



Deutsche Internationale Schule Abu Dhabi
المدرسة الألمانية الدولية
German International School Abu Dhabi

PARENT HANDBOOK

German International School in Abu Dhabi

Academic Year 2025/26

General School Information

Name and Address

German International School Abu Dhabi
P.O. Box 4150, Abu Dhabi, UAE

Contact Information

Phone: +971 2 666 8668

Email: info@gisad.ae

Website: www.gisad.ae

School Hours

Office Hours: Monday to Thursday 07:45 – 16:00, Friday 08:00 – 12:00

Class Hours: Monday to Thursday 07:45 – 15:40, Friday 08:00 – 12:00

Contacts

Principal: Andreas Rothfritz (Andreas.rothfritz@gisad.ae)

Head of Administration: Dorina Hacker (Dorina.hacker@gisad.ae)

Secretary: info@gisad.ae

Vision and Mission

Vision

We are a dynamic, student-centered learning community that values academic achievement, personal development, and cultural understanding.

Mission

GISAD provides a German curriculum-based educational program that equips students with the knowledge and skills required for global citizenship. We aim to inspire curiosity, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning.

Core Values

1. Academic Excellence: Pursuing high academic standards and continuous improvement.
2. Respect: Appreciating diversity and treating everyone with fairness and dignity.
3. Responsibility: Fostering accountability and self-discipline.
4. Integrity: Maintaining honesty and ethical behavior in all actions.
5. Collaboration: Promoting teamwork among students, parents, and staff.

Important Information for Parents

Admission & Enrollment

GISAD practices a fair and transparent admission procedure without discrimination. Priority for admission is given to German nationals, children of German nationals, German-speaking students of other nationalities, and non-German-speaking students willing to learn German.

The following documents are required for registration: completed registration form, copies of birth certificate, passport and Emirates ID of the child, passports and UAE residence permits of both parents, report cards from the last two school years, Transfer Certificate (for school changes within the UAE), and medical documents. The admission process includes an interview with school leadership and, if necessary, a placement test to determine the appropriate grade level. In case of over-registration, a waiting list is maintained according to admission priority, registration date, and siblings.

Detailed information on the admission procedure is published in the Student Administrative Affairs Policy on the school website.

Tuition Fees

The tuition fee structure is determined annually and includes instruction, teaching materials, and administrative fees. Current information on fees by grade level, payment methods, additional costs, and refund policies can be found on the school website at www.gisad.ae.

Daily Schedule

Classes begin at 7:45 AM with the UAE national anthem. Students must remain on school grounds during the school day; students in grades 11 and 12 may leave the premises during free periods with written parental permission.

Schedule Monday to Thursday:

1st Period: 07:45 am – 08:30 am

2nd Period: 08:30 am – 09:15 am

Break: 09:15 am – 09:35 am

3rd Period: 09:35 am – 10:20 am

4th Period: 10:20 am – 11:05 am

5th Period: 11:05 am – 11:50 am

Break: 11:50 am – 12:10 pm

6th Period: 12:10 pm – 12:55 pm

7th Period: 12:55 pm – 01:40 pm

Break: 01:40 pm – 02:10 pm (Early bus departure)

8th Period: 03:10. pm – 03:55 pm

9th Period: 03:55 pm – 03:40 pm (End of school, late bus departure)

Attendance & Punctuality

Regular school attendance is essential for educational success. Classes begin at 7:45 AM with the UAE national anthem. Students must remain on school grounds during the school day; students in grades 11 and 12 may leave the premises during free periods with written parental permission.

Absences exceeding 5% of school days (Kindergarten: 10%) are considered concerning. Excused absences include: illness (with medical certificate for extended illness), family bereavement, scheduled doctor appointments, official appointments, school competitions, and religious holidays. Repeated tardiness (more than three times per school year) results in pedagogical measures.

S.T.A.R. Initiative (Students That Are Ready): Parents support punctual school start by ensuring their child is in the classroom by 7:40 AM (bus) or 7:45 AM (direct drop-off). Special requests for bus transportation can only be accommodated until 8:00 PM the previous day.

Detailed regulations are published in the School Rules and Student Administrative Affairs Policy on the school website.

Curriculum

GISAD follows the Thuringian curriculum. The focus is on core subjects such as German, Mathematics, Sciences, and Languages. Arabic instruction is offered according to UAE guidelines, and Islamic Studies is mandatory for Muslim students. Social Studies is also taught according to UAE requirements.

Arabic instruction is mandatory for all students in grades 1 to 5. Instruction is organized in proficiency levels. Native Arabic speakers have mandatory Arabic instruction through grade 12.

Social Studies instruction about the United Arab Emirates is mandatory for all students in grades 5 to 9 and is conducted in English. For native Arabic-speaking students, Social Studies is also mandatory from grades 1 to 4 and is conducted in Arabic.

Assessment

GISAD uses assessment as a pedagogical tool to promote learning and guide students on their individual learning journeys. Our assessment system combines formative (ongoing)

and summative (evaluative) procedures and complies with both ADEK requirements and the German curriculum.

Students are continuously assessed through various forms: written tests, exams, oral contributions, projects, portfolios, and self-reflections. Teachers regularly provide feedback that helps students identify their next learning steps. All assessments are based on clear criteria and grading guidelines that are verified through internal and inter-school moderation.

The school fulfills all ADEK-mandated standardized benchmark assessments for grades 3-9 as well as German curriculum requirements, including MSA (Mittlerer Schulabschluss, grade 10), Abitur (grade 12), and DSD (Deutsches Sprachdiplom). Students with special educational needs receive appropriate support measures and accommodations.

Performance reports are communicated regularly through written report cards, parent-teacher conferences, and digital platforms. Assessment data is used to inform instructional planning and develop individual support measures.

Detailed information on the assessment system, grading criteria, examination regulations, and feedback procedures can be found in the Assessment Policy on the school website at www.gisad.ae.

Communication Protocols

GISAD places great importance on transparent and effective communication between school and parents. All teachers and staff are reachable by email; email addresses are published on the school website. Inquiries are generally answered within one working day.

Communication Channels: The school communicates through various channels: email, school website (www.gisad.ae), phone, MS Teams, Instagram, and Facebook. The following email addresses are available for specific concerns: info@gisad.ae (general inquiries), schulbus@gisad.ae (bus service), accountant@gisad.ae (accounting), elternbeirat@gisad.ae (parent council), and complaint@gisad.ae (formal complaints).

Communication Hierarchy: In accordance with the motto "Talking with each other about questions and concerns," the school follows a clear communication hierarchy. For questions or concerns regarding a child, parents should first contact the subject teacher, then the class teacher, followed by the department head (Primary School/Lower Secondary/Upper Secondary), and finally the school leadership. For general concerns about the class or school, parents may first contact the class parent representatives.

Parent Conferences: Parent conferences and consultation hours take place at least once per semester. Additional meetings can be arranged at any time by appointment with the respective teacher. The school conducts regular parent evenings to inform about school developments.

Emergency Communication: In emergencies, the school has a notification system (SMS, announcement system, apps) to reach parents quickly. Parents are requested to keep contact information up to date at all times.

The detailed process description of communication channels and additional information can be found on the school website at www.gisad.ae.

Nutrition

GISAD promotes a healthy eating culture and ensures that all students have access to nutritious meals. Our cafeteria is operated by Food Nation and offers daily healthy, balanced meals that comply with the Abu Dhabi Guidelines for Food in Educational Institutions.

Parents are requested to provide their children with healthy and balanced snacks for breaks. Certain foods are not permitted for safety reasons, particularly nut products due to allergy risks. Glass bottles are also not allowed. The school informs parents on the same day about food-related concerns.

The school maintains records of food allergies and intolerances of all students. This information is shared with relevant staff and the cafeteria to avoid accidental exposure. Parents are requested to inform the school immediately about new allergies and provide necessary medications.

Water dispensers are located on all floors, so students have access to fresh drinking water at all times. The school also promotes sustainable eating habits and waste reduction. External food delivery services are not permitted during school hours.

Detailed information on nutrition policy can be found in the Healthy Eating and Food Safety Policy on the school website at www.gisad.ae.

Student Protection & Welfare

The safety and well-being of our students is the highest priority at GISAD. We have developed a comprehensive protection concept that ensures all children feel comfortable, are protected, and can develop in a healthy and positive way.

Our protection concept includes clear responsibilities throughout the school team, effective supervision during breaks, standardized visitor and pick-up procedures, and transparent reporting channels for safety concerns. A specialized Child Protection Team coordinates all protection measures and serves as a point of contact.

The school actively promotes the mental and emotional well-being of students through school social services, counseling services, and preventive programs. For concerns regarding bullying, child endangerment, or other safety issues, confidential reporting channels are available through trusted persons such as school social workers, class teachers, or school leadership. All staff are regularly trained in child protection measures.

The infirmary is staffed daily and provides medical first aid for injuries or illness. Parents are immediately informed of health problems. The school has emergency procedures, a lockdown system, and conducts regular safety drills.

Detailed information can be found in the Safeguarding Policy, Student Protection Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, and Student Mental Health Policy on the school website at www.gisad.ae.

Transportation

GISAD offers a voluntary school bus service for all students from Kindergarten to grade 12. The service is operated by 11 school buses that pick up students in the morning and return them in the afternoon at 1:50 PM (after 7th period) and 3:50 PM (after 9th period).

Registration and Routes: Abu Dhabi is divided into four transportation zones. Bus routes are adjusted at the beginning of the school year according to registrations. Students are picked up at designated stops; in some cases, door-to-door service is possible. Single trips can be booked subject to availability. Registration for bus service is done via schulbus@gisad.ae. Registrations must be submitted at least four days before the start of service.

Fees: Bus fees vary by zone and are determined annually. Parents can pay in two installments. Current information on zones, routes, and fees can be found on the school website at www.gisad.ae.

Behavior Rules: Students must adhere to school bus rules, including punctual arrival at the stop, respectful behavior, buckled seating, and following instructions from the bus driver and attendant. Repeated violations of bus rules may result in exclusion from bus service. Parents are responsible for picking up their children at the stop; students in grades KG through 5 must be picked up by parents.

Changes: Changes to bus usage must be communicated at least 24 hours in advance to schulbus@gisad.ae. Detailed behavior rules and safety regulations can be found in the School Bus Rules on the school website.

School Rules

As an intercultural community, we have developed clear rules for respectful interaction. Our school rules include regulations on school start and attendance, behavior in the building, break design and safety, as well as respectful treatment of people and property. They also define rules on the use of electronic devices, appropriate clothing, and healthy eating.

The complete school rules are published bilingually (German/English) at www.gisad.ae and apply to all members of the school community.

Additional Important Information

Extracurricular Activities (ECAs)

GISAD offers a variety of extracurricular programs, including sports, arts, and cultural activities, to promote the overall development of students. Participation is encouraged to develop teamwork, leadership skills, and personal interests.

Field Trips and School Trips

During the school year, classes take one field trip per semester. Trip destinations are individually selected by classes, are age-appropriate, and observe all ADEK regulations. Special emphasis is placed on considering the culture and tradition of the UAE when designing trips.

Parent Engagement

GISAD places great value on active parent participation in the school community. Participation opportunities include attending parent evenings, working in the parent council, and volunteering at events. Contact the parent council: elternbeirat@gisad.ae

Events

German International School Abu Dhabi regularly organizes school events such as celebrations, performances, sports days, graduation ceremonies, and excursions. Parents are informed in advance about dates, participation requirements, and any applicable dress codes.

Media Center

Students can borrow books, Tonies, CDs, and DVDs here. The media center is open daily. All persons behave quietly and politely toward the staff.

School Shop & Skiplly App

All important school materials can be purchased in the school shop. They can be purchased directly in the media center or bought via the Skiplly app and then picked up in the media center. Cashless payment is possible via the Skiplly app, e.g., for school fees, primary school material packages, or materials from the school shop.

Appendix

A blank copy of the Parent-School Agreement is available on the school website at www.gisad.ae. All parents are required to sign this agreement annually.

The Parent Handbook is continuously expanded, revised, and updated to reflect current standards. Last updated: February 2026