



amicitia  
AMERICAN SCHOOL FES

**Maternelle – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Parent & Student Handbook 2009-2010**

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# Maternelle

## Program

Our Maternelle program consists of three English classrooms run by English-speaking teachers assisted by trained Moroccan staffmembers.

With English immersion as our goal (see Language policy, Appendix E, General Parent/Student Handbook), students in Maternelle spend most of their school day in an English environment.

Learning takes place through age-appropriate instruction, activities and play. We strive towards having the most appropriate educational equipment available to assist and reinforce our program.

We offer a caring and loving environment where the safety and security of your child is of utmost importance. Your child will be under constant supervision indoors and outdoors.

In Maternelle classrooms the student staff ratio is at a maximum of 1:6.

We have a gentle and firm approach to discipline and there is a reward system in place to encourage positive behavior. Appropriate student behavior is our highest priority as we prepare them to enter a school environment where academic success and behavior are closely linked. Showing respect to all and encouraging social skills are some of our highest behavioral goals in this age group.

We encourage parents to discuss their concerns and needs with our teachers as open communication enables us to help students who are having academic, emotional or psychological problems.

Apart from language acquisition, the English program concentrates on reading and writing skills. All students are also exposed to French and Arabic through appropriate stories, songs and poetry. Participation in music, art and physical activities completes the scope of learning your child will be part of, taking his/her development to the next level and laying the foundation for success in his/her education.

## Procedures

One of the great things about maternelle is that it is the perfect time to develop good habits, such as punctuality! Please help your child to arrive on time to school! If your child arrives after 8:30, they will be counted as late. If a child is tardy (late), twice during a week, the administration will be notified, and the parents called. If a child is late more than two times in the duration of one week, they will be sent home. **That means the 3<sup>rd</sup> time the child comes to school late in a week, they will be sent home.** *The secret to arriving at school on time, is to put Maternelle students to bed no later than 8pm.*

### Early Mornings

- 08:25 Students line up at the front door.  
*The assistants will meet them there.*
- 08:30 All students head to class for their morning lessons.

### Lunch

- Please send your child's lunch to school with him/her in the morning. We insist on healthy lunch and snacks – no candy or sodas will be allowed.
- If your child struggles to eat without making a mess on his/her clothes, please send an extra shirt/top that we can put on to protect his clothes. This shirt will be sent home daily to be washed if necessary.
- Students wash their hands before they eat and they eat in the Maternelle lunchroom.
- We make sure the students eat quietly and develop good table manners.
- Every student has the responsibility of clearing their own table if they are capable.

### Recess

- The students learn how to walk in a line on their way to the playground, and enjoy the time outside while they're at the playground.
- Sometimes we play group games, teaching the children how to share and play together.
- When free to do what they like, the students have room to discover, explore, and be active.
- The students are always supervised by a teacher or assistant.

### Afternoons

- 14:30 This is the end of our formal program, children should not be kept waiting too long. We strongly recommend that you pick up your children promptly.

- 14:45 The students that are still at school move to the after-school care room. Students who are not signed up for after-care program will be charged a fee of 10dh per 5 min. Parents will be expected to pay that promptly the next day.
- 15:30 All students must be picked up by their parents. If their parents haven't come yet, the students will stay in After-School Care at an additional fee.

## After-Care Program

Students with an older sibling(-s) who would prefer to stay at school until 15:30, need to sign up for the sibling after-care program. See Appendix for the enrollment form. All the Maternelle students in this program will be taken care of in a separate room or have some time to play outside (weather permitting). There will be no extra fee charged for the time until 15:45, but if students need to stay longer, or are just having to wait for parents who are late, they will be charged the penalty fee of 10dh for 5 min.

## Correspondence Notes

Notes will be handed to the parents concerning messages about school events and outings, or changes to previously distributed information. Special requests regarding individual students will also be dealt with in this way.

- ALL notices must be read and signed.
- If these instructions are not followed, we cannot be held responsible for information of notices that are not received.

## Assessment

We formally test our students four times a year in order to assess their learning and development. The areas in which our students are formally assessed are: social and emotional development, gross motor and P.E., English oral language and pre-reading skills, fine motor and pre-writing skills, and math. We informally test our students throughout the year to assess their understanding of the themes and concepts through one on one interaction, games and observation.

## **Birthday Parties**

Parents of Maternelle students may arrange to celebrate a child's birthday at school with the classroom teacher. Parents wishing to participate should first get permission from their child's teacher and discuss with the teacher all relevant information.

## **Toys**

In general students should not bring toys to school unless they are part of a teacher initiated project or theme.

## **Going Home With a Friend**

If a Maternelle student is to go home with a friend, the parents of both students must notify the teacher in writing. These notes should be initialed by the homeroom teacher and given to the appropriate teacher on dismissal duty.

## **Potty Training Policy**

Please understand that Maternelle does not have the proper facilities to accommodate children who are not potty-trained. If your child is not fully trained by September 8, he/she will not be accepted into the school period for compliance.

# Elementary School

## (1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade)

### Attendance Procedures

#### Arrival and Dismissal

School gates open for students at **08:00**. Students should report to the line-up area to leave his/her backpack and be ready to line up when the first bell rings at 8:25. Students arriving after 8:25 will be considered late and dealt with according to the tardy policy (see later in this document). Elementary students (1st-6th) will be met by their teachers at line-up and escorted to the classrooms. Dismissal is dealt with in the General Parent/Student Handbook.

#### Tardies

It is required that students be on school grounds at **least 5 minutes** before morning classes begin. When late, students should check in with the secretary and then go to their homeroom immediately. Students will be allowed two morning tardies during a grading cycle with no questions asked. A third tardy during a grading cycle will result in the student receiving a recess or lunch detention/eighth period (for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students).

If a student is late more than once in the duration of a week, their parents will be called and they will receive a detention/eighth period. If a whole class manage to be on time for one whole week, they will be rewarded at the discretion of their homeroom teacher.

### Student Information

#### School Uniform and Dress Code

*The school uniform is required of all students in grades 1 – 8 to help foster a sense of discipline and modesty in school dress. It consists of:*

- **School Assigned Tops:** Students are required to wear Navy Blue tops designated by the school. Acceptable tops include Navy Blue jackets, sweaters and Amicitia sweatshirts along with an AASF shirt or t-shirt. Non AASF shirts may be worn underneath AASF clothing, as long as the colors are consistent with uniform colors (Blue, Beige). PE shirts are NOT acceptable as outerwear except during PE class. Scarves are acceptable if consistent with AASF uniform colors and are solid, not multi-colored.
- **Solid color Beige or Khaki bottoms:** Shorts, pants, culottes and skirts will be available from the supplier. Jeans are not a part of the school uniform and may not be worn except on designated days.

No students are allowed to wear any accessorizing, fancy belts, large hoop earrings (larger than a 10 dirham coin), or fancy or expensive jewelry. Ear rings must not be distracting (extra long, dangling, etc.).

Shoes should be appropriate for school. Students may not wear fancy dress or high-heeled shoes (heels may not exceed 5 cm, or 2 inches), Moroccan slippers (Babush), or flip-flops.

Students who come to school without the proper uniform will be sent to the school office. They will be allowed to call home and, when the proper attire arrives, they will return to class. A first offense will be counted as a warning and noted in the discipline records. Students will receive detentions for all subsequent violations. In order to emphasize the value of the uniform policy, the student's principal may also require the student to write an essay explaining the reasons for the uniform policy.

Parents should mark student names on each uniform piece, and on any student jacket or sweater. This will ensure that misplaced items can be returned to the student. A lost and found is maintained at the school reception. Unmarked clothes which have been left in the lost and found for more than a couple of months will be given away.

Occasionally special dress or free dress days will be announced to encourage school spirit.

To Return Uniforms:

Uniforms must be returned in perfect condition within 2 days of purchase for the following reasons:

- To change the size of the clothing
- When there is a factory fault, the receipt of purchase must be shown

### **Student Code of Conduct**

We believe that the Elementary school years are the training ground to ensure that student behavior is supportive to their academic growth and success. This can be achieved as young as 1<sup>st</sup> Grade and should be expected and enforced through out their High school. Parents' support in behavioral issues are of the utmost importance. We expect parents to reinforce what we teach at school and to respect and support the school's code of conduct.

Please read this section in the General Parent/Teacher Handbook with great care as exactly the same principles apply.

## **Classroom Rules and Procedures**

It is the responsibility of every teacher to train his/her students to follow specific classroom rules and procedures. All rules are based on the six values of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. A lot of time during the first days of school will be used to achieve this goal.

## **Academic Expectations**

### **Homework Procedures**

Each child must purchase a cahier de texte. Teachers will write homework in the cahier de texte (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade) and/or write it on the whiteboard in a specific place where it is visible and clear for students to copy it into their cahier de texte (3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade).

Parents should daily check and sign their children's cahier de texte after the children have completed their assignments. If there is any problem with the homework, feel free to write the teacher a note in the cahier de texte. Do not hesitate to call the parents of your child's classmates in order to help you (and your child) understand homework.

Homework is an essential part of students' grades and should be done diligently. It is expected of students to submit their homework daily.

Homework are given for the sake of practice, preparation and/or elaboration. If homework is assigned for practice students should be familiar with the material to complete it independently.

The amount of homework given should be dependent on the grade level.

Reading: Suggested reading minutes per day

- 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade: 10 minutes
- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade: 15 minutes
- 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade: 20 minutes

Tests: Expect that your child will have weekly spelling and reading tests.

Math: Students should be given 10-15 problems daily which should take on average about 20 minutes to complete.

Science & History: Students will be assigned review sheets and/or worksheets to help them review chapters – just reading the textbook doesn't necessary help them to learn the material. Students will be given a study guide or a review sheet to help them study before a test. Tests dates will be recorded in the student's cahier de texte at least a week ahead of the actual test date.

French/Arabic: Homework will focus on reading and grammar exercises. Students in the younger grades might not have daily assignments.

Projects: All projects will be assigned at least a week before the due date.

**Please Note:**

Copying directly from the internet or other resources is considered plagiarism (that includes printing information from the internet and pasting it on a poster). All homework including reading books, English, content areas, and math should not exceed over 1 hour. Please take into consideration that some students work faster or slower than others. However, if your student is spending too much time completing homework (more than two hours) please consult your child's teacher.

**Unfinished Homework Assignments**

After a first warning, students will receive detention from sport and recess if they do not complete and submit homework assignments on time. If this is repeated, the student will receive an eighth period (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade). Eighth period is from Monday to Thursday, 15:30-16:30pm. Parents will be notified in advance when their child will have to do his/her eighth period. Students in younger grades' parents will be informed and even more homework will be given to be completed for the next day.

**Tutoring**

Elementary school teachers will make themselves available to tutor students who are in need of extra help. In every case teachers will request a conference with the parents to recommend tutoring. There is a fee for this service. In cases where teachers are not available any more, the school will help to find a suitable tutor.

**Ideas for Helping Your Children Complete Their Homework**

1. Make sure they are using their cahier de texte to record their homework daily.
2. Prioritize assignments – do harder assignments first.
3. Establish a regular time for doing homework – develop a routine (eat a snack, work on homework, play outside, eat dinner, read...)
4. Establish a regular place (kitchen table, bedroom – be near your child).

5. Keep old quizzes and tests. Go over old tests with her child. Discuss ones they got wrong.
6. Eliminate distractions (phone, TV, and music).
7. Check their work. If they are young – check their work frequently.
8. Break an assignment into smaller parts.
9. Big projects – create a timeline with small goals. Don't wait to the last minute.
10. Have a consistent folder/binder to keep homework.
11. Use a timer if needed.
12. Have your child speak aloud their thinking process.
13. If your child is not completing homework – talk to the teacher and create a homework contract. This contract should include when, where, and how long your child will study. There should be consequences/rewards based on how well they follow the contract.
14. Older students – let them see the natural consequences of their behavior. Volunteer to help them plan out a homework and study schedule.

### **Study Skills for Older Students**

1. Use study breaks. Study for 20 minutes and then take a break. Students will remember more if they take breaks. Don't study for one hour or more at a time.
2. Review notes more than text book. Teachers often create tests from the notes given in class. Review 3 times: Review new notes after school, at regular times afterwards (weekly, monthly), and right before a test.
3. Take notes during a reading assignment. Write only key words, phrases, definitions, and summarize.
4. Ask questions after a child studies.
5. Teach to review work frequently. Teach them to recite one thing they learned from each class daily.
6. Make flashcards (vocabulary, words/definitions, questions/answers)
7. Get enough sleep:
  - Maternelle/Lower Elementary: 20:00
  - Upper Elementary: 20:00-20:30
  - Middle School: 21:00
  - High School (depends on homework): 22:00 (ideal)
8. Create questions while reading and answer them.
9. Find main ideas and details.
10. Rewrite notes. Highlight or color code notes.
11. Review spelling words, math facts, historical facts when driving to a store.
12. Use new vocabulary words and facts in daily conversation as much as possible (even after the test).
13. Each subject needs to be studied differently.

## **Grading**

Elementary School report card grades differ depending on the subject and level. Some grades will be given as percentage grades, others in symbols and others in numbers from 1 to 4. The explanation of these grades is available at the back of the report card. (see Appendix of this document). The grades always reflect a composite of participation, class work, homework and tests as done during the five or six week grading period. Individual teachers decide how much each of these would count and it can differ from grading cycle to grading cycle. Please see individual teachers if you have questions about grades.

## **Parent Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to spend time with their children in both play and conversation. Parents and children are also encouraged to find time to read together. Reading at home in any comprehensible language is beneficial to a child's cognitive development. It is preferable that this kind of reading should be done in the native languages of the parents. For these activities, parents and children should select readings together that are of mutual interest.

## **Birthday Parties**

Parents of Elementary students may arrange to celebrate a child's birthday at school with the classroom teacher. Parents wishing to participate should first get permission from their child's teacher and discuss with the teacher all relevant information.

## **Toys**

In general students should not bring toys to school unless they are part of a teacher initiated project or theme.

## **Going Home With a Friend**

If an Elementary student is to go home with a friend, the parents of both students must notify the teacher in writing. These notes should be initialed by the homeroom teacher and given to the appropriate teacher on dismissal duty.

## APPENDIX A

### Enrollment Sibling After-Care

*At the discretion of the administration, Maternelle students who have older siblings in Amicitia may enroll in an after-care program for the time between 14:30 and 15:30. This is a privilege. Any student who is not cooperative may be removed from the program.*

Name of student(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Grade(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of sibling (s): \_\_\_\_\_ Grade(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please briefly state any information the teachers need to know:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Administration Use: Request Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Request Denied \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Removal:

Unfortunately, due to the consistent negative behavior, \_\_\_\_\_ has been removed from the Sibling After Care Program.

Principal's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Explanation of Grading**

#### **All second language learners (ESL/FSL/ASL):**

- 4** - Excellent / Above standard
- 3** - Bien / Meets standard
- 2** - Moyen / Approaching standard
- 1** - Insuffisant / Below standard

#### **1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, Music and Sport:**

- A** - Excellent / Above standard
- B** - Bien / Meets standard
- C** - Moyen / Approaching standard
- D** - Insuffisant / Below standard

#### **English/Mathematics/Science and Social Studies:**

**A+** : 97-100%

**A** : 94-96%

**A-** : 90-93%

**B+** : 87-89%

**B** : 84-86%

**B-** : 80-83%

**C+** : 77-79%

**C** : 74-76%

**C-** : 70-73%

**D** : 60-69%

**Failing:** below 60%

#### **French and Arabic:**

**A** : 84-100%

**B** : 76-83%

**C** : 68-75%

**D** : 60-67%

**Citizenship grade** is rewarded by all teachers according to the student's general behaviour in- and outside the classroom. Our criteria is based on the following 6 character traits: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

***Note de civisme** est donné par l'ensemble des enseignants de compertevrent de l'élève dans-et en dehas de la classe. Notre outtère est basé sur les 6 aspects (traits de caractère) suivants : être digne de confiante, le respect, la responsabilité, la justice, l'attention envers les autres et la citoyenneté.*