**AKF ACADEMY PARENT 2025-2026**

**HANDBOOK**

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**PURPOSE**

The AKF Academy is a private K-5 institution dedicated to educating students with learning differences, and other specific diagnoses. Our mission is to provide a safe and secure learning environment that helps each child enhance their potential. We achieve this through academic remediation, social skills improvement, and building self-esteem. Our dedicated staff collaborates to create a supportive atmosphere using structured materials.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

At AKF Academy, we strive to provide an appropriate education for students with disabilities. Our goal is to maximize each student’s potential academically and personally while fostering independence. We believe in instilling confidence and competence in our students. The Special Services Department, including special education teachers, child study team members, related services providers, and teacher assistants, works in partnership with administration and parents. We value parental insights and aspirations as we plan educational programs tailored to each child’s needs.

**SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. **Quality Staff:** We maintain quality trained teachers and staff.
2. **Student-Staff Ratio:** Our student-staff ratio does not exceed 6:1.
3. **Effective Methods:** We use proven teaching methods geared toward helping students with learning differences.
4. **Regular Communication:** Parents receive regular updates on student progress through emails, reports, and conferences.
5. **Structured Environment:** Our school provides a structured environment conducive to learning.
6. **Safety and Positivity:** We foster a safe and positive school climate.
7. **Emotional Support:** We value emotional support for all individuals.
8. **Non-Discrimination:** Admissions, employment, facility use, and financial aid are non-discriminatory based on sex, race, color, religion, or national origin.
9. **Compliance:** We comply with mandates.

**OUR APPROACH**

At AKF Academy, we remove obstacles to learning. By teaching academic and functional skills through research-based strategies, we empower students to persevere. Our low teacher-student ratios allow for individualized, customized instruction. Each student’s program is carefully planned based on assessments, parent feedback, and teacher/therapist input. Adjustments are made as students progress, ensuring targeted learning outcomes.

**PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Ensure student(s) arrive at school on time.
2. Follows the dress code.
3. Read weekly newsletters, provide school necessities, review progress reports, and (if available) check the school's online student information and gradebook system regularly.
4. Abide by school rules and policies.
5. Collaborate with the Administration and Faculty.
6. Pay all tuition and fees on time.
7. Be On Time for drop-off and pick-up.
8. Attend scheduled conferences and school-related meetings.
9. Assist with volunteer support when possible.
10. . Calmly conduct themselves when on our school campus and when speaking to faculty and staff.

**OUR CORE VALUES:**

* We believe that education and learning are key to success and independence.
* We believe that a safe environment, both physically and emotionally, is imperative.
* We believe in faith; we welcome families of all faiths to the AKF Academy family
* We believe that good character is our highest aspiration.
* We believe that establishing a community of respect and support among students, staff, and parents is essential.
* We believe that hard work and self-discipline are crucial to building independence.
* We believe that a caring faculty who continually strives to grow in their craft is crucial for student success.
* We believe that students with learning differences should be challenged to reach their highest potential in academics, athletics, and the arts.
* We believe that students should accept responsibility and demonstrate accountability for their work and actions

**POLICIES**

**Attendance**

The students who benefit the most from the educational experience offered by AKF Academy are those who attend regularly. Therefore, the school discourages absences except in cases of emergencies or illness. AKF Academy also discourages scheduling trips that interfere with school days. Please check the school schedule and calendar carefully to avoid such conflicts

**Tardiness**

* Homeroom begins at 9:15 A.M., and all students are expected to be at school by that time.
* Students may arrive as early as 9:00 A.M.
* Tardiness not only causes a loss of school time for students but also disrupts the entire class.
* Parents MUST sign in students who arrive after 9:30 A.M.
* If the student has an appointment during school hours, an excused note from the facility and/or doctor should be emailed to the school or given by the parent or student to the front office.
* After 5 tardies, a parent meeting will be scheduled to address the issue and find solutions that support the student's success.

**Absences**

* When a student is going to be absent, a parent or guardian should notify the school's front office beforehand.
* If the absence is not prearranged, the parent/guardian should contact the front office by 8:00 A.M. on the day of the student’s absence.
* Upon the student’s return, the parent or guardian should email/send a written note or doctor’s note for the student to present to the office.
* Students are considered present if they attend at least 4 hours.
* Excessive absences may result in administrative evaluation.
* *NOTE: Cases due to COVID-19 will be handled individually. Students are STRONGLY encouraged to stay home if showing any symptoms of illness.*

**Dress Code**

Students are expected to dress in our school uniform throughout the entire school day. The uniforms with the school logo can be purchased from the school administration

* Uniforms must always be clean, well-fitting, and in good condition.
* Only shirts with the official school logos are acceptable.
* Black or white socks or tights/leggings with socks are to be worn at all times.
* Sandals or open-toed shoes are NOT permitted.
* Hats or caps are NOT permitted in the building/class.
* Shirts must be tucked in while in the building.

**Hair Policy**

* Hair must be kept clean and out of the face.

**Dress Code Violations**

* Consequences for dress code violations within every 9 weeks:
  + 1st offense: Discuss with parent and review the dress code in the handbook.
  + 2nd offense: Notify parent(s).
  + 3rd offense: Meeting with parent (s)

**Conduct**

* + We believe that self-discipline and organizational skills are essential components of education.
  + The discipline system of AKF Academy is designed to provide a learning environment free from disruptive or distracting behaviors.
  + Our Discipline Committee, comprised of administrators and faculty members, addresses persistent discipline concerns and matters not covered under the classroom discipline system.
  + Major behavioral infractions may result in suspension, expulsion, or refusal for re-enrollment.

**Classroom Behavior and Cooperation**

* + Cooperation with school staff is expected and required.
  + Students must show respect to other students and teachers.
  + Teachers will assign levels using the discipline system.
  + If misbehavior persists, a conference with parents, students, and teachers/administrators will be scheduled.

**Damage to School Property**

* + Students are required to report any loss, accident, or damage to school property.
  + Writing on, scratching, or disfiguring desks, tables, or walls is strictly forbidden.
  + Repair or replacement costs will be charged to the student account for careless or improper conduct.

**Forbidden Articles**

* + Students, parents, and visitors forbidden articles include any type of alcohol, knives, guns, toy guns (including paintball guns, airsoft guns, or cap guns), or any type of weapon.
  + Students may not bring scissors, blades, fireworks, or stink bombs to school.
  + Confiscated articles will result in disciplinary action, suspension, or expulsion.

**Items Not Allowed at School**

* + Students are not allowed to bring gum, candy, handheld electronic games, or toys to school.
  + Approved fidget devices and clear water bottles are permitted.
  + Other drinks (e.g., coffee-type drinks) are not allowed in class.

**Cell Phones**

* + Lower School students may not bring cell phones or devices with internet access (e.g., 3G, Wi-Fi, smartwatches) on school grounds.
  + First offenses result in confiscation and return to parents or guardians.
  + Additional offenses will be referred to the Discipline Committee.
  + Music or electronic devices are not allowed during school or after-school activities.

**Drug Policy**

* + Possession, selling, or use of drugs, alcohol, or controlled substances is against the law.
  + AKF Academy does not tolerate violations on campus or during school functions or trips.
  + **Parents should not be under the influence or smell of any drugs or alcohol when present on the AKFA campus.**

**Harassment**

* + AKF Academy provides an environment free of discrimination or harassment.
  + Demeaning or insulting actions, words, jokes, or comments based on sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, appearance, or abilities are strictly prohibited.
  + Sexual harassment includes unwanted questions, lewd comments, jokes, unwanted touching, or suggestive notes.
  + Violators will face strong disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion.

**Bullying and Threatening Statements or Acts**

* + The safety and well-being of the school community are paramount at AKF Academy.
  + Students are expected to respect their classmates and teachers.
  + Any threatening actions or statements toward anyone in the school community will not be tolerated.
  + This policy extends to electronic means (phone, texts, emails, instant messaging, social media) both on and off campus.
  + Students engaging in such behavior, even if perceived as “joking,” will face disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion.

**Honor System**

* + Honor is integral to AKF Academy’s commitment to developing character and intellect.
  + Honesty in both words and actions is expected from all students.
  + The honor system is fundamental to the holistic development of each student.
  + Failure to adhere to the honor system will result in disciplinary actions determined by the administration.

**Cheating**

* + Unauthorized possession or use of materials during testing constitutes cheating.
  + Sharing answers verbally or in writing for assignments (homework, quizzes, tests, exams, etc.) is also considered cheating.
  + Both the giver and receiver are equally culpable.

**Lying**

* + Lying includes conscious falsehoods (verbal or written) and purposeful withholding of information or deception.

**Stealing**

* + Taking another person’s property without permission or intent to return it is considered stealing.
  + This applies to student and teacher possessions or school supplies.

**Lunch Area**

* + Students bring their lunches.
  + Refrigeration for lunches is NOT available.
  + Limited microwaving is provided for heating lunches.
  + Students/parents forgetting lunches will receive a phone call to bring or order their student a lunch.
  + Please label lunch boxes and bags visibly.
  + Good manners and courtesy are expected in the lunch area.
  + AVOID sending items with peanut products; notify the homeroom teacher or front office if necessary.

**Communication**

* + Parents can arrange conferences with teachers in person, by phone, Zoom, e-mail, or through the Head of School or Principal.
  + Teachers will respond to e-mails and phone calls outside of instructional time during planning periods or before school.
  + Parents should avoid dropping by teachers’ classrooms unannounced.
  + Students and parents are expected to be courteous, appropriate, and respectful in all communication with the school.
  + Faculty members do not engage in social networking websites with currently enrolled students or their parents.

**Challenged Materials**

* + Parents questioning instructional materials should contact their student’s teacher, who may refer the matter to an administrator.

**Homework**

* + Homework assignments are tailored to students’ performance levels for independent work.
  + Parents should provide a suitable space and atmosphere for homework completion.
  + Parents should not complete a student’s homework in their own handwriting.
  + Students are responsible for all assignments.

**Policy on Make-Up Work & Retakes**

* + If a student is absent for more than 2 days, make-up work will be given upon return.
  + On the 3rd day of absence, schoolwork can be sent home at the parent’s request.
  + Missed tests/quizzes should be made up within a week of the absence.

**Reporting Periods**

* + The school year consists of 2 semesters: Terms 1 and 2 (first semester) and Terms 3 and 4 (second semester).
  + Progress report folders will be sent every term (9 weeks).
  + Parents should sign the enclosed card and promptly return the folder to the child’s homeroom teacher.
* Report cards will be sent to homes via email or distributed to parents during the parent-teacher conference at the end of each semester.

**Financial Responsibility**

* + Tuition and incidental charges are billed monthly.
  + Tuition charges follow the established payment plan during enrollment.
  + Incidental charges for the previous month are billed on the 3rd of the month, with payment due on the 15th.
  + A $30 late fee applies to overdue payments.
  + Returned checks incur a $25 fee.
  + Accounts 30 days overdue may restrict class attendance, lunch orders, After-School Care, and extra-curricular activities.
  + Only students with zero balance accounts receive records and re-enrollment eligibility.

**Re-Enrollment**

* + Students with appropriate conduct, continued academic progress, and good financial standing are offered yearly re-enrollment.

**School Dismissal**

* + School dismisses regularly at 3:00 P.M.

**Carpooling**

* + The AKF Academy assumes **NO** responsibility for providing transportation.
  + Parents are encouraged to arrange carpools independently.
  + Parents must give written or verbal permission for their child to ride with anyone other than a parent/guardian.
  + Policies of Transportation Network Companies (such as UBER and Lyft) prohibit unaccompanied individuals under the age of 18 from using their services.
  + We will adhere to their policies.

**Curriculum**

* + We draw from various curriculum sources, including the Georgia Core Knowledge, national, and state education standards.
  + Our curriculum encompasses literature, language, and mathematics.

**Aggressive Parent**

Our School aims to establish and maintain positive and open relationships with all parents of enrolled children. However, we understand that on occasion, there may be times when a parent arrives at our school displaying aggressive, difficult, or challenging behavior. Our school is committed to maintaining a safe workplace for all staff and visitors and ensuring staff have the skills to safely prevent and de-escalate aggressive behaviors. Workplace violence can be any incident where a person is abused, threatened, or assaulted while engaged in work.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Parents have the right to make a complaint or report a concern to our school at any time. Complaints may be real or perceived, and of a serious nature or more trivial nature (but important to them), such as not being able to quickly find their child’s shoes at the end of the day. However, on occasion, a parent’s feelings may escalate into anger or aggression, not necessarily due to the concern at hand, but due to other events or situations they have had to deal with that day, or due to the effect of drugs, alcohol, or mental health.

**WHAT IS ‘AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR’ OR ‘WORKPLACE VIOLENCE’?**

Within this policy, aggressive behavior or workplace violence could include, but is not limited to:

* **verbal abuse and threats**
* intimidation and insults
* angry and hostile behavior
* shouting and swearing
* stamping feet
* physical violence
* threatening behaviors

  These behaviors could be caused by:

* frustration
* intoxication
* substance misuse or abuse
* psychological imbalances or disturbances

**NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/EDUCATORS/STAFF**

Should a situation arise where AKF staff member(s) is confronted by an aggressive or violent parent, they will:

* implement strategies to de-escalate aggressive behaviors
* advise the parent that the Nominated Supervisor/appropriate person will come and speak to them
* offer and encourage the parent to move into a private space (front office) away from children and other families (This may even be outside if the children are inside).
* if the parent(s) ignore or refuse the invitation, the parent will be then asked to leave and return when he/she can speak calmly in a location away from students.
* if this is not agreed upon, thensomeone on the staff will call **911 for police assistance.**
* if the parent/guardian agrees upon moving into a private space, at **ANY TIME** the staff member is feeling threatened or in danger, she/he will leave the area and call **911 for police assistance.**

**Handbook Disclaimer**

* + This handbook is not intended to be a complete and detailed account of all school policies.
  + It serves as a general guide for parents of children in AKF Academy.
  + The administration reserves the right to formulate or change rules as deemed necessary.