



**ACACIA SCHOOL**  
*Committed to Excellence*



# PARENT HANDBOOK



**ACACIA SCHOOL**

Sub B. Lot 5379/M Nakatindi Road

More Information:  [www.acaciaschool.com](http://www.acaciaschool.com)

## GREETINGS FROM THE CO-HEADTEACHERS



Gardinah



Warren

Dear Acacia School Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted to welcome you to Acacia School and look forward to working with you to support your children's education journey. Acacia School prides itself on its strong and supportive parent community. We consider your child's education to be a collaborative process that requires close links between home and school. Acacia School teachers are kind, supportive, and nurturing. Please reach out to them in the first place if you have any questions or concerns about your child's learning.

This handbook is a tool to support the Acacia School parents and community. It contains information and procedures aimed at making the school a safe, friendly, and enabling place for students to learn. While we attempt to ensure that this is a comprehensive document, situations may arise that will require additional clarification. Please refer to the Acacia School website for further updates or information related to different aspects of the school.

Please feel free to share any suggestions with us as we partner in providing high-quality education for your children. We aim to make Acacia School an exciting and rewarding environment in which every child will not only thrive but develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enable them to positively impact their communities.

Yours sincerely,

Warren and Gardinah Mukuni  
Co-Headteachers

## **ABOUT ACACIA SCHOOL**

Acacia School is a non-profit making school situated on Sub Lot 5379/M, Nakatindi Road, Livingstone, Zambia. A group of parents started the school, and in its early days, lessons were given under a tree at Zigzag Cafe. When student numbers increased, the school moved to Flamboyant Lane. However, a few years later, the increased student numbers and need for space resulted in the school moving to its current premises. We are now teaching children from over ten different countries. Acacia School's small class sizes are a huge advantage as far as meeting the children's individual learning needs is concerned.

## **ACACIA SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

Acacia School offers a broad and balanced education curriculum that aspires to the highest levels of International Primary education. We are committed to educating, encouraging, and challenging all pupils to fulfil their intellectual, emotional, social, and physical growth. As a multicultural school, we show no bias towards religion, race, or gender. Acacia School sees its role in ensuring students not only benefit from being in Zambia but also from the opportunity of learning alongside children from various parts of the world.

## **ACCREDITATION**

Acacia School is fully accredited by Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) and therefore offers the Cambridge International Curriculum in English, Mathematics, and Science. Selected topics from the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) syllabus have been incorporated into the teaching framework. Acacia School is a member of the Independent Schools Association of Zambia (ISAZ) and the Livingstone Independent Schools Organisation (LISO).

## **GOVERNANCE**

Acacia School is overseen by a Board of Governors which is appointed consistent with the Acacia School constitution and is itself overseen by a Board of Directors. The self-perpetuating "corporate governance" model used by the Board of Governors has been supported for many years by the Ministry of Education in Zambia through the annual school registration process and is endorsed by the Independent Schools Association of Zambia.

## **FOA**

Friends of Acacia (FOA) is a voluntary fundraising body. The FOA goals are:

- To encourage parent and community involvement.
- To encourage participation by all without discrimination.
- To work collaboratively with the school leadership including administrators, teachers, and other staff.
- To effectively communicate FOA decisions and events to head teachers, and the board.
- To plan and manage fundraising events to raise money to support the schools' developmental projects.

## **CAMPUS INFORMATION**

### **Daily Routine**

06:00	Grounds staff arrive
07:20	Teaching staff arrive
07:30 - 07:50	Pupils arrive
07:50	Free reading session
08:00	Lesson 1
08:45	Lesson 2
09:30	Lesson 3
10:00	Break Time
10:45	Lesson 4
11:30	Lesson 5
12:15	Lesson 6/Assembly on Fridays
13:00	Lunch Time
13:45	Sports and Clubs – Lower and Upper School alternate

### **Pick up Times**

13:00	End of day for Early Learning Years
14:30	End of day for Lower School
15:30	End of day for Upper School

\*If you are unable to pick your child up on time for any reason, this must be communicated to the class teacher. If a younger sibling needs to stay until an older siblings pick up time, this must be authorised with the school.

\*\* Please note that there is a late pick-up window of up to 10 minutes past pick up time, after that there may be additional charges, due to teachers having to stay behind with your child.

### **School Hours**

The Acacia School day starts at 08:00 and ends at 15:30. Students are expected to arrive at school between 07:30 and 07:50 (latest) so that they are prepared for their 10 minutes of free reading which takes place between 07:50 and 08:00 hours. Lessons start promptly at 08:00 hours.

### **OFFICE HOURS**

School offices are open Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 15:30.

### **COMMUNICATION**

A child's school life is greatly enriched by a family that is well-informed and active in school life. Acacia School welcomes parent involvement and encourages close ties and frequent communication between parents and the school. Parents can expect communication to take the following forms:

- Acacia School Newsletter – A weekly, digital newsletter publication that is sent home throughout the year. It is also available on the school website where parents can sign up to receive the newsletter.
- Class WhatsApp Groups – Each class has a dedicated admin-only WhatsApp group to disseminate information – please ensure that all parents and guardians are included.
- School email system – The school email system helps the school to relay information to the parents in a more official manner.

### **CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

In addition to the academic program, Acacia School also runs a comprehensive clubs activities programme for all students. These clubs allow students to explore their strengths outside of the main curriculum and provide opportunities for team building and leadership. Students can choose from activities with an academic, artistic, sports, or health/well-being focus.

A full list of the clubs for each term is sent out to parents to help the children in deciding which enrichment activity to sign up for.

### **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

The school year has 180 instructional days and is divided into three terms.

Term 1	January to April
Term 2	May to August
Term 3	September to December

A calendar is available on our website, or as a separate attachment from the school office.

### **SECURITY ON CAMPUS**

Security guards are on site from 18:00 to 06:00. During the day, the grounds staff provide basic on-campus security. Students are not allowed outside the school fence without the supervision of a teacher. We ask all parents / guardians to keep the school gates closed after entering / exiting the premises.

### **Entering Campus**

On normal school days, the campus is open from 07:30 to 15:30. Teachers, administrators, and parents can enter and exit when school is open. Students enter freely but must be in uniform for easy identification.

### **Exiting Campus During the School Day**

Students are not allowed to leave campus before the end of the school day without permission from the Headteachers. Children should be collected by their parents from their respective classrooms at the end of the school day. Teachers have been instructed to wait for parents for a maximum of 10 minutes after the end of each school day. If you send someone to collect your child from school, please ensure that they have written permission which should be handed to the Headteacher before the child is collected.

### **Visitors**

All visitors must sign in at the entrance gate and proceed to the main office to check-in. For security purposes, visitors need to wear the “**Visitor**” **name card** during their visit. This will also assist staff and students to help guide them.

**Driving and Parking on Campus**

There is plenty of space for parents and visitors in the car park area. Drivers are expected to act courteously and drive slowly when on school property.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES**

Acacia School is implementing safety measures that require parent cooperation and support. As much as possible, parents must only pack healthy foods for their children. Fast food / deliveries and fizzy drinks will not be permitted in school.

During pandemics and when instructed by the Ministry of Health/ Education, students, teachers, and parents will undergo temperature checks and hand sanitisation before entering campus.

**Fire Drills**

As part of our safety measures, Acacia School will conduct fire drills once each term. These drills are aimed at helping the students to know how to effectively respond in case of a true fire situation. The fire drill procedure will be on the classroom notice board in all our classrooms.

**Fire Extinguishers**

All our buildings have the appropriate and valid fire extinguishers that must be used in case of a fire in any part of the school. These are additional safety measures to help the school deal with unexpected situations efficiently and logically.

**LOST AND FOUND PROPERTY**

Lost and found items will be displayed every Friday for students and parents. We strongly encourage parents to have their child's clothing and personal items labelled with name and grade where practical as this allows us to return lost items directly to the student. The school will eventually donate unclaimed items at the end of each term to a charity group that supports local schools and students with special needs.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS**

The Acacia School Physical Education programme uses an inquiry-based approach to teach lifetime health and fitness. The programme focuses on movement competencies, active living, and healthy living through class discussion and a wide range of games and activities on the sports field and in the swimming pool. The goal is to develop healthy habits, locomotion skills, spatial awareness, hand-eye and foot-eye coordination, physical endurance, and strategic thinking in a safe and active environment that encourages students to be cooperative and inclusive toward others. As such, all sports and P.E. lessons are compulsory.

Inter-house and inter-school sports competitions are organised each term. The house colours are Red for the Rhinos and Green for the Lions.

**MUSIC**

Music at Acacia School uses a blend of inquiry and traditional skills-based learning to develop students' abilities to sing, play instruments, dance, compose, improvise, perform and experience the music of diverse origins. The music incorporates an active environment that encourages students to be confident, team-oriented thinkers. Musical concerts and productions are organised and held from time to time.

The school offers extra Music lessons during the break, lunch, and after school at a small fee for children who wish to develop their musical skills further. If you are interested in extra music lessons for your child, then please see the Music Teacher to sign up. Please kindly note that spaces are usually limited due to the high demand.

**LIBRARY**

The Acacia School Library is open to all students from Early Years to Grade 7. Our collection includes paper books, online research databases, fiction and non-fiction books, magazines, and editorials. We also have a good number of picture books for Early Years children. Physical books are loaned out each week during class library time or at other times when the library is open.

The library is open on weekdays from 08:00 to 15:30. Class teachers can loan out books but must submit records to the School Library Coordinator. Students are asked to return books on time. Lost books will be charged to the parents at the end of each term. If you have any issues or concerns regarding the library, please feel free to consult the School Library Coordinator, or your child's teacher.



## ASSESSMENTS AND REPORTING

Acacia School uses both formative (informal) and summative (formal) assessments to inform student progress and achievement across the curriculum and provides parents with various opportunities to learn about their child's achievements (e.g. end of term report forms, and parent-teacher consultation meetings).

There are a variety of ways through which students are assessed. These are but are not limited to:

- Assessment for Learning – this is an ongoing assessment to inform teaching and learning.
- Project work – depending on the subject and the grade, the children may be given projects to work on individually or in groups and these will be assessed.
- Class discussions and presentations – older children may also be assessed through class discussions and presentations.
- Homework – Some of the homework given will be graded and will contribute to an average grade at the end of each term.
- Mid-term assessments – Once each term, more formal mid-term assessments will be administered. These along with the term grade will form the end-of-term report.
- Cambridge progression tests – these assessments are conducted in the third term to check the level of progress made by each student during the year under review.
- Cambridge checkpoint examinations – Before the end of Grade 7, around October, the Cambridge Checkpoint examinations will be written.

## PARENT-TEACHER CONSULTATION MEETINGS

Parent-teacher consultation meetings are conducted once each term. These meetings provide parents with an opportunity to discuss individual student strengths as well as weaknesses or concerns with their child's teacher. They further provide an excellent platform for parents and teachers to work together in supporting the children's learning.

## HOMEWORK

Homework is a requirement of the Ministry of Education (MOE) and should be meaningful and assigned in a manner that enhances student learning. It helps to establish patterns of study, build responsibility and develop time management skills. While homework is a student's responsibility, it also enables parents to learn more about what their child is doing in school and become involved in the learning process. We recognise the value of family time in a student's life and learning, and we aim to only intervene with purposeful homework.

At Acacia School, homework may be used to:

- Reinforce class lessons
- Gain a better understanding of material and skills already taught
- Continue learning activities started during class time
- Help students engage with materials, games, and activities that promote thinking skills

## Homework Schedule

DAY	SUBJECTS
Monday	Mathematics and weekly spelling words
Tuesday	English Language
Wednesday	Science
Thursday	Social Studies
Friday	No homework on Friday

If you have concerns regarding your child's homework, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher in the first place or the school homework coordinator.

## Spelling Culture

To build a strong school spelling culture, all Acacia students will be given their weekly spelling words every Monday. They are expected to learn the spelling words during the week. The teachers offer strategies, help, and reminders before the weekly spelling test which takes place every Friday morning.

## STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS

Please ensure your child has the following stationary ready for the start of the academic year. Your class teacher may request addition supplies outside of this list upon occasion. Please keep an eye on your child's stationery supplies throughout the term and top up where necessary. We recommend your child taking their pencil case home at the end of each day to ensure you can help them check this.

### **Nursery & Reception**

- Pencil Case
    - HB Pencils
    - Coloured Pencils
    - Wax Crayons
    - Pencil Sharpener
    - Eraser
    - Glue Stick
    - Scissors
  - 1 x Homework file
- 

### **Grade 1 – Grade 3**

- Pencil Case
    - HB Pencils
    - Coloured Pencils
    - Pencil Sharpener
    - Eraser
    - Glue Stick
    - Scissors
    - Ruler – 30 cm
    - White board pens
  - Classroom Books
    - 9 x A4 lined
    - 2 x A4 square (maths)
    - 1 x A4 plain (art)
    - 1 x A5 lined (spelling)
  - 1 x Homework file
- 

### **Grade 4 – Grade 7**

- Pencil Case
  - Ballpoint pens – black & blue
  - HB Pencils
  - Coloured Pencils
  - Pencil Sharpener
  - Eraser
  - Glue Stick
  - Scissors
  - Ruler – 30cm
  - White board pens
- Extras
  - 1 x Dictionary
  - 1 x Geometry Set
  - 1 x Calculator
- Classroom Books
  - 10 x A4 lined
  - 2 x A4 square (maths)
  - 1 x A4 plain (art)
  - 1 x A5 lined (spelling)
- Homework books
  - 3 x A4 lined
  - 1 x A4 square (maths)

## **ASSEMBLIES**

Acacia School gathers for school and class assemblies every Friday from 12:15 to 12:45 hours. The purpose of assemblies is to provide students with an opportunity to celebrate achievements, build community, and showcase what has been learned in our units of inquiry. These assemblies are student-led and designed to share learning in an entertaining manner. Parents are invited to grade-level assemblies.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Social/emotional counselling services are available to all students through a comprehensive model that includes whole-class counselling lessons, small group counselling, and individual counselling support. Referrals to group and individual counselling come from teachers, parents, and students. The school leadership collaborates with teachers, parents, students, and outside agencies to minimise barriers to success.

### **Learning Support**

Students experiencing academic difficulties may receive intervention support as a way of learning support. Support through an intervention means that the student will receive short-term supplemental instruction to build a skill to help them get 'up to speed'. Any student who is experiencing extended academic difficulties may be placed on the Special Education Needs register following an assessment by the Individualised Learning Teacher. This means the student will now receive long-term extra study sessions and other strategies to address the specific learning difficulties.

Please see the Headteachers if you suspect that your child has a specific learning difficulty. The Heads will then arrange with our Learning Support specialist to have your child assessed.

### **Positive Behaviour Support**

Counselling is available at school to assist students in need of behavioural, emotional, or social support. Common issues students and their parents seek help for include: conflict resolution, peer problems, transitional struggles, study and organisational skill, conflicts at home, and crisis or grief response. Acacia School counselling services are meant to provide short-term support focused on immediate improvement. If extended support is needed or services cannot adequately be provided at school, the school leadership will assist the family in locating appropriate help within Livingstone/Zambia.

## **TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES & TEACHER / PARENT SUPPORT**

A list of staff whom you can see for help in specific areas, as well as individual teachers' classes and responsibilities is available from the school office and as a separate attachment.

## **SCHOOL FEES**

Tuition and Boarding Fee amounts and information are available via the school office, and as a separate attachment.

## **PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH CONCERNS**

### **Concerns about School Classroom Activities**

Concerns about school classroom activities or indeed any other concerns that parents may have regarding their child's learning should first be discussed between the parent and the teacher. Then, if necessary, with the Headteacher.

### **Concerns about School Personnel**

Any concerns about School Personnel should first be discussed with the Headteachers. After listening to the parent's concerns, the Headteachers may deem it necessary to conduct a meeting to provide a positive solution. If the matter cannot be resolved or appears to be of a serious nature, the Headteachers may hand it over to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors. In no case will complaints be made or discussed in the presence of students.

## **ACACIA SCHOOL UNIFORM**

Acacia School uniforms are purchased from the school office. While all efforts are made to keep stock on hand, please assist by purchasing or ordering uniforms in advance. Students with ripped, stained or otherwise ill-fitting uniforms will be requested to purchase new items.



### Girls

3 x Acacia School blue button-down shirts  
2 x Acacia School skorts and/or  
3 x Acacia School dresses or playsuits  
2 x Acacia School blue sports shorts  
1 x navy swimming costume  
2 x Acacia School blue sports t-shirts  
1 x Acacia School hat and/or cap  
1 x Acacia School house t-shirt (red or green)  
1 x Acacia School blue fleece  
1 x swimming cap  
1 x navy swimming costume  
In addition:  
White socks  
Trainers for PE  
Black school shoes  
Shin pads  
Long blue games socks  
Gum shield/mouth guard

### Boys

3 x Acacia School blue button-down shirts  
3 x Acacia School navy shorts  
2 x Acacia School blue sports t-shirts  
2 x Acacia School blue sport shorts  
1 x Acacia School hat and/or cap  
1 x Acacia School house t-shirt (red or green)  
1 x Acacia School blue fleece  
1 x swimming cap  
1 x navy swimming costume  
In addition:  
Grey socks  
Trainers for PE  
Black school shoes  
Shin pads  
Long blue games socks  
Gum shield/mouth guard

### **Boys Uniform**

- Formal – Navy shorts & blue button-down shirt, underwear, grey socks & black shoes.
- Sports – Blue sports shorts & blue sports t-shirts, underwear, grey socks & blue or black trainers.
- Sports (House) – Blue sports shorts & red or green house t-shirt, underwear, grey socks & blue or black trainers.
- Winter – As per formal, including navy-blue fleece / jacket.

### **Girls Uniform**

- Formal – Skorts & light blue button-down shirt, underwear, white socks & black shoes OR school dress (blue & white checked) OR playsuits (blue & white checked).
- Sports – Blue sports shorts / skorts & blue sports t-shirts, underwear, white socks & blue or black trainers.
- Winter – As per formal, including navy or black tights, and navy-blue fleece / jacket.

### **Jewellery**

- Jewellery is not allowed (including bracelets, necklaces, ankle chains, beads, bands, rings & friendship bracelets).
- Girls may wear discreet gold or silver ear studs (no stones) or small sleepers (round in shape) - one in each ear **in the traditional position**. Boys are not allowed piercings.
- Only plain wrist watches are permitted.

### **Hair**

- Girls' hair must be tidy and natural looking. Neither dyed nor tinted hair nor dyed or tinted braids are allowed. Braids can only be black or off black.
- Hair must be off the face and girls' hair must be tied back properly with plain navy blue, black, or white fasteners.
- For boys, **only conventional hairstyles are permitted** - no steps, flat tops/cushion tops/quiiffs with shaved sides, or long hair over the ears, eyebrows, or collar. Boys may not dye or relax their hair.
- Students are not allowed to shave/cut their eyebrows.
- Students are not allowed to cut each other's hair.
- Students with dyed hair will be sent back home to correct it.
- Appropriate hairstyle and length for girls and boys must be strictly adhered to.

### **Make-Up and Nail Varnish**

- Make-up is not allowed at any time.
- Pupils must not use nail varnish or false nails. Nails must be kept short.
- Coloured contact lenses are not permitted.

### **Hats and Caps**

No hats or caps are allowed to be worn indoors. Only Acacia hats may be worn as part of the school uniform or Caps as part of the PE uniform. No other caps are allowed.

When in casuals any cap or hat may be worn (but not indoors!).

### **EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIPS**

Any Acacia School-sponsored excursion off our campus with students is considered a trip. Field trips are an important part of our school programme, and student safety is a priority at every step. Field trips are planned to provide learning opportunities that are significantly enhanced by an off-campus venue, we are lucky to have many fantastic places within Livingstone to take the children to.

The school will provide transport for approved local trips within Livingstone town. The parents through the respective Class Representatives may be asked to help support these trips by providing meals, entry fees, and other related costs.

### **SCHOOL TRIPS**

Full uniform should be worn unless a member of staff informs the pupils otherwise. A list of what the students are allowed to bring on school trips will be sent out before the trip. Students must exhibit excellent behaviour while on school trips and uphold the good image of Acacia School.

### **PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH SICKNESS**

1. If your child feels unwell during lessons, he/she must get permission from the teacher to go to the school office.
2. The school First-Aider keeps a supply of paracetamol and Ibuprofen. They will consult with you about whether to give your child medicine or ask you to come and collect your child.
3. Students whose body temperature goes beyond 38 degrees Celsius should be collected from school. Their parents must arrange for them to see a doctor.
4. If your child feels unwell during sports, the sports teacher or staff in charge of the activity will refer him/her to the school First-Aider. If it is an emergency, one member of staff will escort your child to the school office.
5. Students are not allowed to escort injured or sick students to the office.

### **FINAL REMARKS**

This document is meant as a guide to help answer questions you may have about Acacia School and to guide you through your time with us. We encourage all new parents to quickly familiarise themselves with the Acacia School Complaints Policy and the Parents Code of Conduct. These are among some of the important documents that will guide you further as you join the Acacia School family and community. Additionally, there is a lot of information in the Student Handbook which you will find extremely useful in settling down your child at Acacia School.