



Al Ain American School Reopening Policies and Guidelines

Al-Ain American School's framework for the reopening of school is based ensuring the safest possible environment – but one that is also mindful of the fact that our school have a mission to educate and to support everyone involved in this mission holistically.

Considering the precautionary measures taken by the UAE government, under the ADEK policies, and social distancing guidelines, we are happy to announce that the school will reopen for all the students on 30th August 2020. The points below are taken into consideration in preparing the resumption of operations for the academic year 2020-2021.

AAAS has established a COVID-19 Taskforce composed of the Response Team as well as relevant departments within the school (student affairs, academic affairs, community outreach, etc.).

The school's COVID-19 Taskforce will ensure the following is completed prior to reopening and the school hours (detailed requirements are available in the relevant sections below):

- Conduct a general Risk Assessments
- Cleaning and Disinfection of the premises
- Map circulation routes
- Placement of signs, demarcations, off-limit areas
- Installation of safety equipment and ensuring stockage of materials
- Preparations of all spaces according to the protocol required for the intended activity to be held

- Verify that all staff have undergone COVID-19 Testing

We understand that starting the new school year might make your children feel nervous or reluctant to return to school.

HERE ARE A FEW TIPS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILDREN DURING THIS PHASE:

- Speak to your children about COVID-19 and let them know that it's natural to feel anxious or nervous about returning back to school.
- Have an open conversation about their anxieties and fears about returning to school and reassure them about safety measures and precautions the schools will have in place to keep everyone healthy.
- Be honest about the changes that they will see at school, such as the need to wear masks, inability to be close to their friends and teachers.
- Explain to your children that they will play an important role in keeping themselves and their community healthy by wearing a mask, maintaining social distancing, and sanitizing hands.
- Continuously check in with your children to evaluate their well-being when school begins.

Important Note

- Please ensure that you are present in the UAE, at least 14 days prior to your children's school reopening date to comply with any health and travel requirements set by the government.
- Schools will provide distance learning for students who have a medical reason for not being physically present on campus. If your child has a high-risk health condition, he/she may continue distance learning by submitting a medical certificate to the school. Contact your school for details.
- We may request you to provide a medical clearance if your child is absent for a prolonged period.

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Al Ain American School will resume partial school operations where students will return to school at a lower capacity using a blended learning approach (face-to-face and distance learning).

Partial Return Model

“Half-Day Model” will be implement. It is a Partial return model where all eligible students are grouped into 2 half-day shifts (attend either morning or afternoon), which includes reduced contact hours, but most regular Face to Face (FTF) learning, logistic demands will be taken into consideration example 2 daily bus and cleaning shifts.

Shifts	Grade Level	Face to Face Timings	Distance Learning Timings
Morning Shifts	KG1 and 2 - Grade 4	8:00 am -11:00 am	4:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Afternoon Shifts	Grade 5 – Grade 9	12:45 pm – 4:00 pm	9:00 am – 11:00 am

There will be NO Distance Learning Program for Kindergarten students.

Students Grouping

Based on Al Ain American School's own context and staffing model, the school will consider grouping teachers and students in the form of “BUBBLES”.

- “BUBBLES” refer to group of students that spend the entire school day together, and do not interact with other students during this period. This strategy is particularly useful for reducing the risk of cross transmission of the virus between young students who have difficultly practicing social distancing especially for the lower grades.
- “BUBBLES” are not possible for older students as subject teachers will be rotating between classes.

Attendance

Attendance is compulsory during all modes of learning (face to face FTF. or distance learning). A student will be marked absent if they fail to attend the class for the day.

An absence is only authorized for the following reasons, confirmed by a signed letter from Parents/Guardians or by the way of official documents to attest for the full duration of the absence:

- Illness
- Death of the first- or second-degree family member
- Scheduled doctor appointments
- Official community task
- Mandatory appearance before an official body
- Essential urgent family travel or matters such as medicals treatment or the death of a family member.

Tuition Fee

- Full tuition fee will apply to students, regardless of the mode of attendance and reopening model followed by the school. *(Refer to the approved fee letter attached)*

Bus Fee

- On withdrawal of your child from the school transportation, the school will not guarantee the availability of transportation for the remaining period of the academic year.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE ARRANGEMENTS

- Schools will carry out a general cleaning and disinfection for three times during the school-working hours.
- School will provide hand washing or hand sanitizing stations in key locations around the school premises and on the school bus.

- All classrooms will have sanitizing wipes, hand sanitizer and covered bins to maintain proper hygiene.
- High-contact surfaces such as light switches, handrails, doorknobs, toilet seats etc. will be cleaned and disinfected **every hour**.
- Toilets will be cleaned and disinfected **after every time used**.
- Registered School Nurse will be present on the school premises during the school-working hours who will record any student who experience a sudden onset of COVID-19 symptom and isolate the student in the isolation room until the Parent/Guardian arrives.

INDIVIDUAL HEALTH & SAFETY

- It is MANDATORY for every child has to undergo a COVID-19 PCR test before returning to school and share the report with the school.
- Your child will have to wear a mask if they are older than 6 years (**KG1 and KG2 students do not have to wear a mask. Students from Grade 1 and above must wear a mask as directed**):
- If your child is unable to wear a mask, they may be allowed to wear a face shield if supported by a medical certificate
- Gloves are not recommended as they are less effective than hand washing in controlling the spread of COVID-19. However, they may be worn.
- It is mandated to inform you in case your child may have been exposed to a patient of COVID-19 while at school.
- AAAS strongly advise the parents to check their children's temperatures and screen for symptoms before leaving the house. Children who exhibit symptoms or who are feeling generally unwell are encouraged to stay home.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Students will be expected to stay 1.5m apart at all times.
- Younger children who find it difficult to maintain social distancing in KG and early primary grades may be grouped into "bubbles of up to 10-14 individuals".

ENTERING AND EXITING THE SCHOOL

- **NO** students will be allowed in the school premises before 7:30 am.
- Non-contact temperature screening will take place before entering the school.

AAAS has a set of criteria for authorized entry into the school premises, with the objective of limiting entry to essential persons only. Authorized persons must meet the health requirements for entry and follow the relevant entry/exit protocol. Authorized persons include:

- Enrolled Students
- School staff

Unauthorized persons are prohibited from entering the school premises, they must be identified and informed by the school accordingly. Unauthorized persons include:

- Parents/guardians
- Unenrolled siblings of students

Parents will **not** be allowed on the school premises, unless they are supporting a Student of Determination with a valid result of COVID-19, following proper social distancing and escorting them to the class. Only **one** parent/guardian can accompany children outside the entrance to the school. If you accompany your child as they stand in the queue, you **must** wear a mask.

AAAS has 4 access points/gates which will be designated as either an entry or an exit point. In order to avoid large queues and crowding the school has opted for staggered entry and exit points.

Access Point/Gate	Authorized Persons Entry
Gate 1 (Main Gate)	Staff only
Gate 2	Students of -Grade 1, Grade 4, Grade 5 (Girls), Grade 6 (Girls), Grade 7 (Girls), Grade 8 (Girls) and Grade 9 (Girls)
Gate 3	Students of -KG2, Grade 2, Grade 3, Grade 5 (Boys), Grade 6 (Boys), Grade 7 (Boys), Grade 8 (Boys) and Grade 9 (Boys)
Gate 4	Students of - KG1

Parents will be allowed to remain in the designated waiting area to pick up your child for a maximum of 10 minutes. During this period, you will be required to maintain a 1.5m distance from other people.

TRANSPORT SAFETY MEASURES

We understand that the journey to and from school can be very stressful for you and your child, especially in the current situation. Our priority will be to keep our child as safe as possible by adhering strictly to the guidelines by ADEK.

- Buses will operate at 50% of their capacity, and children will be required to maintain a distance while on the bus.
- Children will be assigned seats on the bus for the entire semester.
- No food and drinks will not be allowed on the bus.
- Temperature checks will happen before boarding the bus, and children with elevated body temperature or any symptoms such as the runny nose, cough, or rash will not be allowed on the bus.
- Buses will be cleaned and sanitized before and after picking up and dropping off of the student.

We encourage you to transport your children to and from school in order to ease the pressure on the school transport system.

IF YOUR CHILD BECOMES SICK AT SCHOOL

- They will immediately be moved to the Isolation Room, where they will be monitored by a School Nurse.
- Parent/Guardian will be contacted immediately to retrieve your child from the school.
- The school shall not administer any medicines to your child.
- The school will inform you about the nearest hospital and COVID-19 testing center.
- If your child tests positive for COVID-19, you are mandated to inform the school so that they can take measures to secure the health of other students and staff who may have been exposed to the virus.
- Information about your child will **not be shared** with anyone other than the relevant government authorities.

OPTIMIZING SCHOOL FACILITIES AND SUPPLIES

- AAAS may convert non-teaching areas such as libraries, IT labs into classrooms.
- Classrooms will be configured to maintain a 1.5m distance between children, and children will be assigned fixed seats for the semester.
- Non-essential furniture will be stowed away.
- The school will minimize sharing of items such as toys and educational equipment.
- Parents must provide all the required stationary (labelled) for their child, to be used in the school.

School Uniform and Bags

- To purchase the school uniforms and school bags kindly visit the website <https://zaksstore.com/shop/aaas/en/>
- Regarding the school bag, make sure that your child's bag will meet the criteria mentioned by the ADEK and the school policy for bags. *(Refer to the bag policy attached)*

Recreation, Lunch and Break Times

- Students will receive regular breaks during the day. However, these breaks will likely be very different from what they experienced in the pre-COVID times: students will have to maintain a 1.5m distance between themselves and their friends.
- For the initial period after reopening, playground equipment like swings and slides will be off-limits to reduce chances of cross-contamination.
- No Canteens will be operating, so we strongly encourage you to provide your child with enough healthy packed lunch.
- Please send enough drinking water as no water cooler will be available at school
- Children will be allowed to take off their masks to have lunch under supervision.

Sports and Cultural Activities

- Physical education at school is suspended until further notice. Virtual activities may be provided.
- AAAS has reduced the number of cultural activities that they offer, such as music, art and performing arts classes.

ONGOING COMMUNICATION

- AAAS will stay in close contact with you after reopening. This may mean weekly newsletters, text-message updates or emails.

We trust that the information we have provided you in this document supports your understanding on how we collectively planned to prepare for the school's reopening. We request you to support and follow the above mentioned for the safety of your child and our staff.