

Welcome to the Franconian International School



FIS Handbook 2024-2025

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General Information

Our Mission

To foster international-mindedness through a challenging curriculum in a caring and cooperative environment, inspiring students to become well-rounded citizens committed to the service of humanity.

Our Vision

A community exemplifying progressive pedagogy, innovative technology and service learning. Our students will exhibit integrity and the desire to make a positive impact in the world.

International Mindedness

All members of the FIS community are open, respectful and accepting. We seek to learn about others, recognizing both our differences and similarities, to create a better world.

High Quality Learning

Learning at the FIS:

- Is encouraged within authentic contexts
- Is constructivist, and inquiry-based
- Develops and thrives through creativity
- Fosters critical thinking

The FIS Values

Caring	We prioritize the well-being of everyone.
Curiosity	We grow through exploring the unknown.
Respect	We respect each other and our surroundings.
Integrity	We respect each other and our surroundings.
Belonging	We are a welcoming and inclusive community.

Contact Details

Franconian International School e.V.
 Marie-Curie-Straße 2
 91052 Erlangen, GERMANY
 Phone: +49 9131 94039 0
 Email: info@the-fis.de

Welcome from the Interim Head of School

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the FIS! It is with great joy and enthusiasm that I extend a warm welcome to each of you. As the Interim Head of School, I am honored to have your family join our community.





The journey of education is one we embark on together, and your child's success and happiness are at the heart of everything we do. To help you navigate this journey, we are pleased to present our FIS Handbook. This guide is designed to acquaint you with our school's values, administrative guidelines, and organizational processes, ensuring a smooth and enriching experience for you and your child. Our goal is to create a partnership with you that supports your child's growth, learning, and well-being. Please take some time to read through the handbook, and do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns. We are here to support you every step of the way.

Warm regards,

Petra Niemczyk
Interim Head of School






Who is Who

Senior Leadership Team


	<p>Petra Niemczyk Interim Head of School petra.niemczyk@the-fis.de</p>		<p>Dan Slevin Head of Primary School dan.slevin@the-fis.de</p>
	<p>Jessica Davey Head of Secondary School jessica.davey@the-fis.de</p>		<p>Dr. Christian Hoffmann Head of Curriculum christian.hoffmann@the-fis.de</p>

	<p>Dr. Manja Leib Head of Educational Administration manja.leib@the-fis.de</p>		<p>Thomas Heinrich Head of Business Administration thomas.heinrich@the-fis.de</p>
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Deputy Heads:

	<p>Clare Owens Deputy Head of Primary School clare.owens@the-fis.de</p>		<p>Ryan Dunn Deputy Head of Secondary School ryan.dunn@the-fis.de</p>
	<p>Sarah Kloha Deputy Head of Curriculum PYP sarah.kloha@the-fis.de</p>		<p>Matt Chambers Deputy Head of Curriculum MYP matt.chambers@the-fis.de</p>
	<p>James Sangster Deputy Head of Curriculum IB DP james.sangster@the-fis.de</p>		

Head of Learning Support

	<p>Viviana Gyori viviana.gyori@the-fis.de</p>
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Head of EAL



Head of Safeguarding and Student Wellbeing



FIS Guide

FIS 1 Front Office Opening Hours

The FIS 1 Front offices are open from 8:00 until 17:00 daily, Monday to Thursday, and 8:00 until 16:00 on Fridays.

School Opening Hours

The school opening hours are 8:20 to 16:00. The official entry is through the main building's front entrance for all visitors unless an appointment has been arranged in FIS 2. Access to the campus and the buildings may be limited at any time for community members and/or visitors as required by FIS health and security protocols.

Students are not allowed in the school corridors before 8:20. At the end of the school day the school provides no supervision unless the students are enrolled in an official after-school activity.

- Primary School students who are not involved in a supervised activity will not be allowed to remain on campus after 15:45 unless supervised by a parent or designated adult.
- Secondary School students who are not involved in an activity should leave the campus by 16:00.

- Students in Grades 9-12 may study in the FIS 2 Library after school until 16:30 under supervision from the Librarian.
- There is no supervision for students after 15:40 each day. The campus is closed to students at 17:00 each day, except for organized events, after school activities, CAS/Service Learning Groups, and sports fixtures. Students who remain on campus due to late starting activities are expected to wait in the Cafeteria or Aula. Unsupervised use of the gyms and outdoor play facilities and surfaces is not permitted.
- Parents should ensure their child leaves school or is collected at 15:40, or when the approved after school activity finishes.
- At the FIS 2 building, doors are locked at 16:15 daily. If students or parents need access to the FIS 2 building after that time, kindly request assistance from the Front Office team in FIS 1.

Access to the hallways, classrooms, libraries, playgrounds, sports fields, or gyms is limited to students and FIS employees during school hours.

Appointments are necessary for parents and other visitors to access the school during the school day. Upon entry into the school, a FIS visitor pass will be issued at reception and the relevant staff member will be informed of the arrival.

Students follow a two-week (10 day) timetable. Weeks are labeled Week A and Week B, and alternate throughout the year. The rotation is published on the [school website](#) and announced to students.

School Closure

Unexpected school closure will be communicated at the earliest opportunity via the school website, e-mail and/or social media.

Structure of the School Day

Primary School

Early Years

Dismissal Monday – Thursday at 15:25

Dismissal on Friday at 13:50

Children from EY, who are using the school bus service are escorted by a staff member from their homerooms to their buses.

Grades 1 to 5

Monday - Thursday

08:20	Doors open for students who need to change their home readers
08:23	Students who do not need to change their home readers can proceed directly to their homerooms
08:25	School day begins in the homeroom
15:35	Last lesson finishes
15:40	School day ends

Friday

The morning routine remains in place, the last lesson finishes at 14:00, the school day ends at 14:05.

All children from Grades 1 - 5 exit the school independently. Parents/carers collect their children from the front forecourt outside the main entrance.

Secondary School

Monday - Friday

08:20	Doors open for students
08:25	School day begins in the Advisory class
15:40	School day ends

Early Dismissal Days for all students (11:55)

The morning routine remains in place, the school day ends for all students at 11:55.

After School Activities Program (ASAP)

The Franconian International School offers EY5 to Grade 12 students a comprehensive range of activities to develop the whole child, including performing arts, language clubs, sports, craft clubs, art clubs and others. These activities, provided by external teachers or our staff, vary each season and year. A full list is published [on our website](#) before each season, with sign-up via the Parent Portal. Inquiries regarding ASAPs should be directed to info@the-fis.de.

Attendance

Morning Attendance

Students must be in their homerooms/advisory classes by 8:25 when attendance is taken. Late arrivals must report to reception from 8:30; punctuality is monitored regularly and the school reserves the right to follow up on repeated tardiness.

Lesson Attendance

Frequent or unnecessary absences of students from Grades 1 - 12 can negatively impact academic progress. As such, the school has a few important expectations related to student attendance:

- To every degree possible, we ask that parents arrange family trips during school vacation times. A copy of the school calendar is posted [on our website](#). For further information, refer to the 'Vacation' section below.
- In case of extraordinary events, such as religious commitments, or cultural celebrations, or special family events, parents should request permission from the Head of Primary or Secondary School. Students must inform their teachers in advance, but families should understand that missed classwork and learning cannot be fully made up with extra assignments.

Please be advised that German law requires that schools report to local authorities any prolonged or repeated unexcused absences of students enrolled in Grades 1 - 12. The authorities expect that the FIS will not excuse absences unless there are extenuating circumstances. Please be aware that the German authorities may issue fines to families as a result of noncompliance.

Absence Notification Procedure

Should a student be absent from school, parents are asked to register this absence through the [Parent Portal](#) before 8:30 on the day of the absence and, if their child rides the bus, please inform the bus company directly early in the morning. Should the FIS not have been notified of a child's absence, the school will follow up with parents. Please ensure the school has your up to date and accurate contact details.

Absences will be recorded either as excused or unexcused.

The school may require a medical certificate in case of illness (BaySchO § 20), in case of:

- illness of three or more school days
- absence on the day of a previously announced assessment
- in case of frequent short-term illness

Students Off-Campus (Grades 11 and 12):

All students must be present in school by 8:25 for the morning attendance register in their homeroom, *even when a student does not have a scheduled lesson in period 1*. It is important that students have regular daily contact with their advisors.

During study periods, Grade 11 and 12 students may use the time for independent study, group work,

reading, or relaxation, following the code of conduct for the DP study room and common room.

Students are expected to responsibly balance work and relaxation, and make good use of their unscheduled time. Most already manage their time well, considering their many outside commitments.

Students may leave campus during lunch or study periods (Grade 11 from January) with the signing in/out procedure. These privileges can be revoked if there are concerns about academic progress, punctuality, or behavior.

If students have no scheduled lesson at the end of the day, they may sign out after their last class (no earlier than 14:40).

Vacation

Student vacations should be limited to the FIS vacation schedule. Students who are taken out of school for an extended holiday will receive an unexcused absence for each school day they miss. Unexcused absences will be noted on the student report card. Parents should be aware that such practice is illegal according to German law. The school has the right to inform the local authorities. If students are likely to be absent from school for a longer period of time, parents should inform the school in writing (emails accepted).

It is the responsibility of the student to collect and complete any work missed from each subject teacher. Teachers are not expected to provide work prior to an unexcused absence.

The annual calendar, including field trips, events and other important dates, can be found on the [FIS website](#).

Legalities Concerning Absences of Students and Requesting an Excused Absence Outside of School Holidays for Grades 1-12

Frequent or unnecessary absences of students from Grades 1-12 can negatively impact academic progress. In Germany, education is compulsory and enshrined in law ("Schulpflicht"). All children have the right to and must attend school for a set period of time. To appreciate this, Bavarian school law and several rules are enforced through government and city offices, which include:

- The school is supposed to report every single day of "unexcused absences" to the relevant authorities (Ordnungsamt in Erlangen).
- After five days of unexcused absence in summary, the school is obliged to file charges with the relevant authorities.
- "Unexcused absence" from the school in the days preceding school holiday periods, and "unexcused absence" right after school holiday periods also needs to be reported (prolonging holidays/Ferienverlängerer).
- All written communication between the school and the affected student, and the legal guardians of the affected student, needs to be handed in as part of the file.
- The authorities may fine the family.

For students under 14 years of age, administrative offense proceedings need to be taken against the

legal guardians of the students.

Please take attendance seriously in order to support your children`s learning.

The process for dealing with requests for **additional absences outside of school holidays** is defined by the local school authorities (Schulamt). For truly exceptional cases such as deaths and marriages, or appointments in which you have no control over their scheduling such as embassy appointments, a maximum of two days of excused absence can be granted. If you need to apply for an excused absence and have an exceptional reason for your child to miss valuable learning time, please contact the section head (Head of Primary or Head of Secondary) specifying the maximum two days requested.

Bike Shed and Parking

Bike sheds are available at FIS 1 and FIS 2 for all students. Use of the bike shed is at own risk, and we recommend using a bicycle lock.

We have between 60 - 80 cars and more than 20 buses dropping students off and picking them up in about a twenty-minute period. It is a busy yet organized period, during which we need our community's commitment to obey the [general traffic and parking regulations](#) of the school.

Class Placement

Most grades have two or three classes, for example, 1A, 1B and 1C. Students are taught for some lessons in these advisory/homeroom groups, and some in groups they are placed into based on their subject choices, language level etc. In all cases, student groupings are decided based on a range of parameters designed to ensure balance in the classes, class dynamics, optimal student learning potential, fair distribution of resources and optimal student timetables.

Advisory/homeroom groupings are designed collaboratively over a period of many weeks in the preceding year with considerable care and attention by all teachers, counselors and school leaders using a range of knowledge and data. We always consider the best interests of each individual child as well as the grade level as a whole.

When groupings are announced, parents need to trust this process, as a single change will cause considerable knock-on effects, undoing the careful work of the end of the preceding year and detracting our time and resources from the successful and smooth start of a new school year.

Communication Channels

Parent Portal

The Parent Portal is a secure online platform that allows you to access important information about the school's policies and is used by parents to report absence from school in Primary and Secondary school.

Toddle

Toddle is an educational platform designed to support teaching and learning in Primary School. It includes features for collaboration and communication between teachers, students, and parents. For parents, Toddle acts as a portal where they can access information about their child's learning journey, view assignments, monitor progress, and communicate with teachers.

ManageBac

ManageBac provides a portal where parents with students in Secondary School can access their child's academic records, view assessment results and stay informed about upcoming assignments and school events. Regularly checking ManageBac is important for parents as it ensures they are up-to-date with their child's educational progress and can engage more effectively with teachers to support their child's learning.

FIS Newsletter and Newsblog

The school's primary means of communication outside of academics, is the weekly newsletter. It informs about activities and events in the following week. Please visit the website and subscribe to our [newsletter](#).

The [newsblog](#) collects highlights of learning at the FIS and is updated throughout the week. You can find it on our website.

FIS Social Media

The FIS also uses social media platforms to share selected aspects of daily school life.

Follow us on [Facebook](#) (The-FIS).

Follow us on [Instagram](#) (franconianinternational_school).

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) (Franconian-international-school)

FIScast - Podcast

For authentic, student-led content, listen to our school podcast "FIScast". Available on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#) and [Buzzsprout](#).

Fee Schedule

The FIS fee schedule is available [on our website](#).

Field Trips

Field trips extend learning beyond the classroom and are highly valued and enjoyed by students. A variety of class, grade level, and subject-specific trips occur yearly.

Upon admission, parents complete a form allowing their child to attend one-day (non-residential) trips, valid throughout their time at FIS. Additional permission is required for residential or extended day trips.

Costs for single-day and one-week residential trips are included in tuition up to a certain amount. For trips exceeding this amount or voluntary trips (e.g., MUN), the FIS will charge parents partially or fully.

Home School Partnership

Parents sign the Home School Partnership document as part of the registration process. For ease of reference of the contents thereof, a copy of the document is below:

All children need a positive and supportive partnership between home and school. The Home School Partnership must be seen as a real and active relationship, promoting the highest expectations between school, parents and students, and setting the standards for the future. The partnership is based on the following shared expectations:

Student and parent expectations of the school:	School expectations of parents and students:
A safe, well-ordered, caring environment in which learning can take place.	A safe, caring home environment which allows students to develop positive attitudes towards school.
The student is valued as an individual.	To support the school's behavior and homework policies.
Planned programs of teaching providing opportunities for pupils to achieve their potential.	A supportive attitude which compliments the work of the school and will allow the child to benefit from education.
Early warnings of problems concerning work, behavior or relationships.	Early contact with the school to discuss matters relating to student progress, behavior or happiness.
Information about academic and social progress.	Attending parent/teacher meetings to discuss student's progress and support them in attaining their own individual targets.
To be listened to and respected.	Positive support of the teachers' role.

Relative to this partnership, the school is obliged to inform parents that in Germany "children have a right to a non-violent upbringing. Corporal punishment, psychological injuries and other degrading measures are impermissible." (Article 1631, Paragraph 2, German Civil Code)

Parents will receive two copies of the home/school contract on admission to the school; one of which is signed and returned to the office by the first day of school.

The FIS follows the recommendations made by the International Task Force on Child Protection, and embraces the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

We, the parents and the school, have a shared commitment to:

Help our young people become happy, capable and confident, encouraging respect and care for other people and property. Provide mutual support for young people as they grow up in today's society.

We, as parents, read, understood and accept the FIS Handbook

_____	_____	_____
Date	Student Name	Grade
_____	_____	
Signature (Parent/Guardian)	Signature (Parent/Guardian)	

Key Policies

The most important FIS policies are accessible to parents via the [Parent Portal](#), or the [FIS website](#).

IB policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Assessment Policy
- FIS Academic Integrity Policy
- IB Complaints Procedure
- Inclusion Policy
- Language Policy

Additional FIS policies include:

- Bullying Prevention and Response Policy
- Conflict Resolution Procedure
- Field Trip Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Student Policy: Smoking, Vaping, Alcohol, Drugs and other Substances

Parents are expected to familiarize themselves with the contents of these policies. Opportunities to engage with the policies will be provided on an ongoing basis.

Lost & Found

Students are responsible for their belongings. They should not bring large amounts of money or valuables to school. Students' names should be recorded on all possessions brought to school. All unmarked, lost items will be placed in the lost and found area. Any money or jewelry that is found will be kept in the office. **The FIS cannot be held responsible for valuables that go missing.**

In Secondary School, students are assigned a locker that they are responsible for using to secure their iPads and laptops, as well as books and any other valuables, when they are not in use. Students are expected to provide their own padlocks.

Lunch at the FIS

Students may take part in the hot lunch program in the school cafeteria. The lunch subscription form, detailed information on the procedure to subscribe or cancel lunch, as well as the lunch menus are available [on our website](#). If preferred, students may bring lunch from home, please pack an adequate and nutritious lunch. Students will have an opportunity to have a mid-morning snack each day. For any queries, you can contact lunch@the-fis.de.

Our kiosk offers sandwiches, warm snacks, whole-grain items, and salads daily for purchase.

Each child will bring in his/her own snack and/or drink. We would like to encourage the consumption of healthy snacks, such as fruit, sandwiches or snack bars. Sweets/chocolate should only be included in snack boxes on special occasions and not on a daily basis. Lollipops should not be sent to school.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The [Parent Teacher Organization](#) is very active at the FIS. Parents work together planning projects and events and organizing fund-raising activities that benefit the entire school. PTO events are announced in the FIS Newsletter. You can stay in touch with the PTO via email pto@the-fis.de.

School Photographs

Professional photos of each child and their class are taken annually and are provided free of charge.

School Supplies

Full details of supplies that students require at school, including devices such as iPads and laptops, are available on the website in the [Primary](#) and [Secondary](#) sections [under the documents tab](#).

Sports and the German International Schools Sports Tournament (GISST)

The GISST Program offers opportunities for both international and local competitions for students from Grades 6 to 12. The FIS has been a member of the GISST (German International School Sports Tournament) since 2011, and competes with twelve other international schools located within Germany. Football, Volleyball, Badminton, Basketball, Swimming, Cross Country, Table Tennis and Track and Field are offered during the school year. More information is outlined [on our website](#).

There is also the [Junior GISST Club](#), which is a non-competitive sports program for students in

Grades 3 to 5.

Technology

The use of technology is integral to learning at the FIS. Further details of the use of technology for learning and FAQs are available on the school website <http://the-fis.de/e-learning/>

The minimum device guidelines are available in the stationery supply lists on our website.

Students are responsible for the appropriate use of computers and the school computer network.

The network is provided for students to conduct research and to communicate with others.

Independent access to the Internet is provided to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Access is a privilege, not a right. Access entails responsibility.

Individual users of the computer network are responsible for their behavior and communications over both the Intranet and the Internet.

Devices that are used in the FIS network must be up to date regarding operating system patches and must be virus-free.

The usage of VPNs or other software to mask users' identities or get around the FIS firewall and internet filters is forbidden.

School Network and cloud storage areas will be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and to ensure that the users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on the server or emails sent from the school are always private. In addition, users should assume that a network administrator will periodically check the history of the sites each user has visited.

More information is available in the FIS Device Guideline (currently in review and expected to be published in February 2025).

Transportation

The FIS encourages participation in the transport service organized for families living within FIS bus zones further than a 2 km radius of the school.

All inquiries, including localities served by our transport system in the current school year, should be directed to Ms. Tamara Reinhold via bus@the-fis.de or by telephone 09131/940391010. Further information on the school's bus service can be accessed via the school website.

Curriculum and Programme Handbooks

The following handbooks are currently in review and expected to be published in February 2025:

- Curriculum Handbook
- Programme Handbook
- Departmental Handbook

Wellbeing, Inclusion and Support

Health and Safety

General

The FIS has a First Aid Room which is staffed by the school nurse (available Mondays to Thursdays 08:00 to 17:00 and Fridays from 08:00 to 16:00). To contact the school nurse please use the following email address health@the-fis.de.

Should a situation develop that requires tight management, then the current safety and hygiene protocols can be found on the [FIS website](#).

On your child's admission to the school, you will receive an Emergency Information Form for your child. It is the responsibility of the parents to review and update emergency contact details in a timely manner.

Medical Information

The most recent medical information provided to the school regarding your child will be used to mitigate any medical concerns. Should your child develop any new medical condition or dietary requirement, please contact the School Nurse who will help to update your records (health@the-fis.de).

Illnesses of Children

Parents should inform the school should their child develop a communicable condition. Children should only return to school when they are 24 hours free from the following:

- Fever
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Acute cold symptoms
- Severe headache
- Sore throat
- Persistent cough

- Red, swollen and/or draining eyes
- Earaches
- Toothaches
- Diarrhea

Medication

No student is to bring medication into school at any time, nor is he/she to self-medicate. This includes prescription and non-prescription drugs. If a student needs to be given medication during school hours, please follow the guidelines available on the [FIS Website](#).

Counseling

FIS Counselors respond to immediate and longer-term learning, developmental, and social-emotional needs of students. Services are detailed [on our website](#) and include individual and group counseling for students, as well as consultation and support for parents and staff.

Students are encouraged to talk to their teachers when seeking advice and assistance in everyday matters. In case they have personal issues, they would like to address confidentially, they may make an appointment to talk with the counselor.

Likewise, students may be referred by a teacher or parent to speak with the counselor.

Weapons and Other Dangerous Items

Weapons, real or pretend, or other potentially dangerous items are not permitted on the school campus. Should a student be found to carry such an item it will be confiscated. If students are under the age of 18, items can only be returned to a parent or guardian. (BaySchO § 23).

Primary Homeroom Classes and Subject Specialist Classes

Students in Primary school are organized into homerooms. The homeroom teacher is the parent's main point of contact for social and emotional questions as well as the academics of the subjects they teach: Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies. The homeroom teacher will be the point person, the most pivotal person in your child's schooling each year.

Students will visit specialist teachers for other subjects such as Visual Arts, Music, Physical Health Education, and Outdoor Learning as well as the library. They will attend these in their homeroom groupings. Exceptions to this are for German as an Additional Language / German Language Arts lessons when students are taught in classes appropriate to their level of German, as well as some English as an Additional Language lessons. Questions concerning all these subjects should be directed to the relevant teacher.

Secondary School Advisory

In Secondary School, Students meet in Advisory groups each day during morning attendance and weekly during an Advisory session.

Advisory at the FIS focuses on cultivating and nurturing skills and traits necessary to lead engaged, meaningful, and prosocial lives.

It aims to uphold and promote the International Baccalaureate mission, the FIS Guiding Statements, and the IB Learner Profile; and to open spaces for fostering the FIS values: caring, curiosity, respect, integrity, and belonging.

Advisors aim to build and maintain a space where all students feel connected, valued, safe, and supported.

Through proactive, preventative programming, Advisory is designed to support students on their personal, interpersonal, and academic journeys through secondary school and toward next steps after graduation; supporting the development of identity, purpose, and belonging.

Topics we discuss in Advisory include:

- Emotional and mental health awareness
- Healthy relationships/comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)
- Interpersonal communication
- Substance use and abuse
- Active learning strategies and study skills
- Future-oriented planning, including self-exploration, career exploration, and Work Experience preparation
- Life skills, including topics such as budgeting, bicycle tire repair, and healthy cooking
- Media literacy and digital citizenship
- Challenging discrimination and prejudice

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

From EY5 to Grade 12, the FIS EAL Program offers small-group English instruction and in-class support until students achieve proficiency. The program is leveled for beginners, intermediate, and advanced students. Language teaching is integrated with the curriculum through theme-based topics and classroom content, ensuring EAL students gain the same knowledge, skills, and concepts as their peers.

Learning Support

Learning support is provided for students with learning exceptionalities where appropriate, to meet their individual needs in accessing the curriculum.

We believe every student deserves the opportunity to thrive. Our dedicated Learning Support team works closely with students, teachers, and parents to provide tailored support that meets each

student's unique needs to ensure all learners can reach their full potential.

Closing Remarks

This handbook provides essential information to help students, parents, and staff navigate school policies, procedures, and available services. We encourage you to review the details, as they support the smooth functioning of daily school life. If you have any questions or need further clarification, please feel free to contact our administrative team. We are here to ensure everyone in our community has the information and support they need for a positive school experience.