



AISF Parent–Student Handbook (2025–26)
(March 2026 review)

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AISF Parent–Student Handbook (2025–26) (March 2026 review)

Welcome to AISF

Dear Families,

Welcome to the American International School of Freetown! We are delighted to have you as part of our community. AISF is more than just a school — it is a place where children learn, grow, and thrive in a safe, caring, and inclusive environment.

We believe that education is a partnership between school and home. By working together, we can ensure that every child reaches their full potential academically, socially, and personally. This handbook is designed to help you understand how daily life at AISF works, what we expect of students and families, and how you can support your child's success.

We are excited to begin this school year with you.

My door is always open and you may contact me by:

Email: director@ais-freetown.net or Tel: + 232-79-552-345

Best regards,
Elizabeth Minnigin
Director

1: School Contact Information Page

Administrative and Safeguarding Contact Information

Director

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Finance Officer

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Vice Principal

DeMetria Hopkins

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Child Protection Officer (CPO)

DeMetria Hopkins

safeguarding@ais-freetown.net

Deputy CPO

Gemma Sinnott

safeguarding@ais-freetown.net

School Office

Office Hours: 7:30am – 4:00pm

American International School of Freetown

Hill Station, Freetown, Sierra Leone

☎ +232-76-622-453

Class Teacher Contacts (2025–26)

Pre-Kindergarten / Kindergarten (ECC – Early Childhood Center)

Lead Practitioner — **Cornelia Alu-Conteh**

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Grades 1–2 (Main Building)

Teacher — **Nachelle Thomas**

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Grades 3–4 (Main Building)

Teacher — **Gemma Sinnott**

gsinnott@ais-freetown.net

Grades 5–6 & 7-8 (Main Building)

Teachers — **DeMetria Hopkins** dhopkins@ais-freetown.net & **Nicholas**

Ingram ningram@ais-freetown.net

High School (Main Building)

Site Coordinator — **Ludovic Brouilloux**

lbrouilloux@ais-freetown.net

Part A: Foundations

1: Organization, Philosophy and Mission

Governance & Leadership at AISF

AISF is a non-profit American foundation registered in the State of Delaware, operating in Sierra Leone under a Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. and Sierra Leone governments.

The Board of Directors

- Holds the school in trust for current and future generations.
- Sets the mission, vision, and strategic direction of the school in partnership with the Director.
- Approves school policies and the annual budget, including tuition fees.
- Appoints and evaluates the Director.

Board Structure

AISF has a seven-member hybrid Board: three elected by the Association, three appointed by the Board, and one appointed by the U.S. Ambassador. Members serve two-year terms. The Director participates as a non-voting member.

The Director

The Director is the educational leader and chief executive of the school, responsible for day-to-day management, learning standards, and the implementation of Board policy.

The AISF Association

All parents/guardians of enrolled students and all full-time faculty are members of the AISF Association.

- The Association meets annually at the **Annual General Meeting (AGM)** in May to receive reports on the school's work, review finances, and elect Board members.
- This ensures that parents/guardians and faculty remain actively involved in the governance framework of the school.

Parents/Guardians are also encouraged to participate actively in school life through the PTO and community events.

2: Our Vision, Mission, and Growth at AISF

AISF Vision

Know | Think | Care — Inspiring knowledgeable, caring thinkers

AISF Mission

AISF develops students' love of learning in an internationally recognized, safe, student-centered, and interactive learning environment. Students develop a global perspective that fosters empathy and prepares them for success in an ever-changing world.

AISF Beliefs

We believe that:

- Respect for everyone's progress, and care for their safety and wellbeing, are essential for a successful and interactive learning environment.
 - The richness of our community enriches our learning experience and develops global perspectives.
 - Each member of our community is both a teacher and a learner, participating in an ongoing process of self-realization.
 - Collaboration and teamwork are vital for progress in an ever-changing, interconnected world.
-

Profile of AISF Graduates

AISF graduates will be literate and proficient in:

- English language including reading, writing, speaking and listening
- Mathematics
- The natural sciences
- The social sciences
- A variety of the creative arts
- Digital literacy, including confident, responsible, and creative use of technology

They will be skillful in:

- Communicating effectively
- Working collaboratively in teams
- Thinking critically and solving problems
- Synthesizing, analyzing, and using information to create unique products
- Applying information and media literacy with discernment

They will be:

- Adaptable
- Communicators
- Collaborators
- Empathetic
- Ethical
- Resilient
- Respectful
- Thinkers
- Caring

Global Perspective at AISF

AISF blends the strengths of American education with internationally recognized programs to foster a global mindset. Rooted in U.S. standards yet enriched by the cultural and national variety of our community, we prepare students to thrive as confident, compassionate global citizens.

- Core subjects such as English Language Arts and Mathematics are aligned with U.S. standards across all grade levels.
- In Early Childhood and Elementary School, Science and Social Studies are taught through the International Early Years and International Primary curricula, offering inquiry-based and globally themed learning.
- In Middle School, Social Studies and English Language Arts remain aligned with U.S. standards while incorporating international perspectives, ensuring students learn to analyze issues from multiple viewpoints.

This dual emphasis on American rigor and international breadth ensures students gain strong academic foundations while developing the adaptability, empathy, and global awareness needed for future success.

Our Campus and Continuous Growth

AISF is committed to continual growth and improvement, guided by Middle States Association (MSA) accreditation standards and international best practice. Each year, the Board, Director, staff, and families work together to set goals, review progress, and ensure AISF continues to provide the best possible education for our students.

Our campus in Hill Station enjoys an elevated, wooded setting overlooking the city and the Atlantic Ocean. It is located close to the residences of the British High Commissioner and German Ambassador, providing a safe and accessible environment. The school offers:

- Fully air-conditioned classrooms and learning spaces
- A small playing field and children's playground equipment
- Multipurpose spaces for assemblies and activities

Security and Safety

The campus is enclosed by a perimeter wall and protected by 24-hour contracted security staff. AISF partners with G4S and the United States Embassy, including through the Embassy's radio network, to help ensure a safe and secure environment for students, staff, and families.

Looking Ahead

AISF continues to invest in improving its facilities and resources so that students benefit from a safe, modern, and inspiring learning environment.

What This Means for Families

Our guiding statements remind us that every child deserves to grow as a knowledgeable, thoughtful, and caring individual in a safe, supportive community. Together, we nurture students who are prepared not only for academic success, but also for life as compassionate, resilient global citizens.

3: Admissions & Placement

AISF welcomes students of all nationalities, cultures, and backgrounds. Admission decisions are guided by our mission, values, and commitment to providing a high-quality, inclusive education.

Entry Age Requirements

- Entry into each grade is based on the student's age by September 1 of the academic year.
- Early Childhood 3 (EC3): Age 3
- Early Childhood 4 (EC4): Age 4
- Kindergarten: Age 5
- Grade 1: Age 6
- Students entering EC3 and EC4 are expected to be toilet-trained before starting school.
- Exceptions to cut-off dates are rare and may be considered by the Director after review of developmental readiness and prior school records.

Transfer Students

- AISF accepts transfer students throughout the school year, subject to space availability.
- Placement is based on age, previous school records, teacher/principal recommendations, and, when needed, assessments conducted by AISF.
- In some cases, students may be admitted on a short trial period to ensure a successful adjustment.
- Final placement decisions rest with the Director, who considers both the student's needs and the school's ability to provide appropriate support.

Language Placement & ELL (English Language Learners) / EAL Support

- AISF is an English-medium school. Students may be asked to complete a language assessment to determine their English proficiency.
- AISF follows an **inclusive, push-in model**: students remain in their mainstream classes, where teachers provide language support as part of daily learning.
- Support is delivered by **professionally trained, caring staff**, with every teacher responsible for ensuring that all children can access the curriculum. They are supported by highly competent Teaching Assistants who work alongside them in the classroom.

- Adaptive tools such as **i-Ready English** personalize instruction, helping students progress through levels of proficiency — from **Emerging** to **Expert**.
- AISF values **multilingualism as a strength**. Families are encouraged to maintain their home languages while students build English proficiency. For students learning English as an **Additional Language (EAL)** — often referred to as **English Language Learners (ELL)** in U.S. schools — support is embedded in daily classroom learning rather than provided through a separate program.
- Families will be informed of placement decisions and support services at the time of admission.

Special Placements & Inclusion

- AISF values an inclusive approach and welcomes students with a variety of learning needs.
- Admission of students requiring additional academic, behavioral, or medical support is carefully considered in light of available resources and staffing.
- For students with identified needs, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be developed in partnership with families and the SENCO.
- Placement decisions are reviewed regularly to ensure that AISF remains the right environment for the child's growth and success.
- Details of responsibilities and funding arrangements are outlined in the *Special Education Funding Policy* see Appendix M.

Tuition & Fees

AISF tuition and fees are set annually and shared through the school office and website. Tuition covers instruction and core learning resources, while families are responsible for daily transport, lunches, and extracurricular costs unless otherwise noted.

Our aim is to keep the process clear and transparent for families. Fee schedules, payment timelines, and any additional charges are published each year, and the Business Office is available to answer questions or provide support.

For the current schedule and procedures, please see Appendix D.

Student Transition from AISF

We understand that many AISF families are with us for a limited posting or assignment. When it's time to move on, we want the transition to be as smooth as possible.

- At the end of a family's stay — whether during the year or at the close of the school year — each student receives an official copy of their report card and school records for the current year.
- Families leaving permanently may request a **Leaving Packet**, which includes an official leaving document and previous report cards. If not collected before departure, these can be provided electronically.
- AISF also maintains secure electronic student records, which can be sent directly to the receiving school if that is their preference.
- To keep everything on track, please note that all fees and charges must be cleared before records are released.

4: Safeguarding & Child Protection

Safeguarding & Child Protection

At AISF, your child's safety and wellbeing are our highest priority. We are committed to providing a safe, caring, and respectful environment in which all students can grow, learn, and thrive. Our safeguarding and child protection practices are aligned with Sierra Leonean legislation, MSA Standards for Accreditation, and international best practice. All staff and volunteers are required to follow the AISF Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

What This Means for Families

Safeguarding is not just about responding to serious incidents—it is about creating an environment where children feel valued, supported, and listened to every day. We affirm every child's right to be safe, protected, and respected.

- **Shared responsibility:** Every adult in our community—teachers, parents/guardians, staff, and visitors—plays a role in keeping children safe.
- **Open communication:** Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to raise concerns early. Whether big or small, your concern will be listened to and acted on.
- **Prevention first:** Students receive age-appropriate guidance on safety, wellbeing, and online awareness through the curriculum and school activities.
- **Trained staff:** All staff undergo annual safeguarding training, and the designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) leads our safeguarding efforts.
- **Confidentiality:** Concerns are handled sensitively and shared only with those who need to know in order to protect your child.
- **Clear response:** Concerns will be taken seriously, investigated promptly, and families will be informed of the next steps.

If at any point you or your child feel unsafe or have a concern:

1. Speak to your child's teacher, or
2. Contact the Child Protection Officer (CPO), or
3. Contact the Director if you feel your concern has not been addressed.

Reference

- Full details are in the AISF Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy (2025–26), which is available on the AISF website and Appendix L of this handbook.
- School organization and contact details for the CPO, Deputy CPO, and Director are at the beginning of this handbook
- Reporting forms and resources are available on request from the school office.

5: Special Educational Needs & Inclusion

AISF is committed to providing an inclusive and caring environment where every student is valued as an individual. We recognize that children learn in different ways and at different paces, and we aim to ensure that each learner can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Our Commitment to Inclusion

- AISF welcomes students with a range of abilities and learning needs, provided appropriate support can be offered.
- We believe that inclusive classrooms benefit all students by fostering empathy, collaboration, and respect for individual differences.
- Support is delivered within the classroom wherever possible, so students remain active members of their peer group.

Individual Support Plans (IEPs)

- For students with identified needs, AISF develops an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or support plan in partnership with parents/guardians, teachers, and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).
- Each plan includes clear goals, strategies, and accommodations, and is reviewed regularly to monitor progress.

Role of the SENCO

- Beginning in 2025–26, AISF has a full-time SENCO, who is also a qualified speech therapist.
- The SENCO works closely with teachers, families, and students to identify needs, provide targeted support, and coordinate external services when necessary.
- This role ensures AISF's approach reflects international best practice in inclusive education.

Partnership with Families

- Parents/Guardians are essential partners in supporting children with additional needs, and regular communication ensures consistency between home and school.
- When external support (e.g., therapy, counseling, psycho-educational services) is required, AISF will work with families to coordinate provision.
- Details of responsibilities and funding arrangements for additional services are outlined in the *Special Education Funding Policy* see Appendix M.

Part B: Student Expectations & Conduct

6: Student Code of Conduct

At AISF, we believe that learning happens best in a community built on **respect, responsibility, safety, and integrity**. These shared values guide how we treat one another and how we work together each day.

The Student Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for all students. It helps ensure that AISF remains a safe, caring, and productive environment for learning and growth. The Code applies both inside and outside the classroom, and it is designed to be clear and age-appropriate for each stage of a child's development.

Elementary School (ECC–Grade 4): Our Promises

Our youngest learners are guided by simple, positive commitments:

- I will be **kind and respectful** to classmates, teachers, and staff.
 - I will take **responsibility** for my actions and do my best every day.
 - I will help keep myself and others **safe** by following classroom and playground rules.
 - I will be **honest** and do the right thing, even when no one is watching.
 - I will take care of my school, my belongings, and our shared spaces.
 - I will use technology with care and follow my teacher's guidance.
-

Middle School (Grades 5–8): Our Commitments

As students grow, expectations become more collaborative and independent:

- We will treat all people with **respect** — no bullying, teasing, or exclusion.
- We will take **responsibility** for our learning by being prepared, punctual, and engaged.
- We will make choices that keep ourselves and others **safe**, including how we use technology.
- We will show **integrity** by being honest in our work and fair in our actions.
- We will contribute positively to our school community by supporting others and caring for our environment.

High School (Grades 9–12): Our Pledge

Our oldest students are leaders and role models. Their pledge reflects preparation for life beyond AISF:

- We will demonstrate **respect** by valuing diversity of thought, culture, and opinion, and by mentoring younger students.
 - We will show **responsibility** by taking ownership of our choices, academics, and leadership roles.
 - We will prioritize **safety** — physical, emotional, and digital — for ourselves and others.
 - We will act with **integrity**, practicing honesty, academic fairness, and ethical decision-making.
 - We will prepare for life beyond AISF by upholding our responsibilities as global citizens.
-

Acknowledgment

Each year, students and parents/guardians are asked to sign the **AISF Student & Parent Code of Conduct Acknowledgment Form** to confirm their understanding and agreement. Please see Appendix H.

The signed acknowledgment is kept on file as part of each student's school record.

When the Code is Not Followed

Breaches of this Code are addressed through AISF's **Behavior and Discipline Procedures** (see Section 8 of this Handbook). The aim is always to help students learn from mistakes, restore relationships, and reinforce positive behavior. AISF emphasizes **restorative approaches where possible**, helping students repair harm, rebuild trust, and grow from their experiences.

7: Parent Code of Conduct

At AISF, parents/guardians are valued partners in their children's education. Together we create a safe, respectful, and welcoming environment where every child can thrive. This Code of Conduct is designed to guide how we work together as a school community.

What this looks like in practice

This Code is not about rules for rules' sake — it's about everyday actions that reflect our shared values of respect, care, and collaboration. When families and the school work together positively, students benefit the most.

As parents/guardians, we ask you to:

- **Respect and Support**
Show courtesy and kindness to all members of the AISF community — students, staff, and other parents/guardians. When concerns arise, raise them through the right school channels and speak constructively about the school.
- **Communicate Constructively**
Use the school's communication pathways (see Section 11) to share questions or concerns. Maintain confidentiality, respect, and professionalism in all interactions.
- **Model Positive Behavior**
Demonstrate honesty and fairness in your dealings with the school. Avoid gossip, confrontations, or actions that could create an unsafe or negative atmosphere.
- **Support Learning**
Encourage good attendance, punctuality, and completion of assignments. Reinforce school values at home and help your child take responsibility for their learning.
- **Respect School Operations**
Follow school policies on safety, child protection, health, and security (including drop-off, pick-up, and visitor procedures). Support the school in maintaining a safe and orderly campus.
- **Celebrate Difference**
Embrace AISF's international, multicultural character, encouraging your child to learn from and respect others.

Acknowledgment

Each year, parents/guardians sign the Student & Parent Code of Conduct Acknowledgment Form, confirming their understanding of both Codes. This reinforces our shared commitment to a respectful and unified community.

When concerns arise

We know that questions or worries may occasionally come up. In those moments, we ask parents/guardians to:

- Share concerns respectfully with teachers or administrators, following the school's Communication Protocol.
- Allow the school time to listen, investigate, and respond thoughtfully.
- Help keep the school environment positive and supportive for students, staff, and families.

By approaching concerns in this way, we can keep the focus where it belongs — on the wellbeing and success of every student.

8: Behavior & Discipline Procedures

At AISF, discipline is understood as teaching and guiding students toward positive choices. Our approach emphasizes **restorative practices**—helping students reflect, repair harm, and take responsibility for their actions—while ensuring a safe and respectful environment for all.

Progressive Response

Most issues are addressed through a step-by-step process that matches the level of support or intervention needed:

- **Step 1:** Reminder or redirection from the teacher.
- **Step 2:** Reflection or restorative action (e.g., apology, repairing harm).
- **Step 3:** Parent contact if concerns continue.
- **Step 4:** Administrative involvement (e.g., meetings, behavior contracts, restricted privileges).
- **Step 5:** Suspension or, in rare cases, expulsion for serious or repeated breaches.

STOP Behaviors

Certain behaviors require an immediate and serious response to protect safety, such as:

- Weapons, drugs, or alcohol on campus
- Violence, threats, or harassment
- Bullying or cyberbullying
- Vandalism or theft
- Serious academic dishonesty

Students engaging in these behaviors may be removed from campus immediately and face consequences up to suspension or expulsion.

Bullying & Harassment

AISF addresses bullying and harassment promptly. Both are inconsistent with our values of respect and inclusion and will be met with clear interventions. Procedures follow the AISF **Anti-Bullying Policy (2025–26)**, which outlines prevention, response, and restorative measures.

Appeals

Parents/Guardians may appeal suspensions or expulsions in writing to the Director within five (5) school days. The Director's decision is final. The Board's role, if engaged, is to confirm that school policy and procedures were followed. Full procedural details are provided in Appendix I: AISF Code of Conduct / Behavior Policy.

9: Anti-Bullying Statement

AISF is committed to ensuring that every member of our community—students, parents/guardians, staff, and visitors—feels safe, respected, and valued. Bullying of any kind, whether physical, verbal, social, or online, is not tolerated. Any behavior that undermines the dignity or wellbeing of another person is inconsistent with AISF’s mission, vision, and Codes of Conduct.

What This Means for Families and Students

At AISF, respect and kindness are non-negotiable. To maintain a safe and inclusive environment:

- **Zero tolerance:** Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or exclusion will not be accepted in any form.
- **Safe reporting:** Students and parents/guardians can report concerns to a teacher, the school office, the Director, or the Child Protection Officer (CPO). All reports will be taken seriously, investigated promptly, and handled confidentially.
- **Restorative approach:** When bullying occurs, our priority is to stop the behavior, support those affected, and restore relationships. Responses may include mediation, restorative practices, and appropriate disciplinary measures.
- **Shared responsibility:** Families, students, and staff all play a role in modeling positive behavior, addressing concerns early, and working in partnership to resolve issues constructively.
- **Online conduct:** Bullying is not limited to the school grounds. Inappropriate behavior on social media or digital platforms that impacts AISF students or staff will be treated with equal seriousness. This statement should be read alongside the AISF **Anti-Bullying Policy (2025–26)** for full procedures.

10: Academic Integrity

The independence and integrity of each student's academic work is a fundamental principle at AISF. Academic integrity is taught and reinforced from Elementary through High School, ensuring that all students develop the values, skills, and habits needed to succeed in higher education and life beyond school.

Our Commitment

- **Integrity from the start:** Starting in Elementary, students are taught to take pride in their own thinking, respect the ideas of others, and practice honesty in their work.
- **Skills over time:** Study habits, research skills, and responsible use of information are explicitly taught at each grade level.
- **Preparation for the future:** By graduation, AISF students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty, aligned with global further education expectations.

Demonstrations of Academic Integrity

Students demonstrate academic integrity when they:

- Avoid plagiarism in all forms, including copying text, images, or media from books, websites, or AI-generated platforms (e.g., ChatGPT) without acknowledgment.
- Cite sources correctly when using the ideas, words, or work of others.
- Reference the use of translation tools or other support platforms honestly.
- Follow teacher directions regarding collaboration or independent work.
- Rely on their own effort during tests, without unauthorized notes, devices, or materials.
- Present only their own work (not that of other students, parents/guardians, or tutors).
- Support peers by refusing to provide unauthorized help, share exam papers, or sell/buy work.

Consequences for Academic Dishonesty

AISF treats academic dishonesty as both a serious matter and a teachable moment. Responses vary by age and severity:

- **Elementary:** Students reflect on the incident, re-do their work, and are guided to learn from the mistake.
- **Middle & High School:** Consequences may include:
 - Redo of the assignment or task
 - Reflection meeting and written response
 - Grade reduction or loss of credit
 - Meeting with parents/guardians and teachers
 - Suspension for repeated or severe incidents
 - Conditional enrollment or impact on re-enrollment in serious cases

Reporting

- In Middle and High School, incidents of academic dishonesty are recorded in the school's management system.
- In High School, serious cases may also need to be reported to higher education institutions such as colleges and universities, in line with application requirements.

Part C: Communication, Curriculum & Learning

11: Communication Pathways

AISF values open, respectful, and transparent communication between school and home. We are committed to ensuring that all parents/guardians, students, and staff know the correct pathways for raising questions, sharing feedback, and resolving concerns.

How We Communicate With Families

Regular updates help families stay connected to school life:

- **Weekly newsletter “AWOKO”** from the Director with key dates, highlights, and notices.
- **Classroom platforms** (e.g., Class Dojo, Google Classroom) for ongoing updates on learning.
- **WhatsApp broadcast lists** for urgent notices and reminders (one-way communication only).
- **Email** for formal notices and detailed information.
- **Parent meetings and events**, including Parent–Teacher Conferences, Back-to-School Night, and information sessions throughout the year.
- **Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)** and volunteer opportunities provide additional ways to be engaged in school life.

How Families Communicate with Us

Strong communication helps us work together in the best interests of every child. To make sure messages reach the right people quickly and effectively, we ask all families to follow the communication pathway:

1. Classroom or subject concerns → Speak first with your child’s teacher.
2. Ongoing or unresolved academic or wellbeing concerns → Contact the Vice Principal or for ECC the Lead Practitioner.
3. School-wide matters or unresolved issues → Contact the Director.
4. Formal disputes → If a concern cannot be resolved, it may be referred to the school’s dispute process outlined in Appendix K.

5. Board matters → The Board of Directors is responsible for governance, not daily operations. Parents/Guardians should only contact the Board for matters of governance or when directed by policy.

Best Practice Tips for Families

- Use Class Dojo/Google Classroom, or email for routine classroom communication.
- Arrange meetings in advance rather than arriving unannounced, so staff can prepare and give you their full attention.
- Always keep communication respectful and student-centered.

Reference:

- Contact details for all teachers, the Vice Principal, and Director are provided at the beginning of this handbook.
- Full procedures for disputes are detailed in Appendix F.

12: Complaints & Concerns

AISF is a community built on respect and trust. From time to time, parents/guardians or students may have questions, concerns, or complaints. We encourage these to be raised early and addressed constructively, so that problems can be solved quickly and relationships remain positive.

Our Commitment

- **Open communication:** We take every concern seriously and will listen carefully.
- **Fair process:** Concerns are handled respectfully, confidentially, and without prejudice.
- **Timely response:** We aim to acknowledge and address issues promptly.
- **Resolution focus:** Our goal is always to find solutions that support students' wellbeing and learning.

How to Raise a Concern

Parents/Guardians and students are encouraged to follow the school's communication pathway:

1. **First step:** Speak directly with the teacher or staff member most closely involved. Many issues can be resolved quickly at this level.
2. **If unresolved:** Bring the concern to the relevant coordinator or Vice Principal.
3. **Further escalation:** If the matter remains unresolved, parents/guardians may meet with the Director.
4. **Formal complaint:** For serious or unresolved issues, a written complaint may be submitted following the AISF Procedure for Misunderstandings or Disputes with School Personnel (see Appendix K).

What This Means for Families

- You can raise questions or concerns without fear of negative consequences.
- We ask that all concerns are shared respectfully, without gossip, confrontation, or social media escalation.
- We promise to listen, respond, and communicate clearly about the steps being taken.
- Serious matters (e.g., safeguarding, bullying, health and safety) will always be prioritized and escalated immediately to the Director or Child Protection Officer.

By working together in this way, concerns become opportunities for improvement and stronger community trust

13: Curriculum Frameworks

AISF's curriculum is designed to provide students with a high-quality, internationally relevant education that prepares them for success in further study and in life beyond school. Our programs balance academic rigor with inquiry, service, creativity, and global awareness. In keeping with AISF's size and international context, classes are organized as multi-grade groupings. This allows for personalized learning and positive peer interaction across age levels. For current class structures, see Appendix C Grade Levels

Early Years & Elementary

- **IEYC/IPC:** In the early years and elementary grades, AISF follows the U.S. Standards which are further enriched through the International Early Years Curriculum (IEYC) and the International Primary Curriculum (IPC). These frameworks encourage inquiry-based learning, creativity, and connections across subjects.

Middle School (Grades 5–8)

- **U.S. Standards:** Instruction is aligned with U.S. curriculum standards, ensuring consistency and smooth transitions for mobile international families.
- **MAP Growth Testing:** Students participate in MAP assessments, which help teachers track progress in reading, language, and mathematics against international benchmarks.
- **i-Ready Math & English:** All students use the adaptive i-Ready program, which personalizes learning pathways to meet children at their individual level and support growth across the full range of abilities.

High School Pathways (Grades 9–12)

- AISF partners with **Virtual High School (VHS)** and the **University of Nebraska High School (UNHS)** to provide a fully accredited U.S. high school program leading to a U.S. High School Diploma.
- **Dedicated High School Teacher:** AISF provides a fully trained, classroom-based **High School Teacher** who supervises, mentors, and supports students in their online studies. This teacher ensures accountability, offers daily academic guidance, and maintains continuity with AISF's standards of learning.

What This Means for Families

- The curriculum provides both continuity and flexibility, supporting smooth transitions for students arriving from or moving on to schools worldwide.
- Assessments are used to guide instruction and to help each student reach their potential, not simply to generate grades.
- High school students benefit from recognized diploma pathways, with AP and online course opportunities that prepare them for global university applications.

14: Homework & Home Learning

At AISF, homework is designed to reinforce classroom learning, nurture independent study habits, and involve families in the learning journey. It is not meant to overwhelm, but to help students practice skills, deepen understanding, and develop responsibility.

Our Approach

- **Purposeful:** Homework supports what has been taught in class and helps students consolidate their learning.
- **Balanced:** Time expectations increase gradually as students move through grade levels.
- **Supportive:** Parents/Guardians are encouraged to provide a calm space and encouragement, but students are expected to complete homework independently.

Expectations by Grade Band

- **PreK–Grade 2:** Daily reading with parents/guardians or caregivers is the most important task. In Grades 1–2, short, simple practice tasks may also be given.
- **Grades 3–4:** Daily reading plus up to 20–30 minutes of home learning (e.g., IXL practice, project work).
- **Grades 5–6:** Up to 45 minutes of structured homework per day across subjects.
- **Grades 7–8:** Approximately 60–90 minutes per day, including assignments, projects, and study.
- **High School:** Expectations vary depending on courses (including online courses), but students should plan for regular independent study, revision, and project work.

Parent/Guardian Role

- Encourage regular routines and a suitable study environment.
- Show interest in your child's work but allow them to complete tasks independently.
- Communicate with teachers if your child is consistently struggling with the workload.

15: Assessment & Reporting

At AISF, assessment is not simply about grades — it is about supporting every student's growth. Our approach is designed to celebrate achievement, identify areas for improvement, and help students take ownership of their learning.

Our Approach to Assessment

- **Balanced:** Students are assessed using a mix of formal and informal methods, including classwork, projects, presentations, tests, and participation.
- **Ongoing:** Assessment happens throughout the school year, not just at the end of units or terms.
- **Fair:** Expectations are clear, and students are given opportunities to demonstrate learning in multiple ways.
- **Constructive:** Feedback is focused on helping students understand what they are doing well and what steps will help them improve further.
- **Aligned:** Our assessments reflect international standards and prepare students for the next stage of learning.

Academic Reporting & Conferences

AISF believes that open communication between home and school is essential for every child's success. Our reporting system is designed to give families a clear picture of both progress and next steps.

- **Report Cards:** Students receive **three formal report cards each year** (December, March, and June). Reports provide an overview of achievement across subject areas as well as comments on effort, attitude, and personal development.
- **Parent–Teacher Conferences:** Scheduled **twice per year** (October and February). These meetings allow families and teachers to discuss student progress, celebrate achievements, and set goals together. Additional conferences may be arranged at any time upon request by parents/guardians or teachers.
- **Progress Updates:** Informal updates, quizzes, and unit feedback are shared throughout the term to keep families connected to classroom learning.

Grading Approach

- In **Elementary and Middle School**, AISF uses a **standards-based grading system**. This means reporting focuses on how well students are meeting grade-level learning standards, rather than relying solely on traditional A–F marks. Standards-based grades help families understand *what their child knows and can do*, and where more support or challenge is needed.
- In **High School**, AISF uses **traditional A–F grades** to align with international transcripts, Advanced Placement (AP) requirements, and university applications.
- Families may therefore see a combination of approaches depending on grade level, but the goal is always the same: to provide clear, meaningful information about student learning.

What This Means for Families

At AISF, you can expect assessment and reporting to be clear, supportive, and focused on your child's growth:

- You will always know how your child is progressing through regular communication.
- Reports are written in plain, accessible language so that families clearly understand achievements and next steps.
- Teachers focus on effort as well as results, helping students to develop resilience and a growth mindset.
- Parents/Guardians are invited to be active partners — your insights and support at home strengthen what we do at school.
- Students are encouraged to reflect on their own progress, building independence and accountability for their learning.

Assessment at AISF is about more than grades — it is about nurturing confident, capable learners who are ready for future challenges.

16: Teaching, Learning & Online Safety

At AISF, we believe that every child can succeed when learning is meaningful, challenging, and supported by a safe environment. Our approach blends strong academic standards with creativity, collaboration, and responsible use of technology.

What Families Can Expect

- **Engaging Curriculum:** AISF follows internationally recognized standards, ensuring students are prepared for the next stage of learning anywhere in the world.
- **Student-Centered Learning:** We focus on inquiry, problem-solving, and real-world applications, so students learn not just facts, but how to think critically.
- **Assessment for Growth:** Teachers use a variety of assessments — from classwork to standardized testing — to track progress and tailor support. Parents/Guardians receive regular updates through report cards, conferences, and digital platforms.
- **Support for All Learners:** Students have different strengths and needs. Our teachers, learning support team, and enrichment opportunities ensure that every child is challenged and supported in an inclusive and caring environment.

Online Learning & Digital Citizenship

Technology is an essential part of education at AISF. Students learn not only how to use digital tools, but how to use them wisely and responsibly.

- **Safe & Responsible Use:** Students are taught to respect themselves and others online, protect their privacy, and think before they click.
- **Devices & Internet Use:** School technology (and personal devices, when permitted) must be used for learning purposes. Inappropriate, unsafe, or disrespectful use of technology will be treated as a breach of the Code of Conduct.
- **Balanced Approach:** While technology is important, AISF also values screen-free learning experiences, play, and human connection.
- **Parent Role:** Families are encouraged to support online safety at home by monitoring device use, modeling healthy habits, and talking openly with children about digital life.

When Issues Arise

Breaches of responsible use, such as cyberbullying, plagiarism, or misuse of devices, are taken seriously. The school will:

1. Work with the student to understand and correct the behavior.
2. Inform parents/guardians when concerns arise.
3. Apply appropriate consequences in line with the Behavior and Discipline Procedures, and where relevant, the **Anti-Bullying Policy (2025–26)**.

What This Means for Families

At AISF, we want parents/guardians to feel confident that your child is learning in a safe, supportive, and future-focused environment.

- **Learning is personalized** — every child is encouraged to grow at their own pace, with teachers adjusting lessons and support to meet individual needs.
- **Communication is open** — you will regularly receive updates on your child’s progress, and teachers are always available to discuss next steps.
- **Digital life is guided** — students are taught to be safe, respectful, and balanced in their use of technology, and families are partners in reinforcing these habits at home.
- **Support is proactive** — if your child is struggling, the school will work with you early to find solutions and ensure learning continues positively.
- **Partnership is key** — by supporting attendance, punctuality, and good digital habits at home, you help strengthen the school’s efforts in preparing your child for success.

Together, we create an environment where teaching, learning, and digital citizenship are not separate, but woven into the whole school experience.

17: Technology Acceptable Use

The primary purpose of technology at AISF is to support and enhance student learning. Access to the school's digital resources, internet, and devices is a privilege, not a right. All members of the AISF community are expected to use technology responsibly, safely, and respectfully. Inappropriate use may result in restrictions or loss of privileges.

What This Means for Families

Technology is a powerful learning tool, but it must be used wisely. The AISF Acceptable Use Policy helps ensure that students develop healthy digital habits, protect their safety online, and use technology to enrich—not distract from—their learning.

- **Learning first:** Devices and internet access are for schoolwork, research, creativity, and communication in line with class activities.
- **Respect and safety:** Students are expected to treat others with courtesy online, protect their personal information, and avoid harmful or inappropriate content.
- **Balanced use:** Technology is valuable, but so is balance. Students are encouraged to develop healthy routines that include offline learning, play, and social interaction.
- **Shared responsibility:** Teachers guide appropriate use in class, parents/guardians monitor at home, and students make choices that show maturity and respect.

Mobile Phone Guidelines

- **Elementary & Middle School:** Students must keep phones in their bags during the school day. Use is only permitted after dismissal or with direct teacher permission. Unauthorized use may result in the phone being held by the teacher until the end of the day. Repeated misuse may lead to further restrictions.
- **High School:** Students may use phones in class only when directed by the teacher for learning purposes (e.g., research or project tasks). They may also use phones responsibly during lunch and break times. Misuse may result in temporary loss of privileges.
- **All Students:** Phones must **not** be used to record or photograph other students, staff, or visitors at any time. Any photography, video, or audio recording for school projects will be directed and supervised by a teacher.

Acknowledgment

Students in Grades 5 and above, along with their parents/guardians, sign the AISF Appropriate Use Agreement at the start of each school year. This confirms understanding of the expectations and shared responsibility for safe, positive use of technology. The full AISF Appropriate Use Policy, including specific rules for devices, internet, email, social media, AI, and consequences, is included in **Appendix E:** Parents/Guardians and students must read and sign this form annually

18: Library & Learning Resources

AISF's Library and Media Center is at the heart of our learning community. It offers a wide range of books and digital resources that support learning across the curriculum while also encouraging students to read for pleasure. The space is equipped with computers and interactive technology, helping students build both traditional literacy and modern research skills.

Borrowing & Returns

- Students may borrow up to 2 books at a time.
- The standard loan period is two weeks, and books can be renewed if they are not requested by another student.
- Returning books on time ensures that all students have access to the widest possible selection.

Care of Books

- Families are asked to help children take care of borrowed books.
- Books should be kept in a safe place at home and transported to school in a bag to avoid damage.
- If a book is lost or damaged, families may be asked to contribute a replacement fee so that the library can continue to serve all students.

Library Use

- The library is open during the school day for class visits, independent reading, and research.
- Students are encouraged to visit regularly to develop positive reading habits.
- At designated times, parents/guardians are welcome to explore the library with their child after school.

Encouraging Reading at Home

Families play an important role in building reading confidence and enthusiasm. We encourage you to:

- Set aside a regular daily time for reading.
- Talk with your child about what they are reading and share your own reading experiences.
- Celebrate reading as an enjoyable, lifelong habit.

Part D: Daily Life at AISF

19: School Calendar & Daily Schedule

School Calendar

The AISF calendar — including term dates, holidays, early release days, and major school events — is published on the school website: [AISF Calendar PDF](#).

Any updates or additional activities are communicated through the weekly school newsletter AWOKO. Families should always refer to the most recent issue of AWOKO for the latest and most accurate information.

Daily Schedule

- **Start of Day:** Classes begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. Students should arrive between 7:30–7:55 a.m.
- **End of Day:** Regular dismissal is at 3:00 p.m. from the designated collection area.
- **Breaks:** All students have a morning recess and a 30-minute lunch break.
- **Wednesday Early Release:** Every Wednesday, students are dismissed at 1:00 p.m. to allow for teacher professional development.
- **After-School Activities:** Activities run from 3:00–4:00 p.m. on designated days (not on Wednesdays). Students must be collected promptly at the published finish time.

A Typical Day

While timetables vary by grade, the flow of the school day generally follows this pattern:

- **Early Childhood (EC3–K):** Circle time, literacy and numeracy blocks, play-based learning, specialist classes (e.g., Art, PE, Music, French), snack/recess, story time, and structured free play.
- **Elementary (Grades 1–5):** Core academic blocks (Math, English Language Arts, Science/Social Studies), specialist classes, recess/lunch, and project-based learning in the afternoon.
- **Middle School (Grades 6–8):** Rotating subject periods (Math, English, Science, Social Studies), specialist classes (PE, Arts, Languages), lunch/recess, advisory, and extracurricular activities.
- **High School (Grades 9–12):** A mix of online coursework (VHS/UNHS) supported by a dedicated High School Teacher, supervised study, electives, and project work. Students follow structured schedules aligned with their courses, with on-campus support throughout the day.

20: Daily Life & Routines

A successful day at AISF begins and ends with smooth routines. From morning arrival to afternoon dismissal, these patterns create a safe, calm environment where learning can flourish. By following them, families play a key role in helping every child start and finish the day with confidence.

Arrival and Drop-Off

The school gates open at 7:30 a.m., and classes begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. Families are asked to use the designated drop-off area so that all students can arrive safely and on time.

See Section 22: Transportation & Collection for full details.

Dismissal and Pick-Up

The school day ends at **3:00 p.m.**, and students should be collected promptly from the designated area. If your child is participating in an after-school activity, they should be collected promptly at **4:00 p.m.** from the same designated area.

See Section 22: Transportation & Collection for guidance on authorized pick-up and late collection procedures.

Early Release Wednesdays

Every Wednesday is an **early release day**. Classes finish at **1:00 p.m.** to allow time for teacher professional development and curriculum planning.

- Parents/Guardians must ensure timely pick-up or confirm after-school arrangements.
- The school bus service runs on the adjusted schedule.

Timely Pick-Up of Students

Families are expected to collect students promptly at dismissal so that children are supervised safely and staff can complete their duties on time. A **15-minute grace period** is provided.

If a child is still uncollected after this time, a **late pick-up fee** will apply. If a child remains uncollected after 30 minutes, a **pro-rata fee** will be charged thereafter, as published in the **Tuition & Fees Schedule (Appendix D)**.

The school will always respond with understanding in cases of genuine emergency.

Attendance and Punctuality

Consistent attendance and punctuality are essential for learning. We encourage families to make daily school attendance a priority.

See Section 21: Attendance, Leave and Absence Procedures for full details on reporting absences, late arrivals, and extended leave.

Snacks and Lunch

AISF is a **nut-free** school:

Students bring healthy snacks and lunches from home each day. Please avoid sugary drinks, energy drinks, and foods containing nuts to support the health and safety of all students. Water should be sent in a reusable bottle.

School Closures & Continuity of Learning

If AISF must close due to weather, health, security, or other emergencies, families will be notified promptly through official school communication channels (WhatsApp, email, and SMS). It is vital that Parents/Guardians ensure that the school is informed in writing of any changes to contact details.

AISF has an **Education Continuity Plan** to ensure that student learning continues during any disruption. Specific arrangements (such as online instruction, adjusted schedules, or alternative learning formats) will be communicated to families at the time of closure. **See Appendix N** for a quick guide reference.

21: Attendance, Leave & Absence Procedures

Punctuality and Tardy Procedures

Arriving on time is an important life skill and ensures minimal disruption to learning. To support consistency, AISF has adopted a formal **Student Tardy Policy** that sets clear definitions, progressive consequences, and supports for students and families.

Families are asked to familiarize themselves with the full policy, included in **Appendix J: Student Tardy Policy**. Teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians all play a role in helping students develop punctual and responsible habits.

AISF's Commitment

Consistent attendance is one of the most important factors in a child's success at school. At AISF, we believe that every day counts. When students are present and engaged, they build not only academic skills but also friendships, routines, and resilience.

We recognize that occasional absences are sometimes unavoidable, and we work with families to ensure that time away from school does not disrupt learning more than necessary.

What This Means for Families

- **Regular attendance matters:** Students are expected to be present every school day, arriving on time and ready to learn.
- **Reporting absences:** Parents/Guardians should notify the school office as early as possible — by phone, email, or in person — if a child will be absent. Please include the reason and expected duration.
- **Health-related absences:** Students who are unwell should remain at home until they are fit to return, in line with the school's health and safety guidelines. A doctor's note may be requested for extended absences.
- **Planned leave:** If a family knows in advance that a student will miss school (e.g., family travel, religious observances, special events), a written request must be submitted to the Director in advance.
- **Extended absences:** Absences of more than five consecutive school days require written approval from the Director. Teachers will provide guidance on how missed work can be made up, but parents/guardians should understand that prolonged absence can impact learning outcomes.

- **Punctuality:** Arriving on time is a key life skill. Frequent lateness disrupts learning for both the student and the class. Parents/Guardians should ensure their child arrives before the start of the school day.

Attendance Risk Threshold

- Students who miss **more than 10% of the school year** (approximately 18 days) are considered **“at risk” for promotion to the next grade level.**
- Excessive absences reduce a student’s opportunity to meet learning standards and may result in required catch-up work, conditional promotion, or in some cases, retention.
- Parents/Guardians will be contacted if a student’s attendance approaches this threshold so that early support and interventions can be put in place.
- Family travel should be scheduled during school holidays to avoid unnecessary absences.

Procedures at a Glance

- **Daily absence notification:** Contact the school office before 8:00 a.m. if your child will not attend.
- **Early departure:** If a student needs to leave during the school day, parents/guardians must inform the office and sign their child out at the front desk.
- **Return after illness:** Students returning after contagious illness may need medical clearance before rejoining classes.
- **Make-up work:** Teachers will provide appropriate assignments to help students catch up, but parents/guardians should support their child in managing the workload.

22: Transportation, Drop-off & Collection

AISF's Commitment

Getting to and from school safely is a shared responsibility between families and AISF. While the school does not provide daily transport services, we work closely with parents/guardians and drivers to ensure that drop-off and collection times are smooth, safe, and respectful of our school community.

What This Means for Families

- **No daily school transport:** Families are responsible for arranging their own daily transport to and from school. The school organizes transport only for official school trips, activities, and excursions.
- **Morning drop-off:**
 - Students should arrive between **7:30 a.m. and 7:55 a.m.** to be ready for the start of classes at 8:00 a.m.
 - Parents/Guardians and drivers are expected to use the designated drop-off area and follow staff directions to maintain traffic flow.
 - For safety, please avoid parking in restricted areas or blocking other vehicles.
- **Afternoon collection:**
 - Dismissal is at **3:00 p.m.** for all students.
 - Parents/Guardians and drivers should be prompt in collecting students.
 - Students must remain on campus under staff supervision until collected.
 - Students participating in after-school activities must be collected promptly at **4:00 p.m.**
- **Authorised pick-up:**
 - Students will only be released to parents/guardians, or drivers listed on the family's **Authorised Pick-Up Form** (submitted at the start of the year).
 - If someone else is collecting your child, please notify the school office and Director in writing in advance.
 - Photo identification may be requested for new or substitute drivers.
- **Late pick-up:** If students are not collected within **30 minutes of dismissal**, they will wait in a supervised area. Repeated late collection will be addressed with parents/guardians to ensure arrangements are reliable.

- **After-school activities:** Students participating in extracurricular activities must be collected promptly at the published finish time.

Family Transport Safety

Families are responsible for ensuring that children travel safely to and from school each day.

This includes:

- Ensuring seatbelts or appropriate child restraints are always used.
- Choosing safe, reliable drivers who follow traffic laws.
- Supervising children during travel to promote safe habits.

Road Safety Reminder

- Drivers must observe all campus speed limits and drive cautiously near the school entrance.
- Students should enter and exit vehicles on the curbside only.
- For younger children, we recommend that parents/guardians escort them to and from the vehicle for added safety.

School Trips & Events

AISF organizes transport for official school trips, excursions, and events. Families will be informed in advance, and permission slips must be signed. Safety regulations (seatbelts, supervision, attendance checks) are strictly followed.

Reference

- For a diagram of the designated drop-off/collection area, see **Appendix B** of this Handbook.
- Questions about pick-up arrangements or authorized drivers should be directed to the school office.

23: Canteen & Food Protocol

AISF does not operate a canteen and does not provide meals. Families are responsible for sending healthy snacks and lunch with their children each day.

Lunch & Snack Breaks

- Students have two eating times daily: a morning recess snack and a 30-minute lunch break.
- Parents/Guardians should provide food that can be eaten at room temperature, or use a thermos/ice pack as needed.
- Limited facilities exist to heat food; students may have to wait, so food that does not require reheating is recommended.

Water

- Potable drinking water is available throughout the campus via dispensers.
- Students should bring a durable, refillable water bottle.
- AISF does not provide cups.

Guidelines

- Parents/Guardians are asked to provide nutritious, balanced foods.
- Food sharing is discouraged to protect students with allergies.
- **Please do not send** products which contain nuts into School – some of members of our community are allergic to nuts. Please avoid sending products of other restricted items if notified of class or school wide allergy alerts.

24: Field Trips & Excursions

Field trips are an important part of learning at AISF. They extend classroom experiences, connect students to the real world, and strengthen community beyond the school campus.

Permission

- Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of any field trip.
- A signed permission slip is required for participation of each trip.
- Without written permission, a student cannot attend the trip and will be supervised on campus.

Supervision & Safety

- All trips are supervised by AISF staff, supported by additional adult volunteers when needed.
- Supervision ratios follow age-appropriate standards:
 - EC / Grades 1–2: 1 adult per 5–6 students
 - Grades 3–5: 1 adult per 8–10 students
 - Grades 6–12: 1 adult per 12–15 students
- A designated trip leader is responsible for safety, attendance, and communication with the school office.
- First aid kits and emergency contact information are carried on all trips.
- Students with medical or learning support needs will have additional arrangements to ensure safe participation.

Costs

- When field trips are part of the curriculum, costs are normally covered by the school.
- If extra costs apply (transport, entry fees, meals), families will be notified in advance, and payment must be received before departure.
- AISF works to ensure trips are affordable and accessible for all students.

Expectations

- Students must follow school behavior expectations while off campus.
- The school reserves the right to exclude a student from a trip if safety or disciplinary concerns arise.
- Parents/Guardians will be contacted promptly in the event of an emergency during a trip.

25: Dress Code

AISF does not have a school uniform. Instead, we expect students to dress in a way that supports a safe, respectful, and focused learning environment.

Our Expectations

Students must dress in a way that:

- Is respectful, safe, and appropriate for learning.
- Allows for reasonable accommodation for cultural or religious dress.
- Avoids offensive, distracting, or inappropriate images, symbols, or messages.
- Supports participation in school activities, including PE and outdoor play.

What This Means in Practice

- Clothing should allow students to move comfortably and participate fully in class and physical activities.
- Footwear must be safe for school grounds (e.g., no heels, unsafe sandals, or shoes unsuitable for sport).
- Hats and caps may be worn outdoors for sun protection, but not during indoor lessons.
- Students may be asked to adjust their clothing if it disrupts learning or does not meet safety standards.

Enforcement

Any concerns about dress will be handled **fairly, consistently, and respectfully**. When issues arise:

1. Students may be reminded of expectations.
2. Parents/Guardians may be contacted if clothing needs to be changed.
3. Repeated issues will be addressed under the school's behavior procedures.

26: Extracurricular & Enrichment

AISF's Commitment

Learning does not stop when the school day ends. At AISF, extracurricular activities and enrichment opportunities are an essential part of a well-rounded education. They allow students to explore new interests, develop leadership skills, and build friendships across grade levels.

Our extracurricular program is designed to complement the academic curriculum and support the development of the whole child—mind, body, and spirit.

What This Means for Families

- **Wide variety of opportunities:** Students can participate in sports, arts, music, service projects, academic clubs, and cultural activities. Offerings may vary each semester depending on student interest and staff availability.
- **Balance:** We encourage families to help students find a healthy balance between academics, extracurricular activities, and rest.
- **Inclusion:** Activities are open to all students, though some may have age, grade, or skill-level requirements for safety or competition purposes.
- **Leadership and Service:** Older students are encouraged to take on leadership roles and model AISF values in their participation.
- **Community engagement:** Enrichment activities often include service-learning, giving students the chance to connect with local partners while also engaging with peers from across the globe. Through Round Square and other international organizations, students will have opportunities to collaborate, share ideas, and take part in meaningful projects that build both community and global awareness.

Participation Guidelines

- **Commitment:** Students are expected to attend regularly once enrolled in an activity.
- **Eligibility:** Participation may be affected by attendance, behavior, or academic standing. Teachers and activity leaders will communicate expectations clearly.
- **Safety:** All activities follow AISF's health and safety guidelines, and families will be informed of any special requirements (equipment, permissions, travel forms).
- **Fees:** Most activities are included in tuition; some specialized programs (e.g., external coaching, competitions, or materials) may require an additional fee.

Reference

- Families will receive an **Activity Schedule** at the start of each term, listing the programs available and registration details.
- Major extracurricular programs, including athletics, are also shared through the school newsletter AWOKO.

27: Parent Participation and Parent–Teacher Organization (PTO)

AISF values parents/guardians as essential partners in their child’s education and in building a strong, inclusive school community. A student’s academic progress is greatly enriched when families are well informed and engaged in school life.

Parent–Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO is a voluntary, parent/guardian-led group that works in close collaboration with the school to support events, organize community activities, and foster positive connections among families. All parents and guardians of AISF students are automatically considered members, and everyone is warmly encouraged to participate.

Parent Participation

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to:

- Attend school events, performances, and celebrations.
- Support PTO activities and fundraising initiatives.
- Share their time, talents, and expertise to enrich student learning and school life.
- Partner with the school in upholding AISF’s values of respect, responsibility, and community.

Part E: Health, Safety & Wellbeing

28: Health, Safety, and Wellbeing

AISF is committed to ensuring that every student learns in a safe, healthy, and supportive environment. Protecting children's physical, emotional, and social wellbeing is a shared responsibility between the school, families, and the wider community.

What This Means for Families

Health First

- Parents/Guardians **must** keep children home when they are unwell or contagious.
- Any student with a fever of **37.6°C (100°F) or higher** must remain at home until fever-free for at least 24 hours **without the use of medication**. If a child develops a fever during the school day, they will be cared for in the Nurse's Office until collected.
- Parents/Guardians must notify the school immediately if a student has a contagious illness such as chickenpox, conjunctivitis ("Apollo"), or lice. Students may only return once cleared under the school's health guidance.
- If a medical emergency occurs, AISF staff will seek care promptly. The school partners with **Choithram's Hospital** and **AMI Clinic** for urgent care. For U.S. Embassy dependents, the **Embassy Medical Officer** will also be contacted. Parents/Guardians will be informed immediately using the emergency contacts provided. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, the school will use the emergency contacts on file.
- AISF staff, including the school nurse, **do not** administer chronic or prescription medication unless there is prior written approval from the Director supported by a valid, signed prescription from a Doctor. The prescribing doctor may be contacted for verification, and AISF reserves the right to decline administration if verification cannot be confirmed. Parents/Guardians are responsible for administering any regular medication. Please ensure the school has updated records of allergies, medical conditions, and required treatments.
- Any medical conditions, allergies, or special health needs must be communicated to the school so we can provide the right support.
- Any medication must be delivered directly to the Nurse's Office by a parent/guardian, with written instructions and consent.

Photography and Imagery

AISF celebrates student learning and school life through photographs and recordings. We always prioritize the safety and privacy of our students. Photographs and videos are taken for school purposes and used in accordance with parent/guardian consent preferences. Images may appear in internal school communications or event highlights shared with AISF families, while photographs used on public platforms require explicit parent/guardian consent. Images are never stored on personal devices or shared on private social media accounts by staff. Families may update or withdraw their consent at any time by contacting the school office. Full details are provided in **Appendix F: Photography and Images Policy** and **Appendix G: Photography Consent Form**.

Safety on Campus

- The campus is a secure environment with controlled entry and supervision during the school day.
- Families are asked to follow school procedures for drop-off and pick-up to ensure the safety of all students.
- Emergency drills (fire, lockdown, earthquake) are practiced regularly so students and staff know how to respond calmly.

Emotional & Social Wellbeing

- AISF values kindness, inclusion, and respect. If a child experiences bullying, isolation, or distress, parents/guardians are encouraged to inform teachers or the Director immediately.
- The school provides guidance, support and may refer families to additional professional services when needed.

Healthy Choices

- Families are encouraged to provide balanced snacks and lunches, avoiding sugary drinks and foods that can impact focus and wellbeing.
- Adequate sleep and attendance are essential — students learn best when they are well-rested and present.
- Students should bring a refillable water bottle daily to stay hydrated

29: Emergencies

AISF's Commitment

The safety of our students and staff is our highest priority. AISF maintains a comprehensive Emergency Procedures Manual that sets out clear steps for responding to a wide range of possible situations, including fire, medical emergencies, severe weather, security incidents, and campus evacuations. All staff are trained annually, and students regularly practice emergency drills to ensure readiness.

What This Means for Families

Drills and Preparedness

- Students participate in regular fire, lockdown, and evacuation drills.
- These are conducted calmly and routinely to help children build confidence and familiarity with procedures.
- Families are encouraged to talk with children about the importance of following instructions during these drills and in real events.

Civil Disturbance & Community Events

- In the unlikely event of civil disturbance or community unrest, students will remain safely on campus under staff supervision until they are collected.
- Children will only be released to parents/guardians or emergency contacts listed on their records.
- To protect students, **paid household staff should not be listed as emergency contacts.**

Pick-Up and Reunification

- During an emergency, students will only be released to parents/guardians or other adults authorized on the school's records.
- For everyone's safety, parents/guardians are asked not to rush to campus unless instructed.
- If alternative reunification points are required, AISF will communicate them clearly.

Emergency Contacts

- Parents/Guardians must keep emergency contact information always updated in writing.
- Families must provide details for at least **two emergency contacts**.
- If parents/guardians cannot be reached, the school will use these contacts to ensure timely collection and communication.

Communication During Emergencies

- AISF will use multiple channels to update families, including:
 - WhatsApp broadcast lists
 - SMS messages
 - Email notifications
- Families should ensure they are subscribed to these channels and check messages promptly.
- In rare cases where AISF must close (e.g., civil unrest, epidemic, or severe weather), families will be notified as early as possible. Whenever feasible, learning will continue online.

Health and Medical Emergencies

- AISF maintains a **Nurse's Office**, staffed by a full-time nurse and equipped with essential first aid supplies and facilities for short-term student care until parents/guardians or emergency services can be reached.
- AISF has trained first aid staff on campus and maintains emergency medical contacts.
- In the event of a serious medical emergency, the school will seek care immediately and inform parents/guardians.
- For U.S. Embassy dependents, the Embassy Medical Officer will also be contacted.

Reference

Full details of procedures are contained in the school's internal Emergency Procedures Manual (not for public distribution). Parents/Guardians will always be kept informed through official communications.

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Appendix A: AISF School Calendar 2025–26

The AISF School Calendar provides the official schedule for the academic year, including:

- The first and last days of school
- Trimester start and end dates
- Parent–teacher conferences and report card distribution
- Scheduled holidays and long weekends
- National and religious observances
- Orientation and professional development days for staff

This calendar is the definitive reference for all school term dates and major events. Families are encouraged to use it for planning travel and family commitments, as absences during instructional days may place a student “at risk” under AISF’s attendance policy.

The full 2025–26 School Calendar is provided on the following page. Available on the AISF website: [AISF Calendar PDF](#).



American International School of Freetown



2025-2026 School Calendar

August 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

School Closed
 First and Last Day of School

EP Employee Planning (No students)
 EOT Report Cards

End of Trimester
 Parent Teacher Conferences

Aug 25-29	Orientation week (Faculty & Staff)	
Aug 29	Open House @ 1pm (Meet the Teacher)	
Sep 1	First Day of School for students	
Sept 5	The Prophet's Birthday (Mawlid)	
Oct 15	Parent Teacher Conferences	
Oct 17	Mid-Term Long weekend (No School)	
Oct 21	School re-opens	
Nov 26	End of Trimester 1/Trimester 2 Fees due	
Nov 27-30	Thanksgiving Weekend (No school)	
Dec 12	Report Cards go home	
Dec 12	School closes/Noon dismissal	
Dec 13- Jan 4	Winter Break (No School)	
Jan 5 2026	School reopens	

Feb 17, 19 & 20	Parent Teacher Conferences	
Feb 18	Sierra Leone Armed Forces Day (No school)	
Mar 9	International Women's Day Observed (No school)	
Mar 13	End of Trimester 2 / T3 Fees Due	
Mar 20	Eid al-Fitr (Tentative) (No school)	
Apr 2	Report Cards go home	
Apr 2	School closes/Noon dismissal	
Apr 3-12	Spring Break (No school)	
Apr 13	School reopens	
Apr 27	Sierra Leone Independence Day (No school)	
May 1	Labor Day (No school)	
May 27	Eid al Adha Observed (Tentative) (No school)	
Jun 19	Final Day of school / Noon Dismissal	

Appendix B: Drop-off & Pick-up Routines

AISF is committed to ensuring safe and smooth arrival and dismissal for every child. Please follow the procedures below carefully. Consistency helps us keep children safe and traffic flowing efficiently.

Morning Drop-off

- **Times**
 - **ECC (PreK–KG):** 7:45–8:00 a.m. (ECC entrance)
 - **Grades 1–5:** 7:45–8:00 a.m. (main entrance)
 - **Grades 6–12:** 7:30–7:50 a.m. (main entrance)
 - **Procedure**
 - Enter via the small road between Hema and St. Mary’s, proceed slowly to the AISF entrance, and exit past the Nigerian Embassy (strict **one-way traffic pattern**).
 - The circular drive at the top of the hill is the designated drop-off point.
 - Staff are on duty to assist children; parents/guardians should remain in vehicles whenever possible.
 - If you need to accompany your child, please park in the visitor area and enter through the main gate.
-

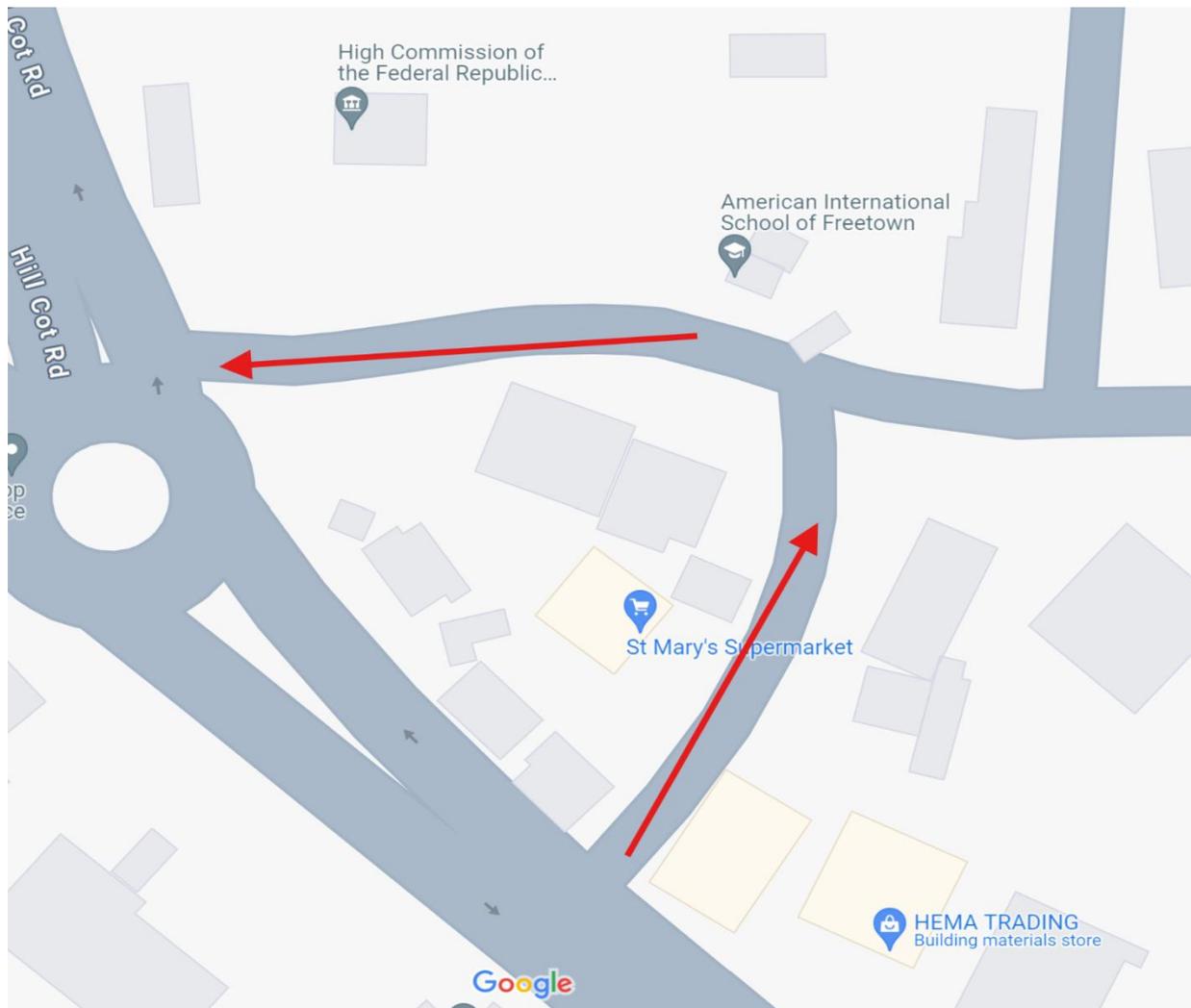
Afternoon Pick-up

- **Times**
 - **ECC (PreK–KG):** 12:30 p.m. (half-day) / 2:45 p.m. (full-day)
 - **Grades 1–5:** 2:45 p.m.
 - **Grades 6–12:** 2:55 p.m.
- **Procedure**
 - Students are released only to parents/guardians or other adults listed on school records.
 - Approved drivers or staff must be registered on the **pick-up form** at the start of the year and may be asked to present ID.
 - Any changes to pick-up arrangements must be communicated **in writing before noon** to the school office.
 - Students in Grade 3+ are released once their ride arrives; younger children are escorted.
 - If a child is not collected within 15 minutes, they will wait in the supervised late pick-up area. Persistent late pick-ups may incur charges.

Safety & Security Notes

- The pick-up/drop-off area is always supervised by AISF staff and the Security Guard Force.
- Children will not be released to individuals not listed on school records.
- Parents/Guardians are asked to collect children promptly to ensure safety and smooth operations.
- During rainy season, please provide rain jackets or umbrellas for children, as they may need to walk down the hill to the school building.

Campus Diagram



Appendix C: Grade Levels

Multi-Grade Class Organization

AISF's small size and international context mean that classes are often organized in blended, multi-grade groupings. This model is a strength of our educational approach:

- It provides students with developmentally appropriate academics and an authentic social experience.
- Multi-age groups are rich learning environments, fostering social growth, leadership, and responsibility.
- Small class sizes allow faculty to differentiate instruction effectively, enabling students to accelerate or review as needed.
- Each student completes their full grade-level program, fully prepared to transition to the next grade.

Current Groupings (2025–26):

- Early Childhood Center (Pre-K3, Pre-K4, Kindergarten)
- Grades 1/2
- Grades 3/4
- Grades 5/6
- Grades 7/8
- High School (Grades 9–12, blended online program with AISF supervision)

Class Size & Capacity

AISF maintains intentionally small classes to support personalized learning.

- Standard maximum: **18 students per class**
- With Director's discretion: may extend up to **20 students** in exceptional circumstances
- Once capacity is reached, applicants may be wait-listed or offered placement in a different grouping if available

Age Requirements for Grade Placement

AISF places students in grade levels according to their age as of September 01, while also considering prior school records and best fit for success, noting that international systems differ and transfers from southern hemisphere calendars may require a half-year adjustment.

Age (by Sept 15)	U.S. System	British System	French System
3	Pre-K (EC3)	Nursery (EYFS)	Maternelle Petite
4	Pre-K (EC4)	Reception	Maternelle Moyenne
5	Kindergarten	Year 1	Maternelle Grande
6	Grade 1	Year 2	CP
7	Grade 2	Year 3	CE1
8	Grade 3	Year 4	CE2
9	Grade 4	Year 5	CM1
10	Grade 5	Year 6	CM2
11	Grade 6	Year 7	6ème
12	Grade 7	Year 8	5ème
13	Grade 8	Year 9	4ème
14	Grade 9	Year 10	3ème
15	Grade 10	Year 11 (GCSE)	2nde
16	Grade 11	Year 12 (Lower 6th)	1ère
17	Grade 12	Year 13 (Upper 6th)	Terminale

Admissions Considerations

- AISF uses a **rolling admissions process** (applications accepted year-round).
- Students with mild to moderate special learning needs may be admitted if AISF can provide appropriate support.
- New students may be assessed to guide placement; results are shared with families and used to ensure success.

Reference

For complete details, see the **AISF Admissions Policy** in the Policies Section of this handbook.

Appendix D: Tuition Fee Policies and Procedures

Annual Capital Fee: US \$1,500.00 (used for large capital projects such as technology investments, large investments in the library and educational programs.) **When paying by the trimester, the Capital Fee is due in full with the first trimester payment and is non-refundable.**

Note: The Capital Fee is waived for ECC/Pre-K

Development Fee (One Time Only): US\$4,000.00 (used for essential reserve funds, for emergency situations, and for major facilities improvements).

Note: The Development Fee waived for ECC/Pre-K

AISF has no hidden fees. There are no additional fees for books, school supplies, etc. Some of our after-school activities are offered free of charge while others carry a small fee.

Regulations and Information

Tuition and other fees are invoiced in US dollars only. All fees must be paid in US dollars only by electronic transfer to our TD Bank account. Wire or bank charges will be charged to the issuer. TD does not add charges for deposits to our account. **All bank charges that appear originate with the sending bank. AISF will invoice for any shortfalls resulting from such issuer charges.**

Tuition Payments

AISF has two options by which school fees can be paid.

- **Option 1:** School Tuition and fees may be paid in full in one single payment at the beginning of the academic year. **To receive a 5% early payment discount, payment must be received in our accounts prior to September 1, 2024.**
- **Option 2:** School Tuition can be paid in advance for each trimester **before** the beginning of each term. (Note that fees are due with the first payment.) Payment must be received by the school, documented by proof of payment, prior to the child attending class that term.

*Fees are due for an entire term if a student begins the new trimester. Please contact the Director if your children will only attend a small part of any trimester. In cases where a student enrolls partway through the school year, the term payment schedule (above) automatically applies.

* A discount of two hundred and seventy-five US dollars (\$275.00) per term is also offered for the third child and for the fourth and all subsequent children enrolled simultaneously at the school a discount of three hundred and twenty-five dollars (\$325.00) per trimester will be applied. This discount is offered to all eligible families regardless of whether the fees are being paid by the individual or the employer.

Registration Fee

If they choose, parents/guardians can reserve a place in the school for their children by paying an annual, per-student, **non-refundable Registration Fee of \$300.00. The fee is deductible from tuition.**

Tuition Refunds for Full Year Payment

In cases where a full year's tuition payment has been made and early withdrawal becomes necessary, a partial tuition refund may be made upon receipt of a written request. In cases where the full year's tuition payment has been made at the beginning of the school year refunds will be as follows:

- Two trimesters attended + one trimester not attended = 20% of annual tuition refunded.
- One trimester attended + two trimesters not attended 40% of annual tuition refunded

Note: Attendance in any part of one trimester shall be construed as attendance of the entire trimester insofar as payment of tuition is concerned unless previously discussed and agreed with the Director.

Late Fee Payments or Non-Payment

AISF is a non-profit US foundation. We rely on the timely payment of tuition fees to provide your children with a quality American and international education. Tuition fees are set annually by AISF's Board of Directors which is composed primarily of AISF parents/guardians; in reality, parents/guardians set the fees for parents/guardians. **Once tuition payments are 30 days or more in arrears, the Director shall, with considerable regret and with due written notice, exclude children from school until such time as payment has been made.** In any case where a family has exceptional circumstances, the family should meet with the Director **well in advance of the 30-day deadline** to establish a binding payment plan.

Force Majeure

In the event of a force majeure situation, which causes a student or students to be withdrawn from the school, the fees already received in full for the school year will not be refunded.

Miscellaneous Fees and Costs

- Parents/Guardians are responsible for loss or unreasonable damage to books or other school property.
- The school provides all textbooks and basic stationery in the cost of tuition.
- **All students in Grades 5 and above must provide their own laptop computer to allow them to access the full curriculum. The school does not provide laptops.**
- After-school activities are optional. Some are provided at nominal fees charged by trimester.
- Families may need to provide specific items such as clothing or racquets as needed for these activities.

- No meals or snacks are included in the cost of tuition.
- AISF does not offer a bus service.

Late Pick-Up Fee

- Families are expected to collect students within **15 minutes of dismissal**.
- If a student remains uncollected after this grace period, a **standing late fee of \$25** will apply.
- If a student remains uncollected after **30 minutes**, a **pro-rata rate of \$100 per hour** will be charged until the student is collected.
- All late pick-up fees are directed towards student activities and services.
- The school will exercise discretion in cases of genuine emergency.
- This policy supports the **wellbeing of staff and students** and aligns with AISF's accreditation commitments under the **Middle States Association (MSA) standards**.

Tuition Fee Collection Policy

Preamble: The timely collection of school fees is essential for the ongoing economic and academic health of the school. The goal of this policy is to set clear guidelines for the collection of fees while assisting families who may find it difficult to meet their obligations to the school. While it may be necessary to exclude a student from school for a period of time, this will be very much a last resort.

- i. Tuition fees are due either in full before the beginning of the school year or prior to the beginning of each trimester for those families opting for the trimester payment plan.
- ii. When families join the school during the course of the academic year, either the total amount or the first installment should be paid within no more than 30 days.
- iii. Families who have difficulties making their full payments on time, should meet with the Director to establish a payment plan. Families are encouraged to be open and proactive about contacting the school if they have difficulty meeting their financial obligations. The Director shall inform the Finance Committee and the school's Finance Officer of any such arrangements.
- iv. Once tuition fee payments are more than 30 days overdue and in the absence of a payment plan, the Director shall, with written notification, exclude the student(s) from school until payment has been made or a payment plan agreed and signed. The Finance Officer will remind families of their unmet obligations at least a week prior to such exclusions.
- v. Following any such exclusions, the Director may work with the family to establish a payment plan. Such plans must involve a significant initial payment and readmit the child with a written commitment to settle the overdue account within a specified period of time. Normally, this should not exceed an additional 30 days. The Director shall inform the Finance Committee and the school's Finance Officer of any such arrangements.
- vi. Where a student has been excluded from school for a period of 30 days (i.e. payment is now 60 days in arrears), the student shall be unenrolled from school for non-payment. The student may be re-enrolled when the financial obligations have been met in full.

APPENDIX E:

Appropriate Use Policy



Know | Think | Care

Inspiring Knowledgeable Caring Thinkers

Preamble

At AISF, we endeavor to inspire knowledgeable, caring thinkers who ponder deeply and critically about the world around them and care passionately about this planet and the others around them. To this end, technology is a powerful tool for learning.

Technology can be used in a positive manner to support learning and inquiry by providing students with access to diverse and engaging resources, tools, and experiences that enhance their understanding, curiosity, and creativity. Some ways to use technology positively are:

- Using digital learning solutions that are evidence-based, effective, and aligned with the curriculum and learning objectives.
- Using inquiry-based learning approaches that encourage students to explore, investigate, and solve real-world problems using technology.
- Using technology to facilitate collaboration and communication among students, teachers, and experts from different fields and backgrounds.
- Using technology to support personalized learning that meets the needs, interests, and goals of each student.
- Using technology to develop students' digital literacy and critical thinking skills that enable them to evaluate, use, and create information ethically and responsibly.

Given the profound effect of technology on teaching and learning, it is important that all members of the community use technology in a safe, ethical, and appropriate manner. That is the purpose of the following policy.

1. Hardware and Software Usage

1.1. All hardware and software provided by AISF are to be used solely for educational purposes and assignments under the guidance of teachers.

1.2. Unauthorized installation, copying, or distribution of software on AISF-owned devices is strictly prohibited.

1.3. Students must promptly report any hardware or software issues to their teachers or the IT officer.

1.4. Personal devices used on the AISF network should comply with AISF policies and security standards.

2. Internet Use

2.1. Internet access provided by AISF is to be used for educational research and assignments.

2.2. Accessing or sharing explicit, inappropriate, or offensive content is strictly prohibited.

2.3. Students should not attempt to bypass or disable content filtering or security measures.

2.4. Downloading or sharing copyrighted material without proper authorization is not allowed.

3. Social Media and Online Communication

3.1. Students must exercise responsible and respectful behavior when using social media, both during and outside school hours.

3.2. Cyberbullying, harassment, or posting harmful or inappropriate content about other students of the AISF community is strictly prohibited.

3.3. Students must not post pictures or any personally identifiable information of other students or teachers on any social media platforms without their explicit consent.

3.4. Personal information, such as home address, phone numbers, or any other personal identification, should not be shared on public platforms.

4. School Email

4.1. School email accounts are to be used for official school-related communication and assignments.

4.2. Students must not share login credentials, use another person's email account, or attempt to gain unauthorized access to email accounts.

4.3. Sending or forwarding chain emails, spam, or unsolicited mass emails is prohibited.

4.4. Be mindful of the content and language used in emails to maintain a respectful and professional tone.

5. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

5.1. When using AI applications or tools, students must do so responsibly and within the guidelines provided by their teachers.

5.2. Respect the privacy and ethical considerations related to AI technology and refrain from using AI for harmful or malicious purposes.

5.3. Do not use AI to create, share, or promote false or misleading information, including deceptive content.

5.4. Always cite the sources when using AI-generated content in academic work and make a clear distinction between AI-generated content and original work.

5.5. Seek guidance from teachers or school authorities if uncertain about the ethical implications or potential consequences of using AI in a specific context.

6. Data Security and Privacy

6.1. Students are responsible for maintaining the security and confidentiality of their accounts and passwords.

6.2. Students must not attempt to gain unauthorized access to others' accounts, files, or data.

6.3. Sharing or publishing personally identifiable information of oneself or others is discouraged.

7. Consequences for Violations

7.1. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary actions, including but not limited to loss of technology privileges, academic penalties, or other consequences deemed appropriate by the school.

7.2. Students are encouraged to report any violations of this policy to their teachers or school authorities.

8. Review and Amendments

8.1. This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.

8.2. AISF reserves the right to make amendments to this policy to address emerging technology trends or changing security needs.

By using AISF's technology resources, students acknowledge their understanding and acceptance of this Student Acceptable Use of Technology Policy. Students are encouraged to seek clarification or guidance from their teachers or school authorities if they have any questions about the policy.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's Print Name: _____ Grade: _____

Parent Name: _____ Date: _____

Date Adopted: _____

Appendix F: AISF Photography and Images Policy

At AISF, we love to celebrate student learning and achievements by capturing moments from the classroom and school events. At the same time, we respect every family's wishes regarding how images of their child are used. This policy explains how we manage student photographs so that memories can be shared while privacy and safeguarding are protected.

1. Purpose

This policy ensures that all photographs of students taken during school events, classroom celebrations, and other school-related activities are used appropriately, with **respect for privacy** and **parent/guardian consent**.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all **photography** activities within the school, including:

- **Classroom Celebrations** (e.g., birthday parties, special events)
- **School Newsletters** and **Emails** to parents/guardians and the school community
- **School Event Photo Highlights** shared with AISF families (e.g., performances, sports day, celebrations)
- **School Website** (internal or external)
- **Other School Publications** and **Displays** (e.g., classroom or hallway displays)

3. Photography Guidelines

- Photos will only be taken by **designated staff members** or the **school photographer**.
- **Personal devices** (e.g., personal phones) are **not permitted** for photographing students during school events to ensure consistency and control over the use of images.
- **No names** will be published alongside student images unless separate consent has been obtained.

4. Consent for Photography

Parents/guardians will be asked to provide consent for their child's participation in photographs through a formal consent process. This consent process will apply to both **taking photos** and **sharing photos** for specific purposes.

The school will maintain records of parent/guardian consent preferences and ensure that student images are used in accordance with those preferences.

Consent Form Overview:

Parents/guardians will be asked to provide consent for the following:

- **Internal School Communications:** Consent for photographs to appear in school newsletters, class emails, or other communications shared with AISF families. No personal identifying information will accompany the image.
- **Event Photo Highlights:** Consent for photographs from school events (such as performances, sports day, or celebrations) to be shared with AISF families for viewing and personal family use within the school community

- **School Website:** Consent for photos to be included on the **school's website**. Photos will be used to **showcase school events** and may be publicly accessible, subject to parent/guardian consent.

5. Opting Out

Parents/guardians have the right to withdraw consent at any time. If a parent or guardian decides they no longer wish their child's photos to be shared, they can **contact the school** and request that their child's image is **excluded from future use**. However, photos taken before withdrawal of consent may remain in school records, yearbooks, or other archived materials.

6. Data Protection and Privacy

- All photos will be **stored securely** and will not be used for any purpose other than what has been consented to.
- Photos will **not be sold or shared with third parties** without additional consent from the parent/guardian.
- Personal information linked to the child (e.g., names, grade) will not be shared with the photos unless the parent/guardian has explicitly consented to it.

7. Handling of Photos

- **Internal Sharing:** Photos used in the school's internal newsletters, emails, or other communications will be shared with AISF parents/guardians and the school community. These communications are intended for the AISF community.
- **Event Photo Highlights:** From time to time, the school may share a curated selection of photographs from school events with AISF families. These images are shared for viewing and personal family use within the school community. Parents/guardians are asked not to repost images publicly where other students are clearly identifiable.
- **Website Use:** Any photos shared on the school website will be used to highlight school activities and showcase school life. Only photos of students whose parents/guardians have given explicit consent for website use will be shared online.
- **Classroom Displays:** Photos may be used in **classroom or hallway displays** to showcase school events and activities. These images will **not be shared externally** without consent.
- **Group Photos During School Activities:** Due to the nature of school life, students may occasionally appear in group photographs taken during activities, performances, assemblies, or sports events. While reasonable efforts will be made to respect parent/guardian preferences, it may not always be possible to exclude individual students from group images where they are not the primary subject.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Administrative Assistant:** Joseph Thomas (admin@ais-freetown.net) will collect and track the photography consent forms from parents/guardians.
- **School Photographer:** Kelvin Savage, the **Information Technology Officer**, is the designated **school photographer**. He will ensure photos are taken appropriately, stored securely, and shared only in accordance with parent/guardian consent. Kelvin will also monitor compliance with this policy and report any issues to the school leadership.

9. Enforcement

All staff members are responsible for adhering to this policy and ensuring that **student images are used appropriately** and in accordance with parent/guardian consent.

10. Annual Review of Consent

The consent process for photography will be reviewed periodically, and parents/guardians

may be asked to reaffirm their consent to ensure that the school maintains accurate records and that families continue to have control over how their child's image is used.

Appendix G: AISF Photography Consent Form

At AISF, we enjoy capturing moments of student learning and school life to share with families and celebrate our community. At the same time, we respect every family's right to decide how their child's image may be used.

Photographs may occasionally be taken during classroom activities, school events, and celebrations. Images may appear in internal school communications, such as newsletters or class updates, and from time to time a small selection of event photographs may be shared with AISF families. Photographs used on public platforms such as the school website require explicit parent/guardian consent.

This consent form allows you to confirm your preferences regarding how photographs of your child may be used.

The school aims to celebrate student learning while respecting family preferences regarding student images.

Consent for Photography and Sharing

Please select **Yes** or **No** for each category.

1. Internal School Communications

- Yes, I consent to my child's image being used in internal school communications (e.g., newsletters, class emails, or updates shared with AISF families).
 - No, I do not consent to this.
-

2. Event Photo Highlights Shared with AISF Families

- Yes, I consent to my child's image appearing in event photo highlights that may be shared with AISF families for viewing and personal family use within the school community.
 - No, I do not consent to this.
-

3. School Website or Public Platforms

- Yes, I consent to my child's image being used on the school's website or other official school publications (public use).
- No, I do not consent to this.

4. Group Photos During School Activities

Due to the nature of school life, students may occasionally appear in group photographs during classroom activities, performances, assemblies, or sports events.

- Yes, I understand that my child may appear in group photographs taken during school activities or events.
- No, I prefer that my child not appear in group photographs where possible.

Important Notes

- Photos will only be taken by designated staff members or the school photographer.
- School-designated devices will normally be used for photography. Personal devices should not be used unless authorised by the school.
- Images will be used only in accordance with parent/guardian consent and the AISF Photography and Images Policy.
- Consent may be withdrawn at any time by notifying the school. Photos taken before consent is withdrawn may remain in school records or archived materials (e.g., newsletters or yearbooks).

Parent/Guardian Consent

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the above, and I give (or do not give) consent for my child's images to be used as indicated.

Child's Name: _____
Grade/Class: _____
Parent/Guardian Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

For Office Use:

Consent form received on: _____
Entered into system: _____

Appendix H: AISF Student & Parent Code of Conduct Acknowledgment Form

School Year: 2025–2026

The **AISF Student Code of Conduct** and **AISF Parent Code of Conduct** are published in the *AISF Parent–Student Handbook (2025–26)*. They outline the rights, responsibilities, and expectations for all members of our school community.

By signing this form:

- **Students** confirm they have read (or, for Elementary, had explained) the AISF Student Code of Conduct and agree to follow it.
- **Parents/Guardians** confirm they have reviewed the AISF Student Code of Conduct with their child and will support the school in upholding it. Parents/Guardians also agree to uphold the AISF Parent Code of Conduct as published in the Parent–Student Handbook.

Student Agreement

I understand the AISF Student Code of Conduct. I will do my best to be safe, respectful, responsible, and kind, and I will follow the expectations of the school.

Elementary Students: Students in Elementary will participate in a *classroom pledge* (group signature/poster). Individual student signatures are required for Middle and High School students only.

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Agreement

I have reviewed the AISF Student Code of Conduct with my child and support the school in reinforcing positive behavior.

I also agree to uphold the AISF Parent Code of Conduct, as set out in the AISF Parent–Student Handbook (2025–26).

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

School Use Only

Received by: _____ (Administrator/Advisor)

Date Received: _____

Recorded in tracking log: Yes

APPENDIX I: AISF Code of Conduct / Behavior Policy

AISF has one overarching school rule:

The AISF Rule: Respect everyone's learning, safety, and well-being.

This rule is intended for all members of the school community: students, faculty, staff, and families.

At AISF, student learning is our prime focus. We believe that students need to feel safe, both emotionally and physically, to be able to learn to the best of their abilities. For this reason, we have high expectations of student behavior and require that all students demonstrate respect for the learning environment, all members of the school community, and for the school's building, facilities, and property.

In our school where we believe that all members of the school community should be knowledgeable, caring thinkers, we respect honesty, integrity, compassion, kindness, and personal responsibility.

To that end, we have the following behavioral expectations:

- The AISF Academic Honesty Policy and Responsible Use Policy must be understood, respected and followed.
- Bullying of any kind is unacceptable.
- Discriminatory language or gestures (based on race, gender or sexual orientation, for example) are not acceptable.
- Any kind of physical altercation (for example, fighting) is not acceptable.
- Theft is unacceptable; this includes borrowing belongings of others without their explicit permission.
- Bringing cigarettes, alcohol, or illicit drugs on campus is strictly forbidden.
- Students are expected to be on time for school and class.
- Students must abide by the dress code.
- Elementary school students may not bring mobile phones to school. Middle School students must keep their phones in their bags and may only use their phones after school to call their families. High School students may use their phones in class for necessary schoolwork with the explicit permission of the teacher.

Behavior Expectations and Response

When students fail to live up to our behavioral expectations, the school will employ—where possible—the practices of “Love and Logic” and restorative justice. We recognize that young people are learning and that our focus should be on teaching our students appropriate values and behavior. Consequences, when needed, should be logical and, where possible, should be focused on righting the wrong.

While we expect to teach appropriate behaviors in our school continuously, we recognize that more serious behaviors need more intervention. We judge the seriousness of a behavior by the degree of risk it presents to the student and community. The range of behaviors that fall into this category include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Repeated disrespect of supervising adult(s)
2. Repeatedly failing to follow instructions of supervising adult(s)
3. Repeated inappropriate use of devices
4. Repeated or threatening issues of personal integrity
5. More serious issues of academic dishonesty - cheating on assessments, intentional plagiarism, etc.
6. Repeated or threatening issues of diversity
7. Threatening aggression

In cases where a student demonstrates these or any similar behaviors, the supervising adult(s) will address the issue in the moment to ensure the safety of the student and community and then follow up by reporting the incident to the administration. In-the-moment interventions are much the same as those for minor offenses; however, the administration will follow up for these more serious behaviors.

The school director or designate will ensure the following in these cases:

1. Parents/Guardians are notified of the incident,
2. Consider if the incident needs to be documented in the student’s record.
3. Administrative interventions are communicated to the supervising adult(s).

Administrative interventions might include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Meeting with parents/guardians, teachers, and/or student
2. Parent/School agreements & plans
3. Written reflection and restorative justice plan
4. Written warning that outlines future possible consequences
5. Ongoing student check-ins with the Director or class teacher
6. Required, coordinated outside support with specialists
7. Temporary suspension, either on or off campus.
8. Potential conditional enrollment

STOP! Behaviors & Immediate Action

To maintain a safe learning environment where our community can actualize our mission and definition of learning, some behaviors demand immediate and extreme action. We call these behaviors STOP Behaviors because, quite simply, they must cease immediately to ensure the safety of the students and/or community. These behaviors include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Bringing weapons and/or dangerous objects, including toys that look like or mimic dangerous objects, to school
2. Bringing alcohol and/or drugs to campus
3. Being under the influence of alcohol or mood-altering substances at school
4. Acts of violence against anyone in our community
5. Bullying and/or harassment
6. Cyberbullying and/or egregious use of social media
7. Vandalism or damaging of school property
8. Stealing/Theft

In such cases, supervising adults should determine the best course of action in the moment, being certain to accomplish the following:

1. Address the behavior to establish a safe learning environment
2. Notify the Director or designate and, when appropriate, Campus Security

Students exhibiting these kinds of behaviors will experience immediate and appropriate consequences. These include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Immediate removal of the student(s) from campus
2. Meeting with parents/guardians, teachers, and/or student
3. Parent/School agreements & plans
4. Ongoing student check-ins with the Director or designate
5. Written reflection and restorative justice plan
6. Written warning that outlines future possible consequences
7. Required psychoeducational evaluation to determine mental suitability to attend school
8. Required, coordinated outside support with specialists
9. Temporary suspension, either on or off campus
10. Potential conditional enrollment or expulsion

BULLYING & HARASSMENT

All students have a right to learn in an environment in which they feel safe to be themselves. Bullying and harassment threaten the core values of the school, pose a threat to a student's safety, and interfere with the learning environment AISF is committed to fulfilling.

What is Bullying?

According to the American Psychological Association, "Bullying among school-age youth is a pervasive problem that challenges the teaching and learning environment, increases mental health and behavior problems, diminishes school connectedness and violates the right of students to receive equal educational opportunities in a safe environment."

AISF defines bullying as "any unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another student or group of students who are not siblings" that involves an "observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated" (APA.org). Bullying may involve "physical, psychological, social or educational harm" and is targeted, meaning that the victim of bullying is intentional and attacks on this target are repeated (or likely to be repeated). Bullying can occur in-person and/or through technology (cyber-bullying) using email, chat rooms, instant message, a website, text message or social media, etc. AISF treats any and all bullying with a serious, appropriate and active response.

What is Harassment?

According to the American Psychological Association, "harassment, unlike bullying, does not have to include intent by the perpetrator to harm, be directed at a specific person or involve repeated incidents" (APA.org). AISF defines harassment as threatening, harmful or humiliating conduct based on race, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability and other actual or perceived characteristics that place a student at risk in a school community.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The independence and integrity of each student's individual academic work is a fundamental principle of school life throughout all sections at the American International School of Freetown. For this reason, understanding the value and the importance of academic integrity is an ideal that is taught throughout the grade levels, starting in the Elementary School and counting through High School.

We teach all members of the school community to take pride in their own thoughts and opinions and model for our students how to articulate and defend their thoughts with confidence and assurance.

In turn, we also teach all members of the school community to value the thoughts of others, and when using information to support their ideas, to do so with respect and integrity.

APPENDIX J:

American International School of Freetown

Student Tardy Policy

Policy Statement

The American International School of Freetown is committed to fostering academic excellence and personal responsibility in accordance with Middle States Association (MSA) standards. Regular and punctual attendance is essential for student success and demonstrates respect for the learning environment and community.

Definition

A student is considered **tardy** when they arrive to any class after the officially designated start time. This includes:

- Homeroom/first period
- All subsequent class periods throughout the day
- Special activities and assemblies with designated start times

Tardy Tracking System

Recording Tardies

- All tardies will be recorded in the school's student information system
- Teachers will mark students tardy in their attendance records
- Parents/guardians will receive automatic notifications for each tardy occurrence
- Students will receive a tardy slip to present to their next class

Cumulative Tracking

- Tardies are tracked cumulatively per trimester
- The count resets at the beginning of each new trimester

Progressive Consequences

First Tardy

- Verbal reminder about the importance of punctuality
- Student receives information about time management strategies

Second Tardy

- Written notification to parents/guardians
- Student completes a reflection form on punctuality

Third Tardy

- Parent/guardian contact by homeroom teacher
- Student develops a punctuality improvement plan

Fourth Tardy

- Administrative conference with student
- Parent/guardian meeting scheduled
- Review of transportation and morning routine

Fifth Tardy

- **Loss of recess privileges for one day**
- Mandatory parent/guardian conference with administration
- Student serves recess time in supervised study hall

Subsequent Tardies (6th and beyond)

- Extended loss of recess privileges
- Potential assignment to morning arrival supervision
- Consideration for additional interventions as needed

Excused Tardies

The following circumstances may result in excused tardies when properly documented:

- Medical appointments (with documentation)
- Family emergencies
- Transportation issues beyond student/family control
- School-sanctioned activities
- Weather-related delays affecting the broader community
- Pass from previous teacher

Documentation Requirements

For excused tardies, families must provide:

- Written explanation within 48 hours of occurrence
- Appropriate supporting documentation when applicable
- Medical notes for health-related tardies

Support Systems

Student Support

- Time management workshops available through counseling services
- Peer mentorship programs for chronic lateness
- Individual counseling for students with persistent attendance issues

Family Support

- Resources for establishing effective morning routines
- Communication with transportation services when needed
- Flexible conference scheduling for working families

Administrative Procedures

Teacher Responsibilities

- Accurately record all tardies within 10 minutes of class start
- Communicate concerns about chronic tardiness to administration
- Provide missed instruction summary for tardy students when appropriate

Administrative Responsibilities

- Monitor tardy patterns and trends school-wide
- Ensure consistent policy implementation across all grade levels
- Coordinate with families on intervention strategies
- Review and update policy annually based on effectiveness data

Appeals Process

Families may appeal tardy consequences through:

1. Initial discussion with classroom teacher
2. Conference with grade level administrator
3. Final appeal to Principal if resolution is not reached

Appeals must be submitted in writing within five school days of the consequence being assigned.

Data Collection and Review

- Monthly tardy reports generated for administrative review
- Semester analysis of tardy patterns by grade level and individual students
- Annual policy effectiveness review with recommendations for improvements
- Alignment review with MSA standards during accreditation cycles

Communication

This policy will be:

- Included in the student/parent handbook
- Reviewed during new student orientation
- Posted on the school website
- Communicated through regular parent newsletters
- Reviewed with students during the first week of each semester

Policy Review

This tardy policy will be reviewed annually by the Administrative Team in consultation with faculty, parents/guardians, and students to ensure continued effectiveness and alignment with MSA standards.

Effective Date: September 2025

Policy Owner: Administration

Review Cycle: Annual

MSA Alignment: Standards 2, 3, and 5 (Teaching and Learning, School Climate and Culture, and Student Services)

APPENDIX: K

Procedure for Misunderstandings or Disputes with School Personnel

AISF Board Approved Procedures

Definitions: "Staff" includes faculty, administration, maintenance, and security guards. "Parent" includes guardians.

- a. Any parent/guardian or staff of AISF who has a difference of opinion in regards to a school or administrative decision shall first attempt to resolve this problem directly with the person responsible and at the lowest possible level. Most concerns or misunderstandings can be resolved at this level.
- b. At all times, complaints and concerns should be addressed and responded to with the utmost respect. Reasoned dialogue is the best way to address and respond to concerns.
- c. If the petitioner feels that this cannot be done because of privacy or other concerns or has unsuccessfully attempted a direct resolution of the dispute, he/she may confer with the Director.
- d. Steps a) and b) shall be attempted prior to any further steps. The process of attempting to settle the issue should be clearly understood by both parties.
- e. If conferring with the Director is unsatisfactory, the parent/guardian or staff member may appeal directly and only to the Chair of the AISF Board, in writing, cc'ing the Director.
- f. Within ten days the Chair of the Board will respond to the parent/guardian or staff member's concern.

APPENDIX L:



**American International School of Freetown
Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
2025 - 2026**

**Approved by Board: AUGUST 2025
Next Review Date: AUGUST 2026**

Introduction and Safeguarding Principles

The American International School of Freetown (AISF) is committed to providing a safe, caring, and respectful environment in which all students can grow, learn, and thrive. We believe that the welfare of every child is paramount and that all children, without exception, have an equal right to protection, regardless of age, gender, disability, language, religion, ethnic origin, or background.

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility. Protecting children from harm requires the active commitment of all members of the AISF community — staff, students, parents/guardians, volunteers, contractors, and visitors — working in partnership with families and external agencies.

Early intervention, open communication, and an unwavering commitment to the best interests of each child underpin our safeguarding practice.

This policy sets out the guiding principles, responsibilities, and procedures that ensure safeguarding is embedded in all aspects of AISF life. It is designed to meet the requirements of the Middle States Association (MSA) Standards for Accreditation, Sierra Leone child protection legislation, and recognised best international practice.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to define the school's approach to safeguarding and child protection, to provide clear guidance on recognising and responding to concerns, and to outline the responsibilities of all members of the AISF community.

The policy applies to:

- All AISF employees, Board members, volunteers, contractors, and visitors.
 - All school activities, whether on campus or off-site, including school trips, extracurricular programmes, and online learning.
 - All interactions between AISF representatives and students, whether in person or via digital communication.
-

Legal and Accreditation Framework

AISF's safeguarding framework is informed by:

- The **MSA Standards for Accreditation**, which require schools to have effective safeguarding policies, clear governance oversight, and robust implementation procedures.
- Sierra Leone's child protection laws and relevant statutory guidance.
- The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**, which sets out the rights of children to safety, education, and protection from harm.
- Established best practice from recognised international safeguarding bodies.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- A **child** is any person under the age of 18.
 - **Safeguarding** refers to the broader actions taken to promote the welfare of children and to protect them from harm.
 - **Child protection** refers specifically to the actions taken to protect a child suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm.
 - The **Child Protection Officer (CPO)** is the school's designated lead for safeguarding, equivalent to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in international safeguarding terminology.
 - The **Deputy CPO** acts when the CPO is unavailable to ensure continuous safeguarding coverage.
 - **Abuse** includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, online harm, exploitation, trafficking, grooming, female genital mutilation (FGM), and forced marriage.
-

Roles and Responsibilities Board of Directors

The Board of Directors holds ultimate responsibility for ensuring that AISF meets its safeguarding obligations. The Board approves this policy, ensures adequate resources are allocated for safeguarding, and receives an **annual anonymised safeguarding report** from the Director. This report, prepared by the CPO and reviewed by the Director, enables the Board to carry out its governance oversight role in line with MSA Standards.

Director

The Director has overall strategic responsibility for safeguarding within the school and is directly accountable to the Board for its effective implementation.

The Director ensures that the school complies with all relevant legislation and accreditation standards, allocates sufficient resources, supports the work of the CPO, and promotes a culture of safety and respect throughout the school community.

The Director is the **custodian of all safeguarding records**, ensuring they are stored securely and accessed only by authorised personnel. While the Director does not manage individual cases day-to-day, they must ensure that all concerns are handled in accordance with policy and that appropriate follow-up actions are taken.

The Director reviews and endorses the annual anonymised safeguarding report prepared by the CPO and presents it directly to the Board.

Child Protection Officer (CPO)

The CPO is responsible for receiving and managing safeguarding concerns, maintaining secure and accurate records, liaising with external agencies, leading safeguarding training, and ensuring that the policy is implemented in practice.

The CPO compiles the annual anonymised safeguarding report, detailing the number and nature of cases, actions taken, training completed, and policy implementation status. This report is submitted to the Director for review before presentation to the Board.

Deputy Child Protection Officer

The Deputy CPO supports the CPO and acts in their absence to ensure continuous safeguarding coverage.

All Staff, Volunteers, and Contractors

Every adult in contact with AISF students has a duty to protect them from harm. This includes completing safeguarding induction and refresher training, following this policy, and reporting any concern immediately to the CPO or Deputy CPO.

Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians are expected to work in partnership with AISF to support safeguarding measures and to maintain open and honest communication with the school regarding their child's welfare.

Prevention

AISF works to prevent harm through:

- Safe recruitment and background checks.
- A clear Safeguarding Code of Conduct (Appendix F).
- Student safeguarding education (including online safety).
- Fostering a culture of openness and trust.

Recognising Abuse

All staff are trained to recognise the signs and indicators of abuse, which may include but are not limited to:

- **Physical abuse:** unexplained injuries, reluctance to be touched, repeated accidents.
 - **Emotional abuse:** withdrawal, low self-esteem, extreme behaviours.
 - **Sexual abuse:** knowledge or behaviour beyond ageappropriate levels, avoidance of certain individuals.
 - **Neglect:** persistent hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate clothing, frequent absence.
 - **Other forms:** evidence of grooming, exposure to online exploitation, risk of FGM or forced marriage, indicators of trafficking.
-

Reporting Procedures

Any safeguarding concern must be reported **immediately** to the CPO or Deputy CPO.

A written Safeguarding Concern Form must be completed and submitted within **24 hours** of the concern arising.

The CPO will acknowledge receipt of the concern within **48 hours** and will take appropriate action, which may include consultation with external agencies.

All actions will be documented, and records will be maintained under the custodianship of the Director.

Whistleblowing and Protected Disclosure

AISF is committed to creating a culture in which concerns about safeguarding can be raised without fear of reprisal.

All safeguarding concerns must be reported **internally first** — to the CPO, Deputy CPO, or Director.

If the concern involves the CPO or Director, or if there is **immediate and serious risk to a child**, the matter may be reported directly to the Board Chair or to the appropriate statutory authority.

No person will suffer discrimination or retaliation for raising a concern in good faith through the correct channels.

Confidentiality

Safeguarding information will only be shared with those who have a legitimate need to know, and solely for the purpose of protecting the child. Unauthorised disclosure of safeguarding information is a disciplinary matter.

Training

Safeguarding training is compulsory for all staff, volunteers, and contractors:

- Induction training must be completed before working with students.
- Annual refresher training is required for all.
- The CPO and Deputy CPO will undertake advanced safeguarding training and receive regular updates.

The CPO is responsible for maintaining a **central log of all safeguarding training**.

Record Keeping

The CPO compiles and updates safeguarding records; the Director holds these records securely as custodian. Access is strictly limited to authorised personnel. Records are retained and disposed of in line with AISF's Data Protection and Records Retention Policy.

Parent and Community Awareness

AISF will share key safeguarding information annually with parents and guardians via the Parent Handbook, dedicated safeguarding briefings, and the school website. The full safeguarding policy is available on request.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Child Protection Officer (CPO) and Director to ensure it remains aligned with Sierra Leonean legislation, MSA Standards for Accreditation, and international best practice.

The review process incorporates:

- An **Annual Safeguarding Audit** using Appendix K of the Handbook, completed jointly by the CPO and Director.
- Updates to the **Safeguarding Training Log and Training Matrix** (Appendices G and G.1).
- **Anonymised safeguarding data** compiled by the CPO and reported annually to the Board by the Director.
- **Lessons learned** from safeguarding concerns, disclosures, or near misses, ensuring continuous improvement.

The effectiveness of safeguarding is evaluated through this annual audit process, supplemented by case reviews, staff feedback, and training evaluations. Revisions are submitted to the Board for approval.

Appendices: AISF Safeguarding Toolkit (A–K)

This Policy is implemented through the *AISF Child Protection & Safeguarding Handbook (2025–26)*, which provides the operational tools, forms, and checklists that guide daily safeguarding practice.

- **Appendix A – Safeguarding Concern Form**
- **Appendix B – Contact List (Internal & External Safeguarding Agencies)**
- **Appendix C – Reporting Procedure**
- **Appendix D – Indicators of Abuse & Neglect**
- **Appendix E – Responding to a Disclosure**
- **Appendix F – Safeguarding Code of Conduct**
- **Appendix G – Safeguarding Training Log**
- **Appendix G.1 – Safeguarding Training Matrix**
- **Appendix H – Emergency Contact & Escalation Chart**
- **Appendix I – School Trip / Off-Site Safeguarding Checklist**
- **Appendix J – Staff Declaration of Understanding**
- **Appendix K – Annual Safeguarding Audit Checklist**

Together, these appendices form AISF's Safeguarding Toolkit, ensuring that safeguarding principles in this Policy are consistently applied, monitored, and improved in practice.

Board Chair: DCM Jared Yancey

Date: _____

Appendix M:

American International School of Freetown Special Education Funding Policy *Inspiring knowledgeable caring thinkers!*

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline how the American International School of Freetown will allocate resources for special education services. We aim to provide equitable and effective support for students with diverse learning needs to truly inspire our students to be successful, thoughtful, and caring thinkers.

Principles

1. **Inclusion:** At AISF, we believe in an inclusive education system that values diversity and ensures that all students have access to quality education.
2. **Collaboration:** Collaboration among teachers, parents/guardians, and specialists is essential for effective special education.
3. **Differentiated Support:** We recognize that students have varying needs, and our support services should be tailored accordingly.

Funding Allocation

1. Basic Learning Support:

- The school will cover the costs associated with basic learning support services. These may include:
 - **Inclusive Classroom Strategies:** Training for teachers to create inclusive learning environments.
 - **Learning Support Teachers:** Support for students within regular classrooms and in small pull-out groups.
 - **Assistive Technology:** Providing necessary tools for students with learning differences.
 - **Curriculum Adaptations:** Modifying curriculum materials as needed.
- Funding for basic learning support will be allocated from the general school budget.

2. One-to-One Specialized Therapy:

- Parents/Guardians will be responsible for funding one-to-one specialized therapy services. These services may include:
 - **Speech and Language Therapy**
 - **Occupational Therapy**
 - **Behavioral Therapy**
 - **Physical Therapy**
 - **Counseling**
- The school will collaborate with external providers, including virtual providers, to ensure high-quality services.
- Parents/Guardians can choose their preferred providers, and costs will be directly borne by them.
- In some cases, the providers may work only with the school, in which case the school will levy a special education fee to cover the cost of the therapy.
- In the case where a student requires a full-time one-to-one special education aide, the school will work with the family to select an appropriate aide. The aide will work as a contractor for the school and AISF will charge a special education fee.

Transparency and Communication

1. Cost Transparency:

- The school will clearly communicate the costs associated with specialized therapy services.
- Parents/Guardians will receive detailed information about fees, payment schedules, and available options.

2. Individualized Education Plans (IEPs):

- For students receiving specialized therapy, the school will develop individualized education plans (IEPs) in collaboration with parents/guardians, teachers, and therapists.
- IEPs will outline specific goals, accommodations, and the roles of all stakeholders.

3. Regular Updates:

- The school will provide regular updates to parents/guardians regarding their child's progress and any adjustments to services.

Review and Evaluation

1. Annual Review:

- The funding policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness.
- Feedback from parents/guardians, teachers, and specialists will inform any necessary adjustments.

2. Equity Assessment:

- The school will assess whether the funding allocation supports equitable access to services for all students.

Appendix N: Continuity of Learning Quick Guide

(For Extended School Closures)

Why this guide?

If AISF is closed for more than a few days, we move to a *Continuity of Learning* model. This ensures that teaching, learning, and community connection continue even when we cannot be on campus.

1. What to Expect

- **Daily Schedule:** Students follow a modified routine with live lessons, independent tasks, and breaks.
 - **Platforms Used:**
 - **Google Classroom (Grades 3–8)** – assignments, announcements, feedback
 - **ClassDojo (EC–Grade 2)** – daily activities, updates, and communication with families
 - **Google Meet / Zoom** – live lessons and check-ins
 - **Teacher Communication:** Daily plans posted by 8:00am. Teachers available for questions during school hours.
-

2. Student Responsibilities

- Check Google Classroom or ClassDojo each morning.
 - Join live lessons on time, participate respectfully.
 - Complete assignments by given deadlines.
 - Ask for help when something is unclear.
-

3. Parent/Guardian Role

- Provide a quiet space and support healthy routines.
 - Ensure access to internet and a device (contact the school if this is an issue).
 - Encourage balanced breaks, meals, and rest.
 - Communicate with teachers if challenges arise.
-

4. Technology & Support

- **Devices:** Each student should have a laptop, Chromebook, or tablet.
 - **Internet:** Families should check daily; AISF can advise on offline alternatives if needed.
 - **IT Help:** Contact [insert IT officer email/WhatsApp].
-

5. Wellbeing & Balance

- Teachers will include non-screen activities (reading, creative projects, physical activity).
 - Encourage movement and hydration throughout the day.
 - Students may contact teachers, Vice Principal, or Director if they feel anxious or overwhelmed.
-

6. Extended Closures (1+ Month)

- Adjustments may be made to grading, assessment, and schedules to reduce stress.
 - Counseling and SEN support will continue remotely.
 - Parents/Guardians will receive weekly updates from the Director.
-

7. Communication Channels

- **WhatsApp Broadcast** – urgent notices
 - **Email** – official school updates
 - **Google Classroom / ClassDojo** – daily learning and teacher feedback
-

Remember: Continuity of learning depends on partnership between home and school. By staying connected, keeping routines, and communicating openly, we ensure students continue to thrive — wherever they are learning.

Appendix O: Accreditation and Memberships

The American International School of Freetown (AISF) is accredited, recognized, and affiliated with the following organizations:

Accreditation

- **Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA–CESS)** – AISF is the only school in Sierra Leone accredited by the Middle States Association. Accredited continuously since April 1994, AISF successfully completed its most recent reaccreditation self-study and visiting team evaluation in 2026. The visiting team recommended continued accreditation, with final confirmation expected following the MSA Commission review in November 2026.
- **Responsible Use of AI in Learning (RAIL)** – AISF is the only school in West Africa endorsed by MSA for RAIL.

Recognition

- **U.S. Department of State, Office of Overseas Schools (OOS)** – AISF is the only official U.S. State Department Assisted School in Sierra Leone. Founded in 1986 through an agreement with the U.S. Embassy and the Government of Sierra Leone, AISF continues to operate under a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2003.

Memberships & Affiliations

- **Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA)** – full member, providing access to professional development, regional collaboration, and peer-school networks.
- **Round Square** – candidate member, connecting students with a global network of schools focused on experiential learning, leadership, and internationalism.

Curriculum Affiliations

- **International Early Years Curriculum (IEYC)** and **International Primary Curriculum (IPC)** – approved provider through April 2027, enriching AISF’s teaching of Science, Social Studies, and the Creative Arts.
- **MAP Growth (NWEA)** – approved testing center. AISF administers MAP assessments twice yearly (October and May), measuring student progress in mathematics, reading, and English language.

High School Programs

- **University of Nebraska High School (UNHS)** – accredited U.S. high school program, enabling students to earn a U.S. High School Diploma.
- **VHS Learning / Massachusetts Mayflower Academy** – offers a broad range of high school courses and diploma pathways.

Testing & College Preparation

- **The College Board** – AISF is an approved test center for SAT, TOEFL, and Advanced Placement (AP) exams. The SAT is offered multiple times each year at AISF.