needs without adult assistance, specifically able to ask to use the bathroom.

KG II Admissions:

- Must be 5 years old on or before December 31st of the school year for which enrollment is requested
- Must have a passing score on the entrance exam, which also indicates age-level proficiency in English (The KG II entrance examination is given only in English.)
- Must be able to tend to their personal needs without adult assistance, specifically able to ask to use the bathroom.

Steps for Admittance to ACA:

- Parents submit a completed application form and all required supporting documents to the ACA Registration Office.
- The applicant is notified of non-eligibility or of the assessment date and time.

- The applicant sits for the entrance exam by appointment. If the applicant misses the assessment appointment, without notifying the school in advance, the exam will not be rescheduled.
- The KG Child Study Team, consisting of the Principal, Assistant Principal, and Counselors, review the assessment and make the final decision of pass or fail, with retesting offered on a limited basis and for exceptional circumstances, as determined by the KG Principal, and only 3 months after the first test is administered.
- Within five working days of the assessment, the school notifies the applicant of the results.
- The admission process can only occur once all documents are complete and on file. Failure to comply will delay or terminate the admission process. Accepted students must attend school within 4 days of the official start of the school year. Parents must inform ACA in advance if their child will be late for the beginning of the school year. Otherwise, they will be officially dropped from the school registration, and their place will be given to another applicant.

Toilet Training:

The American Creativity requires that all students be toilet trained as of the first school day of the school year in question. If a child experiences bathroom accidents frequently, ACA reserves the right to suspend or terminate enrollment without refund of the 100 KD registration deposit, as well as that portion of the fees paid toward the term in progress.

Occasional accidents, however, are normal, particularly during the first weeks of school. Parents should send in one or even two complete extra changes of clothing to keep in the classroom, clearly labeled with the child's name. When an accident occurs, children are more comfortable changing into their own clothes.

Attendance:

Attendance will be taken at 7:15AM. KG children arriving between this time and 8:00AM will be marked tardy, and after 8:00AM are marked as absent. Students with guardians are allowed access to the classrooms until 8:00AM, but afterwards parents may not enter the KG section to accompany students to their classrooms.

Parents must notify the school no later than the third consecutive day of absence. The returning child must bring a written note of explanation from the parent or medical excuse for more than 3 days absence. Parental cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated. 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. Lateness and absences may interfere with your child acquiring the skills and concepts necessary to succeed at the next grade level.

STUDENTS ABSENT FOR MORE THAN TEN DAYS IN A SEMESTER, WITHOUT A CERTIFIED MEDICAL EXCUSE, MAY BE RETAINED AT THE SAME GRADE LEVEL OR EXITED FROM THE SCHOOL FOR THE COMING YEAR.

Tardiness:

It is the expectation of ACA that all students arrive to school on time and that they are prepared for class. Late arrivals disrupt the educational process.

Dismissal:

At the end of the school day, 12:30PM for Pre-K and KG1 or 2:00PM for the KG2, students are expected to leave campus immediately with the responsible guardian (parent, nanny or older sibling). After a KG student is signed out, that guardian must keep the child with them at all times. No child should ever be unattended or left alone at any time or any place on school grounds, including the KG playground. Also, children with nannies or drivers or siblings may NOT play on the KG playground after dismissal unless with parent supervision. This is a health and safety precaution based on a need for legal responsibility as only a parent can provide.

Illness:

Children who have fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or a contagious disease such as measles, chickenpox, strep throat, or conjunctivitis MUST remain home. Follow the fever policy that before coming back to school, your child must be fever-free, without medication, for at least 24 hours. If a child has a fever or is sick, the nurse is allowed to give medication, unless specifically noted otherwise by submitting the form “**Health Information Update**” and responding on page 2 to allow the nurse to administer medication at school. This form will be kept on file in the nurse’s office and will remain in effect until written consent is filed otherwise.

For routine health problems and accidents at school, there are two nurses on campus. They determine the seriousness of the illness or accident and call the parent if the child is to be sent home. Parents must pick up the child for the duration of the day. Parents must inform the school immediately if their children have special health problems, such as allergies, asthma, diabetes, contagious diseases, etc. The nurses are alerted with regard to special needs and precautions, and they inform the child’s teachers and KG administration.

Medication:

Ideally, all medicine should be administered at home before a child comes to school, but the nurses may administer medicine that must be taken during school hours. Teachers are not responsible for giving medicine. Any medicine brought to school must be delivered to the nurse only and accompanied by a note from the parent or doctor stating the name of the student, name of the medicine, dosage, and the time the medicine is to be given to the child.

A student who is ill at school will be sent to the school nurse. The nurse will determine the course of action to be taken. The nurse will inform the parents and school administration if a student is to be sent home. It is crucial that the school has correct home and work telephone numbers, so that a parent can be notified in case of an illness or injury.

Parents planning to be out of the country should leave a name and phone number of a responsible relative or neighbor who can be contacted. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the school informed in any changes in telephone numbers. Students should not be allowed to attend school if he/she has a fever, is vomiting, or has a rash. A child with conjunctivitis (pink eye), lice, or H1N1 is not allowed to attend school and must be seen by a medical doctor. A doctor's note or sick leave form and the ACA nurse approval is needed to clear a child to return to school after having a contagious illness. A few conditions are, but not limited to: pink eye, H1N1, chicken pox, lice, measles, Hand, Foot and Mouth disease, and etc., based upon medical diagnoses and review by ACA nurse.

The following criteria should be used for keeping your child at home:

- Chicken pox needs 10 days leave before returning to school with a doctor's note and ACA nurse clearance. We ask that you accept procedures in place for the well-being of all students.
- Sore throat and swollen glands
- Diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Undiagnosed rash or skin eruption (such as chickenpox)
- Ear ache or drainage from the ears or eyes
- Fever and vomiting within the last 24 hours
- Lice
- Diagnoses of H1N1, pink eye (conjunctivitis), etc.

Payment of Tuition and Fees:

ACA reserves the right to withhold a report card due to tuition fees and/or library book fines not being paid. Once payment has been made and there is a receipt of proof of settling the account, the report card will be given to the family.

Extended Vacations:

The school does not encourage students to be absent from school due to extended vacations. Parents will be required to notify the school in writing and fill out the appropriate form if such an absence is unavoidable, so that arrangements can be made for missed schoolwork.

Parent and Visitor Access to the Campus:

In order to insure that the campus is secure so students, staff, and visitors are safe while on the grounds of the school, we have limited access for all parents and visitors during instructional time. Upon entering the school all parents and visitors must present their civil ID to the security guard(s). Parents are asked to sign in the "Guest Book" kept at the security guard's desk. The parent or visitor is given an ACA VISITOR'S ID badge to wear. This badge should always be visible. The parent or visitor will then proceed to the receptionist who will contact the staff member about the appointment. The parent or visitor must remain in the reception area until the staff member has arrived to escort them onto the campus grounds.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES is a parent or visitor to pass the receptionist's desk without a staff member as an escort and an ACA VISITOR'S ID badge in the parent's or visitor's possession. If a parent or visitor is on campus without an escort and/or ACA ID badge, the parent or visitor will be asked to return to the reception area.

Uniforms:

The uniform for all KG boys and girls is dark blue pants and white shirts with a collar. Girls may also wear a knee length skirt or jumper, preferably with shorts underneath. In cool weather, students may wear any color winter jacket, but preferably dark blue, black, or white jacket or sweater. All clothing must be labeled with the child's full name. Children should wear comfortable closed shoes or sneakers. SANDALS OR CROCS are not appropriate ACA attire, and may not be worn to school by KG students.

No costumes (princess, superhero, police or military attire) **except** on designated event days, or free dress days that are noted as specific colors or attire, and no costumes during field trips or birthdays at KG. When costume days are announced, please also send in the ACA uniform (dress code) as sometimes children prefer not to be in costume all day.

Jewelry:

KG students may not wear jewelry or watches to school, although girls may wear small earrings that do not dangle and are not expensive. ACA is not responsible for jewelry lost at school.

Personal items:

Please do not allow your KG child to bring iPads, phones, expensive or important toys and games to school they would not like to lose or have damaged. ACA is **not** responsible for personal items lost at school.

Buses:

Bus service for kindergarten children is available through the school. Parents must contact the Transportation Office to make arrangements. Pre-K and KG1 bus children board the busses, leaving school by 12:15PM and KG2 bus children leave by 1:45PM. Bused students are placed on the buses unless a note or phone call from the parents specifies other provisions. Children riding the bus **MUST** behave properly to ensure the safety of all passengers. If a child misbehaves consistently on the bus, a warning letter is sent home. If the behavior continues, the child may not be permitted to ride the bus.

Field Trips:

Field trips are scheduled throughout the school year. Children receive a permission form 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 form are not permitted to go on the trip and remain at school under the supervision of another classroom teacher. Verbal approval from a parent by phone or in person is not acceptable. Non-participation in a field trip is very hard for the child, so parents are urged to return all field trip forms on time, with applicable activity/entrance fees as required.

Academic Retention:

In order to succeed at the elementary level, students must first be successful with the kindergarten curriculum. Students who fail to show success in kindergarten may be retained at that grade level for the coming year and/or outside testing may be required before reenrollment is allowed. The final decision regarding retention is made by the Kindergarten Child Study Team, which consists of the Principal,

Assistant Principal, Counselors, classroom Teacher, Arabic Teacher, and with the ELL/PE Teachers. An eventual decision to retain or to deny reenrollment is made after careful committee consideration. This decision is taken in the interest of the student, to ensure every opportunity for academic success in the appropriate placement.

Parties/ Birthdays: Balloons Are Never Allowed In KG

Birthday parties may be celebrated at lunchtime, but only with prior permission from the teacher in order to ensure that the party does not interfere with scheduled lessons and activities. Birthday parties should be kept as simple as possible. Parents must be present to facilitate the event, bring the cake, plates, and all utensils as KG does not have these on hand. Parties should not last longer than one half hour, and parents are encouraged to leave as quickly as possible afterward. Parents who do not wish for their child to participate in birthday parties must inform the teacher early in the year so other arrangements can be made during parties. No balloons, outside photographers, characters, carnival activities, games, or face painting are allowed at school. The following procedures are for the benefit of all KG students:

- Birthday candles are a fire hazard and are NOT allowed in KG
- Gift bags will not be opened in class, but rather sent home
- Cupcakes or small cakes only as young children have small appetites
- No small, removable decorations on cakes or as gifts to keep young children safe from choking hazards
- **KG does not allow visitors/guests (adults, children, nannies or babies/young children) or any other ACA students (KG or otherwise) to attend in-class birthdays. This is a disruption to the academic process and thus may only be shared with students from the same class**
- **Parents-only (mothers and fathers) may attend**
- No combined birthdays for multiples (twins/triplets). Separate, in-class parties only as space does not allow for such events
- No costumes or party dresses as children must stay in ACA uniform while at school

- KG staff may not distribute event invitations for outside parties, not unless all students in the class are invited.
- If this is inconvenient, please have the birthday party outside of school.

We appreciate you supporting the above procedures for the benefit of all students and the school.

Home School Communications

Weekly Schedules:

A weekly schedule is sent home each Thursday or Sunday so that parents can follow their children's progress. The schedule includes theme topics, academic skills being taught, special projects and events, and field trips. Teachers may also use the weekly schedule to request that a child bring inexpensive materials for an art or science project or to announce a special project or achievement. Details on classroom lessons, activities, and ACA events are available by newsletters.

Homework:

Homework is not given in Pre-K and KG1. English and Arabic homework is usually given once a week in KGII. Homework at this age is designed to be fun, yet educational, and as preparation for the homework expectations of the elementary department. It may consist of journal and name writing, reading, and/or math practice. Homework is sometimes individualized to meet the specific needs of the child.

KG2 Home Reading Program:

Parents play an important role in this fun experience in which students and parents read to each other. KG2 students check out and return books during their weekly library time. They take the library books home with a reading journal to enjoy reading with their families. After reading, they draw a picture and write about the story in their journals. Students also learn from this experience how to use a library, care for books, and take responsibility for returning their books on time. Parents are notified regarding overdue or lost books and are asked to pay a fine for an eventual lost book.

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

A formal parent-teacher conference is scheduled every semester. The teacher will outline the child's areas of strength and weakness 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 behavioral problems, academic difficulty, or changes in behavior for more than two weeks.

Parents may request an additional conference by means of a note or call to the teacher. Messages may be left with the KG secretary. Unless absolutely urgent, parents should allow 24 hours between the time of request and the time of the meeting to allow for proper preparation by the teacher. 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 makes every effort to help resolve any difficulties or questions.

Report Cards:

At ACA, learning is assessed in an authentic, performance-based method of evaluating student comes. Report cards are sent home quarterly to be signed and returned. They indicate student progress in meeting curricular goals, both academic and social. Parents must remember that each child develops differently. They should be encouraging and supportive as they discuss the report card with their children.

Panther Paw Awards:

Each Sunday, Panther Paw Awards are handed out to students who have shown positive performance whether academic or behavioral. Awards are based on a goal of building students' self-esteem through expectations of responsible global citizenship, positive academic performance and behavior, independence and responsibility, and with the incorporation of environmental mindedness as caretakers of our earth. One student from each class is chosen and their group picture is taken to hang in our KG Reception. Parents are invited by the classroom teacher to attend their child's award morning.

Guidance:

KG has two qualified, bilingual Counselors, available for consultation with students, teachers, and parents, in case of behavioral and academic concerns. Appointments are made directly with the Counselors.

Student Discipline:

In KG, discipline means helping children to 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 for we recognize that each child and each situation is unique. However, all staff members follow the general disciplinary techniques endorsed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):

- 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.
- In KG, children are taught that everyone deserves to feel safe, to respect others, to be good citizens, and to expect the like treatment from others. Hitting, or any negative physical contact, is never acceptable forms of communication and will not be tolerated at ACA. Should repeated reminders be needed, the KG including the teachers, counselors and principals will request to work with you to encourage your child to adjust to the expectations of school.
- Model appropriate and respectful treatment of people and materials.

In case 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, and 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 point of view, which is a first step in the development of empathy, an important pro-social behavior.

On occasion, the teacher may direct a child away from a group or activity, but this “redirection” is not used as a 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 principal when their behavior is dangerous to themselves or others, or if all other attempts to solve the problem have failed. Finally, the KG Counselors may be called and a parent conference scheduled. Techniques that are **not** used at ACA under any circumstances are hitting, yelling, criticizing, threatening, or making hurtful or sarcastic comments.

The Kindergarten Department at the American Creativity Academy is very excited about working with your young child this year. We look forward to offering your child a very positive school experience.

We care deeply about all of our students and wish everyone a successful and safe school year.

PROMOTING HEALTHY EATING HABITS IN KG



Dear KG Parents,

We all know that getting your child to eat healthy foods can be a struggle sometimes. Every child is different, and every child comes from a different environment that might influence his/her eating habits. In Pre-K, we want to start, with your cooperation and encouragement, to teach the students that eating healthy can be both fun and satisfying. Eating the correct foods can also help with focus and alertness in school; which is the key to success.

Therefore, we are going to develop a rotation schedule from the beginning of the year; where every Thursday one student will share a **healthy snack** with his/her classmates. Examples of healthy snacks to share could be:

- Carrot and cucumber sticks (with or without dip)
- Fruit (cut up fruit or fruit salad)
- Pretzels
- Popcorn
- Dried fruit
- Cheese and crackers
- Healthy mini sandwiches using whole wheat or multi grain bread (peanut butter, turkey, or unprocessed cheese)



We look forward to your cooperation and to a healthy and happy KG school year.

Thank you.

All KG Teachers

