



3100 NW 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Boca Raton, FL 33431

Tel: 561-395-3011 Fax: 561-395-3029 info@assahaba.org www.assahaba.org

# ELEMENTARY STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK 2021-2022





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## Welcome To GSA

Assalamu Alaikum,

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Garden of the Sahaba Academy (GSA). We are very blessed to have a community that fosters commitment for an Islamic Education for our children. We hold high expectations for everyone to achieve great things academically, behaviourally, and socially.

We will, Insha Allah (God Willing), offer opportunities for all to reach standards of excellence in an Islamic climate that is safe and free from interruptions. We will work together throughout the school year to help all children realize their highest potential.

This handbook serves as a general guideline to the policies and procedures of GSA. Please read it carefully and discuss the contents with your child/children.

Parents and students are required to follow and adhere to the policies and procedures set forth herein. As parents, your full participation in the life of GSA is vital for our success and our doors are always open to listen to your comments and concerns. GSA views the educational imperatives to be jointly implemented by the parents, the school, the Board, and the community.

We pray that Allah (SWT) guides us in this noble endeavor, ameen.

Sincerely,

*GSA Board of Education*



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## Introduction

Education, in Islam, is an obligation on both male and female muslims. Therefore, the establishment of a superior educational institution is obligatory on us as a Muslim community. Today in the United States, it is estimated that there are about 7 million Muslims, both native and immigrant. In addition to the valuable secular education, it is our commitment to provide the highest level of ethics and morals according to the Islamic faith.

Garden of the Sahaba Academy (GSA), a division of the Islamic Center of Boca Raton (ICBR), began its operations in September 2003. Since its inception, the school has exponentially grown from a student body of 19 students. The school currently offers classes from Pre-K3 through high school.

GSA is a full-time Islamic School and its doors are open to all students regardless of race, ethnicity, or religion. We live in a pluralistic society and firmly believe in practicing tolerance. Our belief is based on the command of Allah (SWT) when He says:

“O Mankind! We have created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know each other.....” (40:13).

We seek your support as parents, with prayers to Allah (SWT), to make our joint efforts successful in raising generations of Muslims that follow in the footsteps of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his rightly guided Sahaba.



## Guiding Principles

The Garden of the Sahaba Academy:

- Affirms that there is no God but Allah (SWT), and that Muhammad (PBUH) is His Servant and Messenger.
- Promotes the proposition that Islam is the only way of life, as established by Allah (SWT), that can bring success in this life as well as in the Hereafter.
- Practices the highest standards of moral behavior and conduct as it makes a man or woman the best of Allah's creation.
- Recognize and value the individuality of every student, challenging each to his or her full potential by educating the whole child, helping him/her to acquire skills to ensure a lifelong physical, spiritual and mental well-being.
- Believes that a partnership exists between the home and the school which must be utilized to bring maximum benefit to the student.
- Appreciates and seeks to learn from our cultural differences in the context of our one and united Islamic Community.
- Provides role models for our students who practice what we teach.
- Provides students with a variety of opportunities to demonstrate their achievements.
- Is a model and a professional learning community that is built on the premise of a shared mission of high levels of learning for each student.
- The teachers and administrators work collaboratively to achieve the school's mission, values, and goals.



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## Vision

Graduate exemplary members of the American society

## Mission

Garden of the Sahaba Academy (GSA) empowers students with sound Islamic principles, provides academic excellence and fosters productive citizenship.

## GOALS

Our goals at GSA are threefold:

### Religious and Spiritual

- Ensure that our students develop an appreciation and understanding of the Islamic faith, values and traditions by incorporating Islam in the curriculum
- Maintain a safe, secure, clean, and nurturing Islamic environment
- Teach and inculcate values and traditions

### Academic

- Provide clarity to teachers, parents and students on what knowledge and skills are required at each grade level.
- Cultivate a climate of high expectations for students, parents and teachers in achieving a high standard of education
- Seek and nurture faculty that work collaboratively to meet the needs of students and are engaged in continuous improvement of their professional practices
- Provide a high standard of education
- Evaluate students' performance and provide timely feedback to parents

### Citizenship

- Commend strong moral character
- Recognize and celebrate students' and adults' efforts, improvements, and achievements
- Honor commitments and accomplish them in a timely manner
- Devote one's self to the overall mission and have a positive impact on life
- Become active in the local community



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- Work toward shared success and realize that we depend on each other
- Develop community and leadership qualities

## **GSA Core Values**

In GSA we aim to achieve this vision through the implementation of the following core values:

### **Community**

We will:

- Involve parents and the community in the student learning process in an effort to build a school that is a hub for the community.
- Cultivate and maintain partnerships with students, parents, staff and the community.
- Engage with parents and the community to define our shared vision for how our school will evolve.
- Instill a sense of pride in our school and community.

### **Compassion**

We will:

- Develop the capacity to forgive others and ourselves.
- Help and support each other.
- Celebrate the contributions of others.
- Promote a peaceful, caring and safe work environment.
- Demonstrate care and service to students, staff and the community.

### **Respect**

We will

- Honour self and others through words and actions.
- Honour the rules of the class and the school.
- Treat everyone with dignity and courtesy.
- Value the contributions and efforts of everyone.
- Treat others as we want to be treated.



## Leadership

We will:

- Strive to become leaders committed to educational excellence.
- Establish clear visions and work towards them as a team.
- Work in purposeful and resourceful ways to learn and improve constantly.
- Pursue excellence.
- Resolve differences in constructive ways.
- Embrace new ideas.

## Responsibility

We will:

- Follow-up on our words and promises.
- Contribute to the school and the community.
- Be trusted and depended upon to fulfill our obligations.

## Honesty

We will:

- Be honest, internally and externally, privately and publicly, whether observed by other people or not.
- Remind ourselves that our actions are guided by the best interests of those we serve.

## Philosophy

The Garden of the Sahaba Academy educational philosophy is based on its guiding principle of the recognition and value of the individuality of every student. We challenge each student to fulfill his or her full potential by educating the whole child. The emphasis is on student learning rather than teaching. Our philosophy is primarily based on instilling in each child the love of learning and linking it to the love of Allah and serving humanity by serving The Creator.

Every student is different. He/she is endowed with unique skills and abilities. The home, the school, and the community all have a direct impact on the growth and development of each child.



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It is through our joint efforts (parents/students/school/community) that our youth will realize their full potential.

## Parent Responsibilities

- Provide a caring and safe environment at home
- Reinforce Islamic principles and practices at home
- Challenge your child to give his/her best
- Encourage your child to participate in physical/outdoor activities
- Read/review Quran daily
- Keep mobile devices time to an absolute minimum
- Teach your child to respect everyone
- Encourage your child to be kind and courteous
- Encourage your child to respect the school and its staff
- Ensure that your child attends school regularly and punctually
- Make contact with the teachers through the proper procedure
- Schedule appointments with the teachers through the specified procedure
- Attend school activities and support your child
- Become an active member of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)
- Meet your financial obligations to the school
- Volunteer your services in your fields of interest and for the benefit of the school
- Send and pick up your child on time
- Support the school and encourage other parents to enroll their children at GSA

## Student Responsibilities

We take responsibility for learning:

- We arrive at school on time
- We wear the proper uniform and we are well groomed



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- We have the materials we need for class
- We demonstrate a serious and responsible attitude in our daily work
- Homework is carefully and thoughtfully completed, and submitted on time

We settle our differences in a peaceful manner:

- We respect other people's property and personal space
- We respect other people's differences and embrace them

We are considerate to the needs and feelings of others:

- We are silent in the Masjid
- We use appropriate language at all times
- We treat each other with kindness
- We are willing to help each other
- We are friendly and courteous

We do our best to follow the example of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in his actions, words, and especially treatment of others.



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## Faculty and Staff

GSA is committed to hiring the most dedicated, qualified, and talented teachers, school leaders, and staff to serve our students. At GSA, employees are valued for their individual strengths and contributions towards achieving our mission. Every employee plays a significant role in ensuring that, as a team, we are continuously working towards improving student achievement. We encourage teachers to complete higher levels of training and to utilize their Florida State licensed educational experience for the greatest advantage of the school.

The faculty and staff are committed to the educational growth of all our students. They are qualified in the fields of Islamic Studies, Arabic, English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Literature.

Additionally, our teachers have other expertise that will be of benefit to our students' growth.

At GSA, the staff works as a team not only with each other, but with the parents and the community.

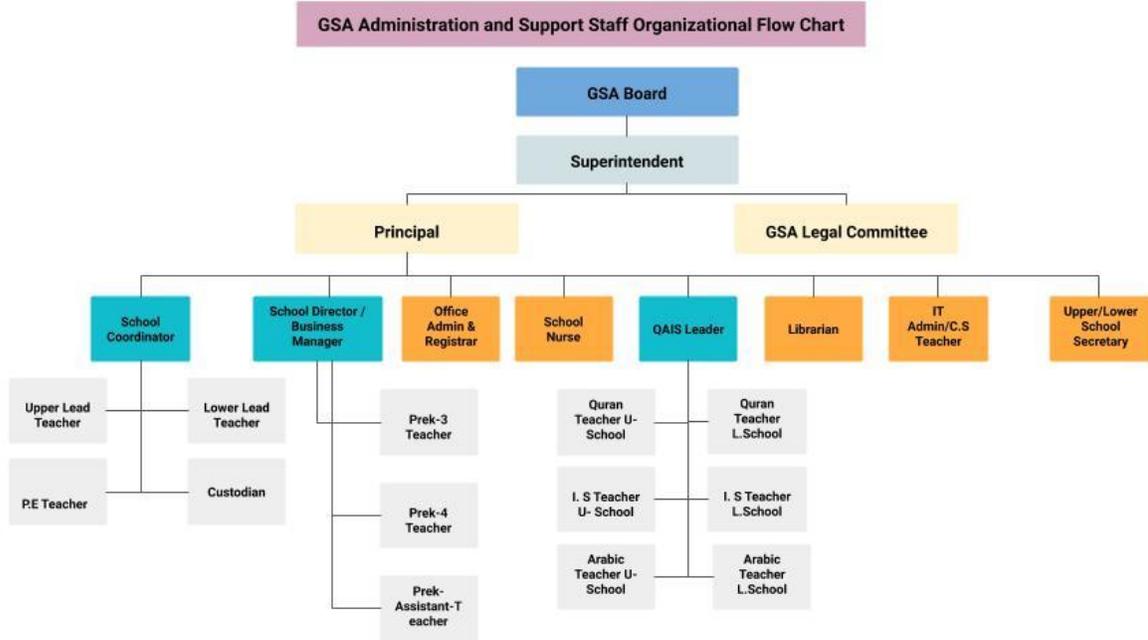
The Parent Teachers Organization (PTO) is vital in adding diversity and enrichment to school programs. The PTO provides support in many activities such as field trips, fundraisers, special nights, and graduation. Volunteers also play an integral role in a variety of school activities.

We are indeed fortunate to have a principal, director, faculty, staff, volunteers, and parents who are dedicated to the cause of quality education and moral excellence.



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## GSA Organizational Flow Chart





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## School Contact Information

### Mailing Address

Garden of the Sahaba Academy  
3100 NW 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Boca Raton, FL 33431

### Phone Numbers:

#### Main Office

Tel: 561-395-3011

Fax: 561-395-3029

<input type="checkbox"/> Fathi Khalfi	Principal & Technology Director	Ext. 000
<input type="checkbox"/> Sadiq Hamidani	Business Manager/PreK Director	Ext. 002
<input type="checkbox"/> Salima Boubker	School Coordinator	Ext. 005
<input type="checkbox"/> Suzie Mousa	Upper School Secretary	Ext 004
<input type="checkbox"/> Nadirah Bessee	Admissions & Office Operations, Events Coordinator	Ext. 003
<input type="checkbox"/> Najat Al Omairi	Lower School Secretary	Ext. 001
<input type="checkbox"/> Sheila D'Metayer	School Nurse	Ext. 006



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## Admissions

### General and Non-Discriminatory

GSA is a full-time Pre K, elementary, middle, and high school and admissions are open throughout the year. The principal and the school coordinator makes the decision for new students to be admitted to a specific grade level after evaluation of his/her application, screening test results, individual and family interviews, supporting documents (including transcripts), and any discipline/probation records from the previous school.

GSA admits students of any race, gender or religion to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to its students. GSA does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender or religion in administration of its educational policies, admissions, or programs.

At The Garden of Sahaba Academy, we have a multiracial, ethnic and culturally diverse population of students and families. Most of our students are bilingual and may need speech or language services. At the present time, GSA does not have the resources to support children with special needs.

GSA, however, does assist parents/guardians in securing help through the School District of Palm Beach County's Department (SDPBC) of Exceptional Student Education (ESE). This service is ONLY for students with speech and language impairments. Speech and language therapy is provided by an independent speech pathologist.

GSA elects the right to make available only the speech and language resources provided from The School District of Palm Beach County ESE program.

### Minimum Age Requirements for Grades KG - 1st

#### KG

5 years of age on September 1st of the year of admission

#### Grade 1

6 years of age on September 1st of the year of admission



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## Application and Supporting Documents

Students will not be admitted without the proper age verification, previous school records (report cards and behavior reports), and immunization records. Students with previous IEP reports will not be accepted due to us not being equipped with the recommended services and resources.

The online application form MUST be completed and signed by parents and submitted with the required documentations listed below:

- Birth certificate
- Previous school transcripts and standardized test scores
- Up up-to-date immunization and/physical Health Examination Records. (Students entering KG and 7th Grade must provide updated immunization health records)
- Psychological/social/behavioral/developmental reports, and any other relevant information
- Allergies and/or any medical condition
- Department of Education Data collection sheet for McKay scholarship students
- Affidavit for McKay scholarship students
- Any other pertinent information

## Placement Test

A placement test will be given to any student applying for grades 1-5 to evaluate the appropriate grade level for the student. For students entering kindergarten, a mandatory screening test will be given within the first three weeks of school. Students who do not meet the minimum requirements will be referred for further evaluation.

## Transfer Students

Students who transfer to GSA will be accepted on a case by case basis in the grade he/she is transferred to with these conditions:

- Grade appropriate age



- Pass the Placement Test
- 90 days academic and disciplinary probation

During the probation period, the student must display a keen interest in learning and adhere to the school rules and requirements.

Parents who are transferring students who do not meet the age-appropriate cutoff date for that grade can apply for a waiver. The request for a waiver will be determined by:

- Documents submitted at the time of the application, which prove that the child is in that grade.
- Students take the Placement Test.

GSA reserves the right to reverse any decision based on academic difficulties, discipline issues and/or any learning challenges during the probationary period. The student will be carefully evaluated by the teacher(s) during this period. Parents will be notified that the student will be placed in the age appropriate grade.

In special circumstances, advanced students who have displayed the following criteria will be allowed to skip one (1) grade level during their entire duration at GSA:

1. Academic advancement in their age appropriate grade level
2. High Achievement on Placement exams
3. Grade Appropriate Social Emotional skills which is evaluated by the school counselor or administration

## **Registration**

Registration is conducted in early spring for both new and continuing students. Continuing students are encouraged to re-register in early spring for the new academic year. Advertisements are done spring through summer annually. Applications and enrollments are done online at FACTS SIS. A non-refundable application fee of \$25 is due at the time the application is submitted for new students; and, a non-refundable registration fee of \$300 is due at the time of enrollment for new and continuing students. A non-refundable supply fee of \$50 and resource fee of \$300 is due no later than June 1st of every year.



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**NOTE:** Submission of scholarship awards letters (SUFS, FES, AAA, McKay) to the school does not constitute registration of the student.

## Payment Policy

- ❑ Registration fees must be paid online at the time of enrollment at FACT SIS.
- ❑ New applicants must pay a \$25 non-refundable application fee
- ❑ Tuition fees are for ten (10) months from August to May and due on the 1st of every month. Payments are to be made from the 1st of August to 1<sup>st</sup> of May. No credit is applied to tuition fees for absences, holidays, and/or non-attendance. Partial attendance does not relieve a parent/guardian of the financial obligation for their child's enrollment.
- ❑ The school recommends that parents sign up for an automatic debit program through FACTS SIS - a third party company. An annual service fee of \$45.00 is charged per family by FACTS SIS to cover administrative costs. The fee is due at the time of registration. If a parent wishes to pay the entire cost of the tuition for the school year, the \$45.00 fee will be waived. Parents may opt to send monthly checks to FACTS SIS (an invoice will be e-mailed to parent/guardian by FACTS or by postal mail if the parent desires). A \$30.00 fee for a failed auto-debit transaction will be charged by FACTS tuition. FACTS charges a convenience fee for payments made with a credit card.
- ❑ Fees not received by the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day of each month will incur a late fee of \$25.00. The student will not be allowed to attend classes after the twentieth (20<sup>th</sup>) day of the month until the tuition is paid in full. Absence during this period will be considered unexcused. The parents are responsible to inform the director, in writing, of any difficulty in meeting these obligations.
- ❑ Students who register after the first month of the first marking period will be required to pay tuition fees on a pro-rata basis.



- ❑ Students who attend school for three (3) days of any month will be required to pay tuition for the entire month.

## **Delinquent Accounts**

GSA is a non-profit educational institution. The running expenses of the school is primarily derived from tuition fees. The school has minimal cash reserves. Late payment of fees will seriously jeopardize the school operations and your child's education. It is essential that all payments be made in full on the date which they are due in order for us to meet our financial obligations.

Student's report cards, tests, transcripts, and health records, and the transfer of said records, will be withheld until all fees are paid in full. All delinquent fees from a previous year must be paid in full before the student is allowed to re-register for the new school year.

Tuition and fees not paid in full shall be subject to collection. The school's collection expenses, including attorney fees, shall be paid by the parent/guardian.

## **Return Checks**

A charge of \$30.00 will be added to any check that was returned for insufficient funds or closure of account, or any other reason. All remaining payments for the year must be by cash, money order, or cashier's checks.

## **Financial Aid**

The stated policy at GSA is that parents must complete all tuition requirements as stated in the registration information. Parents who are experiencing extreme difficulty meeting their tuition obligations to the school may apply for Financial Aid with FACTS. FACTS charges a \$35.00 application fee. Deadline for submitting new and renewal applications is July 15. The amount of financial aid given each year is dependent upon availability of funds.

## **Withdrawal Policy**

Parents wishing to withdraw their child(ren) from GSA are required to notify the school in writing using GSA's withdrawal form. Notice should be given 30 days in advance of the withdrawal date. Parents will be held responsible for one month's tuition if proper written notification is NOT



received by the school. Students who withdraw after the first marking period will not be entitled for a refund on registration or resource fees.

## School Records

Parents have the right to access, inspect, and review official records, files, and other important documents kept on file with respect to their children. This right does not include the removal and copying of materials from the record. GSA maintains data in RenWeb, soft and physical files for every student in which are recorded grades, awards, special notes as well as any violations or infractions. This information is not available to the general public and can only be released to other schools when they formally request such records.

The following indicates the policy in relation to students' records:

- Only the parent or authorized faculty member may have access to these files and records.
- Information with respect to the students will not be made available to a non-custodial person without a signed court release.
- The name change of a student must be supported by a legal document and it will be part of the permanent record.
- All school records will be withheld until all tuition and other fees are paid in full.
- Records will also be withheld until all books are returned/paid for.

### Privacy Act - Florida State 228.093

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) became a Federal law in November of 1974 and was further revised in 1975 and 1976. The intent of this law is to protect the accuracy and privacy of students' educational records. FERPA gives parents certain rights with regards to their children's education record. A parent/guardian also has the right to exercise the waiver to access certain confidential letters or statements.

A parent/guardian may request an appointment to inspect and review their student's records. An eligible student (18 years of age or older) may also request an appointment to inspect and review his/her records. The appointment may be made in person or by calling the school at (561) 395-3011.



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The school shall comply with the request within a reasonable period of time, but in no case more than 30 days after the request has been made. When reviewing the records, you have the right to explanations and interpretations of the records and to obtain copies of the records. A small charge may be made for copies of the records, but in no case should the charge exceed \$0.10 per page per copy. Upon review of the records, if you have reason to believe any of the information contained therein is inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate, you have the right to challenge the information and make recommendations for changes. If the school personnel are in agreement with your recommendations, the necessary steps will be taken to amend or correct the information contained in the records. If an agreement is not reached, a hearing will be scheduled. This hearing will provide you with an opportunity to present your views and to give your reasons for challenging the records. You may bring with you to the hearing, at your own expense, any individual who may be of assistance. Following the hearing, should there be a failure to reach an agreement, you have the right to appeal the decision to the school Board. In the event that your appeal fails at either of these levels of the hearing procedure, you have the right to have entered into the student's record a statement of the issue as you see it.

If the matter has not been resolved and if you believe that this school system has not complied with the law, you have the further right to file a complaint with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, concerning School Education Records.

Prior consent of the parents or eligible students (over 18 years of age) will be required in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to release those records, without consent, to the following parties:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring to;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connections with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;



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- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

The rights pertaining to access and challenge described herein are transferred to the student upon the attainment of his/her eighteenth birthday or admission to an institution of post-secondary education. GSA must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA.

## Instructional Program

### Curriculum

In order to achieve our mission of academic excellence, we have established an educational institution based on sound Islamic principles and supported by highly qualified leadership. Our custom curriculum reflects the needs of our students and incorporates state standards.

Moreover, the standards are designed to help the students solve and deal with the needs and demands of living in the 21st century.

The curriculum comprises the following subjects: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, Arabic, Islamic and Qur'anic Studies, and other electives. It's implemented through a holistic approach that considers each student as an active learner and partner in the education process. The teachers are facilitators who encourage and challenge the students to meet and maintain high academic achievement. The objective is for the students to understand the concepts, and develop attitudes and skills in keeping with the spirit and teachings of Islam.

### Islamic Studies

Islamic Studies is a vast field of study. It includes Aqeedah or the monotheistic belief system, Ibadat or worship, Mu'amalat or dealings, Akhlaq or morals, Seerah of the Prophet's (PBH) life history, and Islamic history in general. It also includes the study of Tafsir or explanation of the Holy Quran, Hadith or the Prophet's (PBH) sayings, to name some areas.



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## Quran

The care and respect of the Mushaf are also emphasized, along with the regularity of its recitation. The focus is on:

- Hifz (memorization)
- Tilawah (recitation with Tajweed)
- Tafsir (explanation)

The applicability and practice of Allah's (SWT) commands are illustrated and emphasized. This approach also strengthens the Islamic culture.

## Arabic Language

Arabic is the language of the Qur'an and the language of paradise. The use of the Arabic language helps the students to understand their Deen and to validate their identity. Areas of emphasis include:

- Reading
- Listening and comprehending
- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Conversation
- Writing

Arabic is also a world language that meets state requirements for foreign language credits.



## Assessments

Assessments are designed to provide timely information on each student's proficiency and to provide struggling students with additional time and support for learning.

### Tests and Quizzes

Regular testing is essential for evaluation of students' work. Teachers will observe a regular schedule of tests and quizzes. Students with an excused absence will have a chance to take the make-up test or quiz.

### Special Assignments/Projects

Teachers will identify and assign particular projects/special assignments related to class work. Guidelines will be given on how to do them, as well as dates for submission. These activities will encourage research, creativity, and scholarship. The final presentation will be graded.

### Interim Reports

Parents have access to the gradebook on FACTS SIS (formerly Renweb) to check their child's grades throughout the year. Teachers will contact the parent at any time during the interim period for students who may not be achieving as expected. Parents should also follow up with the teacher so as to determine the best way to help their child to make satisfactory progress, if they are experiencing difficulties.

### Report Cards

Report cards are available on FACTS SIS (formerly Renweb) after every 9 week marking period. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to go over these documents carefully with their child in order to encourage the student to review and/or improve his/her academic performance. Printed reports may also be sent home.



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## Grading System

The school year is divided into four (4) marking periods – a total of 36 weeks. At the end of each marking period, report cards will be available to parents on FACTS SIS. The numerical grades correspond to the following letter grades:

Excellent	100 - 90	A
Very Good	89 - 80	B
Satisfactory	79 - 70	C
Failed	69 - 60	D
Failed	59 and Below	F

**Note:** Grades D and F are considered failing grades.

## Retention and Promotion

Students must obtain grades A, B, or C in all the subjects in each marking period, and 90% overall attendance for promotion. If a student is failing in Math, Language Arts/Reading and Quran, the parent will be notified by the school admin for a parent/teacher conference. If there's no improvement in the student's academic progress, a letter of possible retention will be sent by the admin to the parent at the end of the 3rd marking period. If the student continues to fail these subjects, they will be retained and cannot be promoted to the next grade level. This decision of retention will be made by the teacher and Principal. A student that's not promoted can do summer courses through Title 1 and can be retested before the new school year begins, but must have a passing grade in order to be promoted.



## Co-Curricular Activities

GSA promotes and encourages a variety of activities to support the school's mission and vision. Teachers assist in and motivate students to participate in special events and activities, both co-curricular and extracurricular. The current facilities of Garden of the Sahaba Academy provide the opportunity for the physical growth of the student body and will also provide opportunities and outlets for creative, developmental and physical growth.

### Field Trips

Throughout the school year, students will participate in experiential learning through regular field trips. Trips will correlate to their curriculum and provide students with an opportunity to experience and internalize learning.

### Campus Walks

Teachers may conduct activities with the students beyond the fenced area around the school (i.e., nature hikes, visit to the Masjid, and picnics). During these activities, the students are taken in small groups or as a whole group to participate in activities that may occur within a 500 yard radius of the school.

### Spelling Bee: Arabic and English

Students from Grades 1 through 5 will participate in an annual spelling bee competition in both Arabic and English. A list of words will be issued prior to the competition in order to allow students to prepare and study. Competitions will be held in the classroom by grade and the finals will be held between grade finalists. Awards will be given.

### QAIS Event

Quran, Arabic and Islamic Studies (QAIS) teachers will prepare a presentation to showcase the QAIS curriculum to parents and community members. The event will include Quran recitation and Nasheed by GSA students.



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## **Sports Day**

A day of team sports with mixed grade groups. Students spend an entire day outdoors competing in fun activities.

## **Culture Day**

Students learn about the culture of a country or region and then create a display and presentation to share what they have learned with students, parents and community.

## **Attendance**

Florida Statute 232.09 states that the parent/ legal guardian of a child of compulsory school age is responsible for the child's daily school attendance. All school personnel, parents, students and relevant state agencies are required to work collaboratively to ensure that the school attendance laws are obeyed; and, make referrals to the legal agency for possible court action for truancy.

### **Attendance Requirements**

The school year consists of 180 days. Official school hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for students. Students must report to their homeroom at 7:55 a.m. It is mandatory for all enrolled students to attend all aspects of the assigned curriculum. The State of Florida requires each student to meet the following requirements per academic year:

- 720 net instructional hours for kindergarten through grade 3, and
- Not less than 900 instructional hours for grades 4 through 12.

Parents are to inform the office in advance of their child's absence, except in cases of emergency. They are also to send a written note the first day the child returns after any absence. Students who are absent due to sickness for three (3) or more days must present a medical note on returning to school. Students who report after 10:00 A.M. are considered absent for the morning session unless they have a doctor's note. Absences are either excused or unexcused. Any exceptions to the above must be requested in writing from the parent(s) and are contingent upon the principal's approval.



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## Excused Absence

- Illness
- Illness of an immediate family member
- Death in the family
- Religious holiday of the child
- Required court appearance
- Doctor/dental appointment
- Suspension from classes
- 5 days for head lice infestation
- Special occasion
- Hajj or Umrah

## Special/Long-Term Absences

- Special/long-term absences must be approved by the Principal at least two weeks in advance of the commencement of the absence, except in an emergency situation in which case parents must contact the principal or the office urgently.
- Parents are to make their requests in writing to the Principal for approval.
- Teachers are to give assignments (for this period) to the child for completion and submission on the first day of returning to school. Parents are to sign a note from the teacher to this effect.
- Failure to submit assignments and passing the exams will result in an automatic “no grade” for the marking period.

## COVID-19 Related Absences

Students will be counted as excused-absent for any COVID-19 related illness or exposure.

COVID-19 related absences will be excused as follows:

- If tested positive for COVID (Isolation of 10 days\*) - absence will be excused for any school days that fall within the 10 day isolation period.



- Had close contact with a COVID positive individual and tested negative on the 5th day after last contact (Quarantine for 7 days) - absence will be excused for any school days that fall within the 7 day quarantine period.
- Had close contact with a COVID positive individual and will not test (Quarantine for 10 days after last contact) - absence will be excused for any school days that fall within the 10 day quarantine period.
- Exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms (no close contact):
  - Absence will be excused up to the day the student tests negative for COVID-19, **and/or**
  - Absence will be excused up to 24 hours after symptoms resolve.
- International travel, Unvaccinated (after returning from travel, test on days 3 - 5; quarantine for 7 days; if test is negative, return to school on day 8) -absence will be excused for any school days that fall within the 7 day quarantine period.
- International travel, Unvaccinated (after returning from travel, quarantine for 10 days if not testing) - absence will be excused for any school days that fall within the 10 day quarantine period.

In the event that a student has to isolate or quarantine in excess of 10 days, the absence will be excused (for the duration of the extended isolation or quarantine period) if the following conditions exist:

- The student's family is unable to isolate the COVID-19 positive individual.
- The student continues or develops symptoms past the pre-set isolation or quarantine period.

\*If a student tests positive, the final decision on the student's return to school date will be determined by the Palm Beach County Health Department. Once the Palm Beach County Health Department is done with their investigation, the school nurse will be notified (via email or phone call) of the student's return to school date.

Students whose absence(s) are excused due to a COVID related incident will be provided access (via google classroom) to assignments/services in an effort to maintain educational continuity. Students



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and parents are encouraged to communicate with the teachers (on a regular basis) during any prolonged absences.

### **Unexcused Absences**

A child's absence is considered unexcused if and when the parent/guardian did not inform the office, either in writing or by a telephone call.

### **Academic Consequences**

A total of 18 absences from school per year are considered to be excessive whether excused or unexcused and it will result in retention or the loss of credit toward graduation.

### **Tardiness**

Consistent tardiness is disruptive to the student's learning and to the functioning of the class.

Any student who arrives late (after 8:05 a.m.) must report to the office and obtain a late-pass/tardy slip before he/she will be admitted to class. Students who arrive after a class or period has started may have to wait until the beginning of the next period to be admitted to class. Students will be charged with the following for being tardy:

- (i) First Offense: Warning
  - (ii) Second Offense: \$1.00 late fee
  - (iii) Third Offense \$5.00 late fee for every tardy thereafter.
- (This will be applicable per nine week term).

### **Drop-off and Pick-up**

School hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Drop-off and pick-up procedures are implemented to promote student safety and for convenience. Please read the following carefully to become familiar with the routine.

Monday - Thursday	Drop-off	7:45 - 7:50 AM
Monday - Friday	Pick Up	3:30 PM



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Early Dismissal	Pick Up	11:00 AM
Friday Dismissal for all	Pick Up	2:00 PM

Please respect your child’s learning environment by being punctual for drop off and pick up of your child. To ensure the safety of all students, please join the drop-off or pick-up line and remain in your vehicle. If for any reason you have to exit your vehicle, please park your car in the staff/visitor parking area which is facing north. Parents and guardians are not permitted to escort students to their classrooms or go to a classroom to pick up their child.

Parents who do not pick up their children 10 minutes after dismissal will be charged a \$7.00 fee per fifteen minutes, per child.

### **Early Release**

There are early release days listed on the school calendar. Students are dismissed at 11:00 am on those days and should be picked up promptly. Parent’s requests for early release any other day must be made in writing to the school at least the day before. Students who must leave early from school should have their parents contact the school office. Phone requests will be honored only in emergencies. Parents or designated guardians should arrive in person and report to the school office to sign the child out before they can leave with the child.

### **Visitors**

Students, teachers, and/or parents must have prior approval from the office before bringing any visitor to GSA. Visitors are expected to observe all school rules which includes checking in. Parents can visit the classrooms with prior approval and a “Visitors Pass” which can be obtained from the office when checking in.



## Dress Code

### Uniform Policy

Students attending GSA or any related event, whether on or off the premises, must either be dressed in school uniform or what is appropriate clothing as defined by the GSA guidelines below. Personal neatness and cleanliness are important parts of Islamic etiquette. The GSA Administration reserves the right to define what is “Appropriate or Eccentric” for school uniforms, hair, etc. Girls should not wear any make-up or perfume. Simple jewelry such as small bracelets, tiny earrings and rings are permitted.

Boys are not permitted to wear earrings of any kind. Parents should be aware of some types of hairstyles that are forbidden by our religion (for example, al-Qaza’, lit. tufts, which is where part of the head is shaved and part is left). It was narrated from Ibn Omar that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade al-qaza’. In addition, nails must be kept short and clean.

The third party provider of GSA’s school uniform is Lands’ End. Each student is required to purchase a minimum of three (3) school shirts or dresses. Every elementary school student is expected to abide by the GSA Student Dress Code as detailed below.

### Elementary (KG- Grade 5)

#### Girls are to wear:

- Short sleeve green polo dress with khaki pants for KG to 3rd
- Long sleeve green polo dress with khaki pants for 4th to 5th
- A white hijab for grades 4th and up
- PE - KG to 3rd: Short or long sleeve GSA shirt and black or navy sweatpants
- PE - 4th to 5th: Long sleeve GSA shirt and black or navy sweatpants
- Black or brown shoes (no shoelaces for grades KG - 2nd)
- Green sweat jackets



### Boys are to wear:

- Green polo shirt with the school logo
- Khaki long pants (available at your favorite store)
- PE: GSA shirt with navy or black sweatpants
- Black/brown/white shoes - no high-tops or multicolored shoes  
(no shoelaces for grades KG - 2nd)
- Green sweat jackets
- White undershirts only

### For boys, the following are strictly prohibited

- Un-tucked undershirts
- Extreme hairstyles that draw undue attention; hair should be neat and trimmed down
- No earring and/or similar jewelry
- Pants should not be worn below the waist line, and/or dragging on the floor.

If additional clothing is needed for warmth, white undershirts may be worn underneath the green polo shirt. Green sweatshirts with the GSA logo may also be worn with the uniform.

### Dress Code for Special Occasions

Special occasions or Dress Up Days include award ceremonies and special programs. On these days, students are asked to wear attire more suitable for the occasion such as jackets & ties, dress pants, dresses, skirts, dress shirts or blouses, and appropriate footwear. Notification will be made in advance for when the Dress Code for special occasions will be in effect. On Dress Down Days, skinny jeans, joggers, pajamas, hats, and torn or frayed clothing are not permitted.

### Violations

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure their children come to school with the proper uniform. Each child is to be neat and clean - no torn or bleached clothes. Students who are in violation of the dress code will receive:

- First Violation:** Written warning via Parent Web
- Second Violation:** Phone call to parent and second written warning via Parent Web



- ❑ **Third Violation:** We will call parents to pick up their child from school and bring him/her back with the school uniform / proper attire/removal of improper or inappropriate jewelry, hairstyle, etc.

### **Uniform Fines**

If a student comes to school without the proper school uniform, a note from a parent should accompany the child. Lack of an acceptable reason for a violation will result in a fine. The fines will start at \$4 and will increase by \$2 increments with the number of offenses. Please note that Uniform Warnings will only be given the first week of school and fines will start the second week of school.

## **Bus Riding**

It is a privilege for students to ride the GSA school bus. The right of a student to ride the school bus is contingent upon their continuous observance of safety rules, established regulations, and acceptable behavior. The school may assign a staff member to be in charge of the bus and he/she will be responsible for implementing the school bus policy.

### **Rules and Regulations**

The following rules of conduct are to be observed by students who ride the school bus:

- ❑ To prevent possible injuries, students must remain seated in their assigned seats while the bus is in motion. Students are not permitted to move around the bus.
- ❑ The driver of the bus will not wait for more than 5 minutes for any student.
- ❑ Students must use only the front door to enter and exit the bus except in an emergency. Tampering with emergency doors, windows or equipment is prohibited.
- ❑ Students must not block the stairwell; this area is to remain clear in case of emergency.
- ❑ To prevent possible injuries to students and others, students must not extend any part of the body or other objects out through the bus windows.
- ❑ Harassment, physical assault, bullying, kicking, spitting, pushing, discriminatory comments, profanity, obscene gestures or any abusive form of verbal language or



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physical conduct towards the staff member, driver, other students or any other persons on or off the bus is Haram & prohibited.

- Usage of mobile phones is strictly prohibited.
- Possession of weapons such as guns, knives, chains, sticks or any other dangerous items including laser pointers that can inflict injury are strictly prohibited and illegal. Such items are subject to immediate confiscation.
- Throwing objects or shooting items inside the bus or out the windows is hazardous and prohibited. Any such objects or items are subject to immediate confiscation.
- Eating or drinking is not allowed on the bus.
- Littering, spilling, vandalism, or destruction of school buses or any part of it is prohibited.
- Parents may not ride the school bus. Drivers are instructed not to let unauthorized adults on the bus. This is for the protection of all students.

## **Compliance and Violations**

The school requires that parents review the bus rules and regulations with their bus-riding children so that they adhere to and comply with all rules and regulations. Any violation in any form of any of the above-mentioned articles or any other unmentioned articles (as determined by the school administration) may result in suspension or revocation of the student's riding privilege. Parents may be held financially liable for the cost of repairing any sustained damages to the school bus.

## **Suspension Penalties**

If an infraction was not resolved by the bus driver or chaperone, the student will be referred to the principal:

- FIRST CITATION:  
WRITTEN WARNING TO THE PARENTS
- SECOND CITATION:  
SUSPENSION OF BUS RIDING FOR ONE DAY OR MORE
- THIRD CITATION:



## SUSPENSION OF BUS RIDING FOR REMAINDER OF SCHOOL YEAR

### Discipline Policy

The Prophet (PBUH) said, “Righteous is good morality, and wrongdoing is that which waivers in your soul and which you dislike people finding out about”, narrated by Muslim.

#### Rationale

In order to create the best, possible learning environment that is safe and conducive to learning based on Islamic teaching derived from the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH), guidelines of acceptable behavior in the classroom and on school grounds are to be followed consistently. Each teacher will set classroom rules. These disciplinary procedures and consequences will help the students realize their responsibility to behave appropriately. Insha Allah, this system will allow students to make appropriate choices, which will, in turn, ensure the proper Islamic environment in the classroom. The students will be either rewarded or penalized for their behavior. Teachers will handle discipline issues in their classrooms. In cases where students cause excessive classroom disruption, engage in acts of bullying and/or fighting, harm others, or use profanity, they will be referred to the Principal for disciplinary actions. Please ask your child each day about his/her behavior. Insha Allah, these disciplinary procedures will help your child assume responsibility for his/her own conduct.

Parents and students are responsible for reading the Discipline Policy and Handbook for a clear understanding of the School’s expectations for student behavior.

#### **THE GSA DISCIPLINE POLICY APPLIES IN THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS:**

- During the regular school hours
- On the school bus or other transportation sanctioned by the School.
- During School sponsored events.
- During events and activities associated with the School
- During Salah and while in the Masjid.



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Additionally, the administration is authorized to take disciplinary action when a student's misconduct away from School has a detrimental effect on the other students or on the orderly educational process.

**Students should try their best to be conscious of Allah (SWT), be respectful, behave safely and appropriately, and be prepared to learn.**

**In the Classroom, a student should:**

- Be a good listener.
- Think before speaking.
- Keep a neat and clean desk.
- Show care for all property.
- Avoid disturbing others in your class or in other classes.
- Leave everything in order at the end of the day.
- Use best manners at all times.
- Greet your teachers and classmates with "Assalamu Alaikum."

**In the Halls, a student should:**

- Always keep to the right when moving in the halls.
- Walk (not run) in the hallways.
- Avoid crowding others while in line. Keep your voice at a whisper.
- Greet your teachers and classmates with "Assalamu Alaikum."

**At Lunch, a student should:**

- Practice proper mealtime manners at all times.
- The lunch area is an extension of the classroom, rules apply.
- Maintain a speaking voice while in conversation (no shouting).
- Each student is responsible for leaving tables and the ground area clean.
- Eat with your right hand.
- Say, "Bismillah" before you eat.
- Say, "Alhamdu Allah" after you eat.



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### **On the Playground, a student should:**

- Students must follow playground rules.
- Students should share and take turns in using all playground equipment.
- Any student who incites, encourages, promotes or participates in a fight while at School, or at school-sponsored activity, shall be subject to disciplinary action.

### **In the Masjid, a student should:**

- Make du'aa as you enter.
- Perform tahiyyatul masjid
- Avoid disturbing others, there is no talking.
- Use your best manners at all times.
- Pay attention and follow Salah properly.
- Stop talking when you hear the Adhan. In a low voice, repeat the Adhan after each call.
- Repeat the du'a for Adhan, after the Adhan is completed.
- Say dhikr after Salat and wait to be dismissed.

### **During Ablution (wudu), a student should:**

- Take turns.
- Keep the area clean and dry, do not waste water.

### **In the Restroom, a student should:**

- Keep it clean and dry
- Finish quickly

## **Discipline Plan**

We believe that together, we will promote an academically, physically, socially and emotionally safe environment in which every individual accepts personal responsibility for making a positive contribution to the harmony and welfare of the school as a whole.

### **As students, we will...**

- Show courtesy, trust, caring, respect and fairness



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- Abide by the guiding principles
- Uphold the school standards
- Accept responsibility for decisions and actions

#### **As parents, we will...**

- Model courtesy, trust, caring, and respect
- Support our student(s) in being in school, ready to learn.
- Participate actively as members of the school community
- Be informed about school policies and events
- Work as partners with the staff in the problem solving processes
- Hold high expectations for our children's productive, responsible behavior.

#### **As teachers, we will...**

- Maintain professionalism as we model courtesy, trust, caring, respect and fairness.
- Provide a well-organized instructional period and engaging work to facilitate good study habits and independence.
- Properly supervise students at all times.
- Be primarily responsible for managing discipline in our classrooms.
- Maintain high expectations for productive, responsible behavior.
- Set responsible and reasonable limits, make fair judgments, and follow through with appropriate procedures for rewards and/or consequences for behavior.
- Cooperate with students, parents, and administration in a positive problem solving process.
- Facilitate home-school communication and parent participation in problem solving.
- Refer students to the appropriate support staff after appropriate measures to manage disruptive behavior have been unsuccessful.

#### **As the principal, I will...**

- Facilitate collaborative development of school-wide procedures and programs that promote a safe, respectful learning environment.
- Maintain professionalism as I model courtesy, caring, respect, and fairness.



- Provide support for the staff in the implementation of the disciple plan.
- Provide strong, positive leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of the GSA Code of Conduct.
- Provide leadership in maintaining a healthy, safe, productive and content environment.

### **GSA Elementary Level Consequences**

In the classroom, consequences for unproductive behavior will include a variety of actions depending on the behavior and the circumstances. At times, certain behaviors will only require a warning and/or other classroom-interventions that are the natural consequence for the specific behavior. For example, if an assignment is not completed, the child may be asked to finish the work during playtime; or if a student is disruptive, his/her seat may be moved to a place where the disruption is no longer possible.

If the problem continues, the teacher may hold a conference with the parent, the child, and the principal to construct a contract that outlines the behavior to be improved and rewards and consequences for changing or continuing.

Unsafe or disrespectful behavior must be taken seriously. It is important to remember that there is no one right way to address this type of behavior in that the circumstances, frequency, complexity, and special needs are all considerations when determining appropriate consequences. The following guide provides a starting point for determining a suitable strategy to extinguish unwanted behavior, encourage appropriate social conduct, and provide an appropriate consequence.

#### **Consequences for misbehavior may include the following:**

- Warning
- Students will be assigned a "Quiet time" to sit and think about the situation and/or find alternative solutions.
- Students are redirected to another activity.
- Student-teacher conference.
- Students receive a written discipline notice from the teacher or principal.



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- Students will complete (in writing) a "Think Time" sheet to describe the situation and reflect on future appropriate behavior choices.
- Students will write an apology note or verbal apology to students or staff members involved.
- A discipline notice is sent home to be signed by the parent and returned to school.
- A phone contact with a parent by teacher or principal.
- Conference with the principal
- Conference with the student, parent, teacher and principal
- In-house, short or long term suspension
- For repeated hostile or threatening behaviors (unresponsive to prior disciplinary measures), the student will receive a 3 day at home suspension to begin immediately from the time of the occurrence.
- For fighting, the student will receive a 3 day at home suspension to begin immediately from the time of the occurrence.
- The parent(s) of any student who has received a 3 day at home suspension will have to meet with the proper school personnel prior to the child returning to school.

## **DUE PROCESS RIGHTS**

Any student whose conduct may warrant suspension or expulsion will be provided the following due process.

### **Students**

- A notification of the violation.
- An opportunity to present his/her side of the story to the appropriate School personnel.

### **Parents**

- A notification of the violation and the consequence decided by the School.
- Twenty-four hour notice to meet in person with the proper School personnel for a fair and impartial conference, unless the student's behavior is so disruptive or detrimental that he/she cannot complete the school day.



## Homework

The elementary school team is dedicated to excellence in our school, ourselves, and in our students. In order to achieve excellence, we believe that we must expect it from our students everyday. Students in Elementary School will have homework in Math, Reading, and Quran everyday. They could receive homework from any of their remaining classes as well. Students should expect frequent assessments. Many teachers will give weekly quizzes in which students should know to be prepared for. Also, ‘pop’ quizzes will be given to ensure students are reviewing their class materials daily. ‘Pop’ quizzes are impromptu assessments given without prior notification. An assessment will be given after each completed unit or chapter.

## Missing Assignment Policy

Any students that miss an assignment, quiz, or test due to an absence will be allowed to make up the work missed. The teacher will make sure that the student receives the missed assignments. The teacher will give the student ample time to complete the work.

## Google Classroom

### Expectations of Students

- Students will log in to each class ON TIME; a late log-in is still a tardy tracked in SIS.
- Students will attend assigned classes every day that school is in session during the scheduled time.
- Students will be expected to participate in "live" daily lessons a minimum of 5-6 hours with their teachers at specific times.
- During class, students will adhere to the Student discipline policy as defined in the Parent/Student Handbook.
- Students will have on-demand access to E-textbooks, training content, troubleshooting, and technology support.
- Students will be provided with multiple communication channels to school counselors and teachers.



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- Students will have a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours to complete any assignments.
- Students with an excused absence will have a chance to take the make-up test or quiz.
- Students will be in GSA uniform during class times.
- Girls 4th grade & up must be in the uniform/hijab.
- Students will adhere to the GSA “Netiquette” policy.

### **Expectations of Parents/Guardians**

- Parents will ensure their child/children log in punctually each day, for each class.
- Parents will ensure to send an email to the home room teacher if their child/children are sick or unable to attend classes due to doctor’s/dentist appointments at least one day in advance or in case of emergency the next day.
- Parents will ensure their child/children attend classes with all required resources including Chromebooks, notebooks etc.
- Parents will ensure their child/children are completing and turning in assignments on time.
- Parents will have technical support available by calling the GSA IT Admin team.



## Health & Security

### General

The health and safety of every student is a major concern to us all. GSA has a functioning clinic which is staffed by a Registered Nurse (RN). Staff members trained in CPR and First Aid, and who have received additional child-specific training by the RN, can assist with certain health-related duties such as administering first aid and medications.

Our ability to care for any student at GSA is dependent upon parents providing us with any information, of significance, related to their child's health and well-being. Parents should notify the school's office and/or school nurse if their child has any allergies, chronic medical conditions, recent injuries or hospitalizations.

### Emergency Contact

Parents are required to complete an emergency contact form for their child(ren) each school year. It is imperative that any changes in address, telephone number(s), doctor or emergency contact person be reported immediately to the school's office to ensure that contact can be made in the event of illness, accident, injury, incident, or emergency dismissal of school.

### Child Abuse and Neglect

Under Florida law, Statute 415.504, anyone who suspects a child may be abused or neglected is required to report it to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Any teacher or school employee who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect shall immediately notify the DCF by calling the nationwide number (1-800-99-ABUSE).

Anyone who knows, or suspects, and fails to report a child's abuse or knowingly prevents someone from reporting, or makes a false report is guilty of a second-degree misdemeanor.



## Administration of Medication at School

Prescribed and over-the-counter medications **CAN NOT BE ADMINISTERED** without a signed Physician's Authorization for Medication form on file. A Physician's Authorization Form is required each school year and for any changes to the current order during the school year. The form should contain the name of the student, the name and signature of the prescriber, the name of the medication, diagnosis, directions for use, whether the student can administer and self-carry the medication, and the parent's signature/consent.

All medications must be delivered to the school by an adult. Once received, a medication count and co-signature for receipt of the medication will be required. Prescribed medications must be in its original container with a pharmacy label, not expired and matching the current physician's order. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original unopened container, not expired and labeled with the child's name.

### MEDICINE DISPENSING PROCEDURES

The Registered Nurse or staff members (who have received medication administration training by the RN) may administer prescribed and over-the-counter medication(s) to students. The staff member administering the medication will ensure that the following "six rights" of medication administration is maintained:

- Right student
- Right medication
- Right dosage
- Right time
- Right route
- Right documentation

If a medication is to be administered on field trips, or during before/after school activities, the same guidelines will be followed.



## Illness or injury at school

If a student becomes ill or injured during the school day, he/she must let the teacher know and get permission to see the School Nurse or School Secretary. Minor injuries will be treated accordingly and the student will return to his or her class. If the illness or injury is serious, 911 will be called. In either situation, the parent(s) will be notified. The principal will also be notified in the event of a serious illness or injury.

Parents will be asked to pick up their child if the following symptoms are present:

- Fever - student may return when fever-free for 24 hours WITHOUT the use of fever-reducing medicine
- Diarrhea - student may return 48 hours after last episode
- Vomiting - student may return 48 hours after last episode
- Symptoms of communicable disease (heavy green discharge, reddened eyes, sore throat, rash) - student may return after clearance given by healthcare provider
- Abdominal pain
- Unusually lethargic behavior
- Presence of head lice or nits

If an ill student remains beyond one hour after the parent is called to pick him/her up, a \$7 late pick-up fee will be charged for every 15 minute period that transpires.

If a seriously ill child is not picked up promptly, emergency procedures will be put into effect.

## Doctor's Authorization to Return to School

A doctor's note is required for a child to return to school after 3 days of any illness.

A doctor's note will also be required under the following circumstances:

- For any child returning to school after contracting any one of the reportable communicable diseases (the note must indicate that the child is not contagious and may return to school).
- For a child returning to school after contracting any communicable disease requiring medical treatment.



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- ❑ For a child who has been sent home with diarrhea/vomiting and wishes to return to school the next day.

Although a child has a doctor’s note, the child must be physically able to participate in a group setting in order to return to school. The final decision rests with the school administrators.

### Medical Appointments

Parents should make every effort to schedule medical and dental appointments on non-school days. If unable to do so, parents should notify the office the day before the scheduled appointment, if a student will be late, absent, or will have to be released early.

### Immunization

Florida’s school immunization law requires all students in public or non-public schools to have documentation of proper immunization or exemption to attend school. All students, prior to their first day at GSA, are required to submit documentation of current immunizations (DH Form 680) or an exemption (DH Form 681). All immunizations are to be kept up to date or your child will not be permitted to attend school.

#### IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

TYPE OF VACCINE	DOSAGE
Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis (DTaP)	4 or 5 doses
Polio Series (IPV/OPV)	4 or 5 doses
Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR)	2 doses
Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)	Varies (usually 3 or 4 doses)
Hepatitis B Series	3 doses
Varicella	2 doses (vaccine not required if there is a history of varicella disease documented by healthcare provider)
Tetanus/Pertussis Booster (Tdap)	7th Grade



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New students in Pre-K, Kindergarten, 7th grade or any other initial entry, are also required to present a certification of school entry health exam (DH Form 3040) performed within one year prior to enrollment.

## Communicable diseases

The spread of certain infectious diseases can be reduced by excluding a person, known to be infectious, from contact with others who are at risk for catching the infection. The following is a list of communicable diseases and the recommended minimum periods of exclusion (if any) from school.

DISEASE	INCUBATION PERIOD	COMMUNICABILITY	PERIOD OF EXCLUSION
Chicken Pox	13-17 days	2 days before rash and not more than 1 week before the crop appears	Until all blisters have dried (usually 5 days)
Coronavirus (COVID-19)	Up to 14 days (median time of 4 - 5 days from exposure to symptoms onset)	48 to 72 hours before starting to experience symptoms up to 10 days after symptoms resolve (if asymptomatic, 10 days after testing positive)	Exclude for 5 days from the onset of symptoms or a positive test
Fifth Disease	4 - 12 days	Before the rash appears	No exclusion required
Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease	3 - 6 days	For days or weeks after the symptoms go away	Exclude until all blisters are dry
Head Lice	7-10 days	Until lice & eggs are destroyed	Until appropriate treatment has commenced
Hepatitis A	28-30 days	Weeks before; 2 weeks after symptoms appear	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, and until at least 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness.
Hepatitis B	60-90 days	Several weeks before symptoms until blood is no longer positive	No exclusion required
Herpes Simplex	2-12 days	While lesions are present	No exclusion required
Herpes Zoster	13-17 days	1 - 2 days before rash, not more than 1 week after lesions appear	Until 1 week after lesions erupt & all lesions have crusted



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Impetigo	4-10 days	While sores are draining	Under treatment, lesions healing, no new lesion
Influenza	24-72 hours	3 days from onset	Exclude until well (at least 5 days for adults and 7 - 10 days for children)
Meningitis	Depends on type	Depends on type	Until well and has received appropriate antibiotics (for bacterial)
Mononucleosis	4-6 weeks	May be up to 1 year	Physician's approval
Mumps	18 days	48 hours before swelling, 6 days before gland involvement & 9 days after swelling	Until swelling & symptoms disappear
Pink eye (Conjunctivitis)	Varies	During course of active infection	Until discharge from eyes have stopped (or diagnosed as non-infectious conjunctivitis)
Pinworms	4-6 days	As long as eggs are laid	If diarrhea is present, exclude until no diarrhea for 24 hours
Ringworms	4-14 days	While lesion is present	Until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced
Rubella	16-18 days	1 week before & 4 days after the rash appears	At least 4 days after onset of rash or until fully recovered
Scabies	2-6 weeks	Until mites and eggs destroyed	Until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced
Scarlet Fever	1-3 days	During acute stage & after 2-4 days after rash	Until the person has received appropriate antibiotics for 24 hours
Strep Throat	1-3 days	During acute stage & 2-4 days after rash	Until the person has received appropriate antibiotics for 24 hours
Shigella	1-3 days	During the course of infection until feces clear	Until no diarrhea for 24 hours



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Whooping Cough	Within 10 days	7 days after exposure, 3 weeks, if not treated, 1 week after treatment	Exclude until 5 days
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## Health Screenings

Florida mandated health screenings for grades KG - 5th are conducted annually (time and resources permitting) at GSA as follows:

- Vision Screening - KG, 1st & 3rd Grades
- Hearing Screening - KG & 1st Grades
- Growth & Development with Body Mass Index (BMI) Screening - 1st & 3rd Grades

GSA follows the screening procedures/recommendations and re-screening/referral guidelines outlined in the Florida School Health Administrative Resource Manual.

Parents who do not wish their child/children to be screened should notify GSA in writing.

## Nutrition

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), over 340 million children and adolescents age 5-19 were overweight or obese in 2016. Childhood obesity can profoundly affect a child's physical, social, and emotional well-being and has been linked to poor academic performance.

Before coming to school, students should have a proper breakfast. Students are expected to provide their own lunch. Please supply healthy and wholesome lunches based on the United States Department of Agriculture Smart Snacks guidelines for schools.

To qualify as a Smart Snack, a snack or entree must meet the following standards:

- Be a grain product that contains 50% or more whole grains by weight (have whole grain as the first ingredient); or
- Have as the first ingredient a fruit, vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food; or
- Be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable; and
- The food must meet the nutrient standards for calories, sodium, sugar, and fats as outlined below:



Nutrient	Snack	Entree
Calories	200 Calories or less	350 calories or less
Sodium	200 mg or less	480 mg or less
Total Fat	35% of calories or less	35% of calories or less
Saturated Fat	Less than 10% of calories	Less than 10% of calories
Trans Fat	0 g	0 g
Sugar	35% by weight or less	35% by weight or less

## Emergency Procedures

### Emergency Closing of School

In the event of an emergency, GSA will follow Palm Beach County Public School with regards to school closure. If school closure is due to inclement weather, please stay tuned to your local radio and TV for updated information. If there is a specific threat to GSA, then an independent decision will be made. School closing and re-opening information will be posted on GSA’s website and an announcement will be sent through RenWeb.

If a situation warrants an early release, parents will be contacted via Renweb. Parents are required to pick up their children promptly.

Days lost will be made up on Emergency Makeup Days as designated in the school calendar.

### Lockdown

A lockdown is implemented when an extraordinary event occurs such as a dangerous or unauthorized person is **NEAR** or **ON campus**.

Lockdown drills are conducted twice a year. During the drill, administrators will check all classroom doors to ensure they are locked and walk around outside of the buildings making sure all blinds and windows are closed. Students are expected to be quiet throughout the entire drill; classroom doors



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should not be opened or unlocked during lockdown. Only an administrator will unlock a door to indicate that the lockdown is over.

## **Fire Drill**

Fire drills are conducted on a monthly basis. During the drills, students and staff are expected to respond as if it was an actual crisis. Teachers will escort students to the assigned evacuation location/safe site. Designated staff members will check classrooms, bathrooms, and hallways for students and escort them to the safe site. Once at the safe site, teachers will take attendance and report to the administrator in charge.

Standard evacuation procedures and emergency maps are located in the administrative office and in every classroom near the exits.

## **Hurricane and Tornado Drill**

Hurricane/Tornado drills will be conducted at least once per year. In the event of a drill or an actual Tornado or Hurricane Warning, the following procedures will be implemented:

1. The Administrative Assistant will make an announcement over the school's Public Address System.
2. Students and staff will assume the appropriate position - kneeling under the desk or table, heads down, hands clasped on top of head.
3. Students in the playground or lunch area will be escorted to their classes and will observe the position described above.
4. Students are to remain in a safe position until the all-clear signal is given.

## **Electrical Outage**

The loss or interruption of electrical power is common throughout the year. In certain situations, students may need to be relocated (until the power is restored). If evacuating, teachers and staff will follow standard evacuation procedures. Parents and the GSA Board will be informed in the event that the school needs to be closed, or classes temporarily suspended, due to prolonged outage.



## Home and School Relations

The home and school are intimately interdependent. This is a strong basis for a binding and dynamic relationship. Both the school and home are strong and focused entities working for the common goal of rearing and training our future leaders and citizens to the highest levels they can achieve. We have an Amana from Allah (SWT) in this noble task for which we will answer. May Allah (SWT) help us and bless us in this effort!

### Orientation Meeting

In the week before school begins, and to mark the start of a new school year, an Open House meeting is held. The parents of newly admitted and returning students are given the opportunity to meet the teachers of their children and also to discuss matters and policies relating to the functioning of the school. Procedures for orientation includes an introduction panel of all the teachers, staff and administration. This will be followed by breakout sessions where the parent (and the student) will go to their child's classroom to meet their teacher and get a tour of the campus from the homeroom teacher. The tour includes the rules and procedures for the classroom, discipline policy, viewing the campus facilities, basketball courts, bathrooms, science lab, library, art room, prayer area and assembly area. Parents of new students, as well as parents of re-enrolled students are urged to attend.

### Communication

There is a constant need for communication between the school and the home. This flow can be in many forms - letters, notes, telephone, and email and should be from both sides (home and school). ***Emails sent via FACTS SIS (formerly RenWeb)*** will be the main form of communication between school, teachers, and parents. Parents are encouraged to check ***FACTS SIS*** frequently to ensure constant contact and awareness of your child's education. Parents should also make daily checks of your child's backpack for correspondences sent by the school. Some of these correspondences will require your signature. Please do sign them and return them to the teacher on the next school day with your child.



## Media Release

Teachers, faculty, students, and parents of enrolled children may take pictures or audio/video recordings during regular classroom sessions, events, field trips, and any other school related activities. The pictures and audio/video may be used for various types of school advertising such as in newspaper articles, school newsletters, yearbook, school websites, school social media and other media outlets. Parents not wishing to have their child photographed or recorded should notify GSA in writing. This notice will be kept in the student's file while he/she is attending GSA.

## Appointments for Visits

Parents are welcomed to visit the school for any of the following events:

- Volunteer
- Attend school competitions
- Read to your child's class
- Parent-Teacher Conferences

You are requested to:

- Schedule all such visits by appointment through the office
- Report to the office to check in
- You are requested to call and schedule an appointment to meet with teachers during their planning time.
- Avoid engaging the teachers in conversation during the drop-off and pick-up times. The teachers need to give their full attention to the students.

## Parties

There will be no classroom parties unless approved one week in advance by the principal or director. Only Halal food or drinks are to be served. **ABSOLUTELY NO BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

## Parent Involvement/Volunteering

Each family is required to perform 20 hours of service in the school or for school activities.

A hadith of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "Every Muslim is obliged to do an act of charity



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every day.” Families who are unable to fulfill all or part of their 20 hours of volunteer service will be charged \$20 for every hour of service that was not met. This fee will be added to the FACTS account and will become part of the parent’s financial responsibility to GSA. Listed below are just some of the events in which parents can attend or volunteer for:

- Open House
- Orientation Day
- Academic Awards Programs
- In school competitions
- Parent Seminars
- Chaperoning Field Trips (Parents who will be chaperoning field trips will need to provide their own transportation to and from the destination. Parents are not permitted to ride the school bus. This is for the protection of all students).
- Assisting in classrooms
- Reading books to students
- Participating in PTO meetings and fundraisers

## **Fundraising**

The operation of a school requires a great deal of financial resources. Parents are encouraged to participate in all fundraising activities and are requested to actively involve relatives, friends and other community members in these pursuits.

May Allah (SWT) accept our efforts and include us among those parents who have fulfilled their obligations towards their children’s education. Ameen!

## **Parent/Adult Involvement - Levels**

In addition to the above, parents can be involved in a variety of different levels at the school.

Here are three areas and the kinds of activities that you can participate in at each level:

### **Student Level:**

- Assist students with learning
- Reward students’ achievements



- Listen to students' feelings and concerns
- Follow through on recommended actions by the teacher

#### **Classroom Level:**

- Participate in PTO conferences
- Assist with planned programs and activities
- Volunteer for special occasions
- Volunteer to contribute personal skills
- Provide support for efforts of teachers
- Volunteer for lunchroom, playground, or recess activities

#### **School Level:**

- Participate in PTO activities
- Serve on task force of school committees
- Serve as a resource person
- Provide questions to enhance learning
- React positively to school policies
- Assist in solving school-wide problems
- Encourage support for the school, its programs, and activities
- Publicize the good name of the school
- Assist in fundraising activities

### **Graduation**

GSA celebrates the achievement of its students during its annual graduation exercise. There are two graduation ceremonies held in the last week of the academic year.

- Pre K and KG
- 5th grade

Achievement awards are handed out during those events.



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## Grievance Policy

The grievance policy is designed to provide a means to ensure that conflicts will be resolved amicably, justly and quickly at the lowest possible level of administration. Parents who have a complaint should make a sincere attempt to resolve it by contacting and requesting a meeting with the concerned parties. In the meantime, the school staff member who receives the complaint should strive to resolve concerns and complaints whenever possible. The complaint should be received and addressed at the level closest to which the complaint originated. While informal resolutions are encouraged, the more formal process outlined below may be used for complaints for which an informal process was not satisfactory.

If a parent has a grievance or an issue that needs to be addressed, the following protocol is to be followed in the sequence given below. If there is no satisfaction at the first level, then it is the parent's right to take it to the next level.

**Step 1:** Call the office or e-mail the teacher directly involved in the issue to make an appointment to speak with the teacher. The teacher and/or the parent/guardian may request that the appropriate Division Head be present.

**Step 2:** If the parent does not feel the issue has been resolved, the parent may then inform the teacher and make an appointment through the office to meet with the appropriate Division Head.



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The Division Head and/or the parent/guardian may request that the Guidance Counselor be present. The principal or her/his designee may be present if requested by one of the parties.

**Step 3:** If the parent still feels the issue has not been resolved, the parent may inform the Division Head and make an appointment through the office to meet with the principal. The principal and/or the parent/guardian may request that a member or members of the Board of Education be present. The principal is entrusted with handling all the school issues and delegated by the Board of Education with the authority to have the final decision for any grievances.

**Step 4:** After meeting with the principal, if the parent feels that the issue is still not resolved, the parent must inform the principal about his/her concern in writing within 10 school days. Thereafter,

- A. The principal will present the parent's written complaint to the Board of Education within 10 school days from the time of receiving the written complaint.
- B. The Board of Education will discuss the concern and work with the principal to try to find a way to resolve the issue. The principal and/or the parent/guardian may request that the parent/guardian be present during the initial discussion.
- C. The final decision remains with the principal. The principal will give the parent a written reply within 10 school days after presenting the complaint to the Board of Education. The Board of Education will also be given a copy of the reply.

Please note that if at any point during this process you do not receive an acknowledgement of your written communication within the time frame indicated, you should call the Main Office and request that an office staff member follows up to make sure that your communication has been received.

Parents may start the process at Step 2 or Step 3 if the issue to be addressed is something that a teacher is not directly involved with and has no control over, such as general school rules or policies.

### **Unresolved Grievances**

It is understood that within any family, disagreements may occur from time to time. In the school context, it is also understood that part of the principal's professional responsibility is to attempt



to resolve grievances as they occur. On rare occasions, an issue may not be resolved to the satisfaction of the parents whereby they may seek further action beyond the principal. In this case, the parent may ask the principal to submit the parent's written complaint (Step Four above) to the Chairman of the Board of Education. Thereafter,

1. The principal will present the parent's written complaint to the Chairman of the Board of Education within 10 school days from the time of receiving the parent's request.
2. The Chairman of the Board of Education may choose to discuss the concern with the principal directly, or may assign a sub-committee of two or three Board members to discuss the issue with the principal. The Chairman of the Board of Education or Board Subcommittee will work with the principal to try to find a way to resolve the issue. The principal and/or the parent/guardian may request that the parent/guardian be present during the initial discussion.
3. The final decision remains with the principal. The principal will give the parent a written reply within 10 school days after presenting the complaint to the Chairman of the Board of Education. The Chairman of the Board of Education and the Board Subcommittee (if applicable) will also be given a copy of the reply.

Please note that Garden of the Sahaba Academy seeks to ensure students' personal information is properly safeguarded and is used only for legitimate purposes and only when absolutely necessary. Therefore, school personnel, including the principal, may not be able to share all the details of any circumstance or situation.

**\*\*Important! Please Note!**

Under no circumstances should a parent call or text a staff member on his/her home phone or cell phone. Staff members may be contacted through the school office or via school email. (See School Contact Information page at the beginning of this handbook.) Also, under no circumstances should a parent contact another parent or confront another student regarding any school related incident. School related incidents where your child and another student are



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involved should be handled through the teacher, the appropriate Division Head, or principal as outlined above.

Any parent who fails to follow these procedures will jeopardize his/her child's/children's enrollment at the Garden of Sahaba Academy.

## Parent Acknowledgment

Please be advised that the policies in this handbook are subject to change without prior notice, in the interest of ensuring that the service GSA provides meets the ever changing needs of our students.

Please sign and return this page to the administration.

I/We acknowledge receipt of an e-copy of the GSA Student-Parent Handbook and agree to abide by the policies/guidelines outlined in the Student/Parent Handbook.

Student Name/s \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



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