

FRIENDS SCHOOLS STUDENT HANDBOOK

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**International Baccalaureate
Accredited**

You probably already know that we want you to feel at home with us. We want you to know that you are part of a community of people whose main concern is supporting parents in the physical, spiritual, social and intellectual development of their children. We are pleased to introduce you to the Friends School Handbook which we hope will be your guide to life at Friends Schools.

This Handbook refers to the two campuses of Friends School. The two campuses are referred to by their historical names which do not reflect the fact that both campuses educate boys and girls together which reflects the policy of Friends Schools in the 21st century which recognises the advantages of this strategy in our community.

The Friends Girls School (FGS) campus is located on a tree-shaded campus near the heart of old Ramallah. It presently accommodates classes from Lower Kindergarten through to Grade 6. When all our development plans are complete there will be a maximum capacity of 570 children

The Pre-School section at FGS is housed in a separate building. Plans are in development for a new kindergarten which will have a maximum capacity of 120 children. At present there are 100 children in five sections each of 20 children. The programme for children who are four years and five years old respectively is known as the Lower and Upper Kindergarten.

The Friends Boys School campus is located on the boundary between El-Bireh and Ramallah on a large site which is also tree-shaded and has a mix of historical and modern buildings. It presently accommodates classes from Grade 7 through to Grade 12. The Friends Swift House Botanical Garden, open during the day from April 2002, is immediately opposite the Friends Boys School.

Both schools are presently governed by a local Board of Trustees in partnership with their owners, Friends United Meeting (FUM) based in Richmond, Indiana. FUM is one of the international networks of Friends Churches and Meetings in the United States of America, Canada, Cuba, Jamaica and Kenya.

I hope you find this handbook helpful in understanding us and useful in living with us.

Director
Friends Schools

Accreditation

The Friends Schools are licensed by the Palestinian Ministry of Education. Periodically inspectors from the Ministry attend classes, interview teachers, and inspect the facilities.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Friends Girls School and the Friends Boys School of Ramallah and El-Bireh strive to be leading educational institutions in the Palestinian community. The Schools were founded in 1869 and 1901 respectively, for the purpose of offering Palestinian youth a rigorous program undergirded by principles of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Central to Quaker education is a vitality which comes from being a living expression of a religious life. Friends education seeks to promote a constant search for God to all human situations, and to cultivate ethical, moral and spiritual values.

The Friends are committed to:

Excellence in education. Quaker education calls for high academic standards and a willingness to experiment with new methodology and curricula.

Developing the whole person. Quaker education is committed to helping each member of the school community realize his or her physical, mental, spiritual, and social potential. It recognizes that every person is different, with varying abilities which must be developed to the full extent possible.

Helping each person recognize her or his responsibility to society. Quaker education is committed to helping each person recognize her or his responsibility as a caring member of the school, community, nation and global family where "each lives for the other and all live for God." The Schools are committed to nurturing character traits such as integrity, simplicity, honesty, cooperation and compassion. The Schools believe in and encourage freedom of thought and expression. They expect, however, that this freedom be enjoyed with a full sense of responsibility. Quaker education advocates non-violence as a viable option for resolving conflict in every aspect of life. These values are best learned through the example and practice as students, teachers, parents, workers and administrators interact with each other.

Equality. Quaker education believes that all people are equal before God regardless of gender, creed, culture, color or social status. Quaker education in Palestine has focused from the beginning on the education of women to develop their potential and realize their opportunity to be equal members of their community. Quaker education is built on the belief that "all are children of God" and that within each person "there is that of God to be nurtured."

It is upon this foundation that Friends Schools' students grow to be strong and sensitive members of their families, their community and the world in which they live.

HISTORY OF FRIENDS SCHOOL

Friends School has a long and honored history in Palestine and it is interesting to trace the origins of our two schools of which we are justly proud. The history of the Friends School is one closely tied with the history of Palestine. Over the last one hundred and fifty years, the School have experienced Turkish, British, Jordanian, and Israeli occupation, world wars, and closures.

The Friends School in their checkered political history has served not only as schools but as a center for refugees, as a hospital, as a center for community lectures, concerts and other cultural activities.

The Ottoman Empire

Friends work began in 1869 with a number of small schools for girls in the villages surrounding Ramallah. In October 1889 Friends Girls School opened as “The Girls Training Home of Ramallah”. The fifteen students who enrolled the first year came from Lydd, Jaffa, Aboud, Jerusalem, Beirut and Ramallah, and six years later the first class graduated. Miss Katie Gabriel from Lebanon was the first principal, serving eighteen years.

In 1897 the first addition was made to the original two-story house. That was the present girls’ dining room with adjoining room and hallway, and a dormitory above, which is now Swift Hall. Gradually, class by class was added until Friends Girls School became a secondary as well as an elementary school. In 1910 the third floor dormitory was added

A Boys Training Home was founded in 1901, at the urging of community members, for the purpose of providing Palestinian boys a rigorous academic program undergirded by the principles of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). The school was first housed in a building near the Friends Girls School in Ramallah and as the school grew from its initial enrollment of 15 students, land was bought in El-Bireh in 1905 and the first stone of the main building laid in 1913.

The first experiments in mixed classes of boys and girls began in 1902, the two training homes for Boys and for Girls had classes together for one and half hours a day and it was hailed as a great success. The Friends Meeting House in the centre of Ramallah was built in 1910.

First World War

In 1914 the Friends Boys School Main Building was completed but it only came into use as a school in 1918. The Girls Training Home and the Boys School like all other schools in Palestine were closed throughout the war. During those years Turkish and then British troops occupied the buildings. British troops used the Boys School as a hospital in 1917.

British Mandate

Both schools reopened in 1919. At the newly named ‘Friends Girls School, day students, as well as boarders were accepted. Electric light was first used at the schools in 1923. Building at the Girls School continued and in 1925 the remainder of the third floor was constructed. At that time the former dormitory on the second floor was converted into an assembly room and named Swift Hall in honor of Sara J. Swift of New England. The home economics cottage was built in 1929 and Whittier Hall in honor of Alice Whittier Jones in 1934.

Boys first took the Palestinian Matriculation examination in Jerusalem in 1926. The Lowell Jones Library was given by Rufus Jones in 1928. Tennis courts were added in 1927. Grant Hall was built in 1933.

Partition/Expulsion

The partition of Palestine in 1948 and the subsequent expulsion of many Palestinians again changed the character of the School. Friends Meeting House and the School grounds as they became the temporary home for refugees. School numbers swelled to accommodate refugees from the coastal cities. The *White Gifts* giving was instituted to give foodstuffs and money to needy families. There was a conscious endeavour to increase the Schools' scholarship support. As World War Two came to an end, once again the schools continued to struggle to be a positive influence in a troubled world.

Jordanian Rule

The schools had a relatively peaceful life during the Jordanian period from 1948-1967. The fifth secondary class of the Friends Girls School was added in 1956, and plans were ready for opening the sixth secondary in 1963. In 1962 four classrooms were added to Whittier Hall.

Israeli Occupation

Following Israeli occupation the boarding sections in both schools were closed, as students from neighboring countries were no longer able to come.

Since the very earliest years of the schools' foundation, both boys and girls from the two separate schools had shared some classes and this strategy had proved successful. Both boys and girls were always taught together from Kindergarten to Grade 2. The upper Kindergarten had begun very early in the Friends Girls School history and was permanently expanded to the Lower Kindergarten in 1983. There was a growing belief that co-education was educationally sound and could work well in Palestine. As the first Intifada, or Palestinian uprising, grew in strength, enrolment plummeted. The financial situation also put pressure on the Board to look closely at how to use the resources of the two schools more efficiently. In 1990, the campus of the Girls School became a co-educational Elementary School and Kindergarten and the campus of the Boys School became a co-educational High School. When both schools are fully occupied, FGS will have 580 pupils in Kindergarten and grades 1 to 6 and FBS 470 boys and girls in grades 7 to 12.

Palestinian National Authority

Following the Oslo agreements, the uneasy peace brought greater stability to the schools with the emergence for the first time of a government in waiting that had a real interest in Palestinian education.

The second Intifada began in September 2000. Since the beginning of the second uprising, the Schools have been in the center of towns exposed to a new level of violence with sequences of nightly shelling from Israeli tanks and light artillery and attacks by helicopter gunners. The psychological well being of our parents, students and staff was shaken and our enrolment figures fell to 370 pupils in the FBS and 540 in the FGS in 2000/2001 as families left for America and elsewhere to escape the violence. The expansion of the Friends Girls School to three classes in each grade from 1 to 6 will be complete by September 2003.

However, in the past following each tragedy the school has recovered, maintaining its reputation as a leading academic center in the Palestinian community. Despite everything today the Schools continue to demonstrate the resilience and patience of the Palestinian community keeping alive the hope and vision of a better future and to demonstrate the willingness of our Friends and Alumni overseas to help financially when the school's viability is threatened.

FACILITIES PROVIDED BY FRIENDS SCHOOLS

Friends Girls School

Library

The FGS library contains books, periodicals and newspapers in both the Arabic and English languages. All classes from Grades 1-5 have scheduled Library classes to encourage reading and the writing of book reviews.

Science laboratory

The Friends Girls School has a well-equipped general science laboratory. All students at the school have regular science laboratory classes.

Computer Laboratory

The school has an up-to-date computer laboratory. Students in the fifth grade take weekly computer classes. A review of the computer facilities is taking place and an extended network of computers in each classroom is being planned.

Art and Music

The art and music rooms at the school is used by all students at FGS. The music room is equipped with a variety of musical instruments, which are used by students during the music classes.

Sports

The school has one basketball field, one tennis field and a multipurpose field which is usually used for football. The school has also an indoor gym equipped with personal fitness equipment.

Lockers

Any student can rent a locker to store their books and other school belongings.

Multipurpose Hall

This is the main hall at the school. It can seat up to 200 students. It is used for the weekly chapels and for performing students' activities.

Friends Boys School

Library

The library at FBS is used by all students and teachers for research, study and general reading. The extensive collection, in English and in Arabic, is constantly growing with over 200 new books each year. At present over 30 periodicals are received on a regular basis. The school is in the process of constructing a new building which will contain a greatly expanded new library.

Science Laboratories

The school has three science laboratories equipped to the international standards. All students at the school have regular science laboratory classes.

Computer Laboratory

The computer laboratory at the school is equipped with 10 Pentium 4 stations connected by a network and has Internet access. Students in 7th, 8th, 11th and 12th grade take computer classes. Any student can have access to the laboratory during lunch hours. The new building, which is under construction, will contain a new computer laboratory with over 40 stations. All students are allocated personal e-mail addresses.

Art

All students at FBS use the art studio at the school during their art classes

Khalil Totah Auditorium

This is the main hall at the school. It can seat up to 450 persons. It is used for the weekly chapels and for performing students' activities.

Sports

The school has two basketball fields, one handball field, two volleyball fields and a football field. There are also two indoor halls, which are used for PE classes during winter days.

Lockers

Any student can rent a locker to store their books and other school belongings.

Jim Harb Hall

A multi-purpose hall which can seat up to 200 hundred persons is used for meetings, lectures and workshops.

FOOD SERVICES AT FRIENDS SCHOOLS

The Friends Girls School encourages its parents to provide healthy snacks and drinks for their children during the day. Drinking water is, of course, provided on the school campus.

The Friends Boys School has a cafeteria which is located on the campus and which sells wholesome foods such as sandwiches and drinks during the mid-morning break and lunch periods. Food may be purchased only during these hours and eaten in the playground. Students may bring their own sandwiches to school.

During dry weather, food is not to be eaten in the buildings or classrooms on either campus with the exception of the children in the kindergarten who are expected to eat their sandwiches/snacks provided by their parents in the classroom at the appropriate time.

RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS

During Ramadan or Lent, parents are asked to make their own decisions about encouraging their children to fast. The school respects each families wish to fast or not to fast. During Ramadan, the school timetable at both schools is adjusted to shorten the working day starting a little later in the morning and finishing earlier in the afternoon to help children with keeping a fast. The cafeteria remains open on the Friends Boys School site for those not fasting throughout the year.

Every effort is made to respect Christian and Muslim holy days during the year even though it is the Quaker tradition not to honor special days in the calendar feeling that every day is as spiritually important as another.

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION

Application

Parents interested in enrolling their child at the Friends School must complete an application with a copy of a birth certificate, a photo, the results of a medical check up from a doctor on first entry into the school and a completed 'Health Form', a 10 US\$ application fee and transcripts for any child entering grade 2 and above. Following a successful application, a school transfer certificate will be requested from any previous school.

The school offers an academic programme for students who are able to meet its standard. Admission to the school is selective and based on the criteria below.

General Criteria

1. An interview with the parents of prospective students with their children is always conducted. In the interview, our teachers seek to have a first hand impression of the student's personality, character and to understand particular matters that should be noted about the family. Parents are helped to understand the Quaker philosophy of education and the nature of its program., the style of teaching and the principle of co-education.
2. If a family already has other children in the school, priority will be given to the registration of their siblings. Similarly priority is given to the children of Alumni in the registration of new students. Clearly this is particularly important where the number of applications exceeds available places in any grade and this is often the case in the Elementary and Kindergarten sections.
3. Every effort is made to maintain an equal number of boys and girls in each grade of the school and preference may be given to girls over boys in competitive entry.
4. The maximum size for a Kindergarten class is 20. Similarly in Grade 1 and indeed in every other class in the school, the maximum size of a class will be 27 for all grades by September 2004.

Criteria for entry into Kindergarten and Grade 1

5. The minimum age for entry into the Lower Kindergarten, Upper Kindergarten and Grade 1 are usually four, five and six respectively. For entry in September, if space will allow, children who will be four, five and six respectively by the end of January of the following year may be offered a place. Children to be enrolled in the Kindergarten are expected to be toilet trained, responsive, interactive and ready for school.

Criteria for entry into Grade 2 through to Grade 12

6. Every applicant is required to sit a competitive entrance examination in English, Arabic and Math. The Test Score is used by the school as an indication of the student's level of

performance in the three main subjects. The applicant must show that performance in these subjects is comparable to the other students in the school at the same grade.

7. Any debts or financial arrangements at any previous school need to be settled before registration. Recommendations and transcripts from any previous school are required and usually given at the request of Friends School. These are good indicators of whether or not the school should expect any disciplinary problems pertaining to the students. If so, the school may choose at an early stage to reject the application in favour of another.

Acceptance and Registration

*On acceptance, parents are notified and a registration fee **must be paid to secure the place**. Please note that this fee is **not refundable** if the student decides not to attend school.*

At the time of registration any other additional fees notified to parents at the time of application are collected. If a student who has registered decides at the beginning of the school year not to attend, these additional fees will be reimbursed.

Please note that part of the general fees paid during the time of registration include a fee for accident insurance which covers most medical bills resulting from injuries sustained at school.

All injuries or accidents at school must be reported to the school office as soon as possible. The school office is able to offer simple first aid; more serious injuries may involve a trip to the hospital with an administrative or faculty member.

Parents of accepted children agree to abide by the rules of the School.

Re-registration

Students already in the School are required to register for the next academic year usually in the Spring (April or May) as specified by the school calendar for the year.

Graduation

In order to graduate from the Friends School and receive its diploma, a student must have been enrolled in the school for at least two years, all school fees must be paid, all library books and all rented books must be returned. In addition, a student must have maintained good conduct and have passing marks in all subjects attempted.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

At the beginning of the school year a school calendar is distributed listing holidays, marking periods, and dates for Parent-Teacher conferences.

TUITION PAYMENTS

Tuition fees are paid in three installments on dates specified on the school calendar. Late payments will result in an added penalty of 2% on the amount due, unless otherwise arranged with the administration.

THE VALUES CURRICULUM

Friends Schools place a priority on teaching the values felt necessary for leading a life of service in the community. We seek to encourage our children to explore their individuality and their responsibility as school community members in the framework of a person of faith. Friends School staff seek to permeate the whole of our school life in each classroom with these values. The school staff seek to reward those who enhance the life of our school community and to encourage better behaviour from those whose actions or words are unacceptable to us.

Ethics is a subject that is critical to our school philosophy. Ethics provides an opportunity for a student to reflect on the issues that concern them in their personal and social development. For example, the program will help support a responsible attitude to sexual behaviour and the use and abuse of pharmaceutical and recreational drugs. It will help a child reflect on his or her place in the life of the school and the community and the role that they will eventually play as mature and questioning adults.

Allied to the Ethics program is the Community Service Program which aims at helping students to develop a strong sense of affiliation to their community. As a child progresses through each school campus, he or she is encouraged to learn from and support those who are less fortunate than themselves and to expect to play a part in service to the community. The International Baccalaureate program includes this element as a necessary component for the successful completion of the Certificate or Diploma.

THE CHAPEL PROGRAM

Weekly attendance at Chapel is a very important part of Friends School experience.

All Chapel events begin with some time of silence and reflection. These short periods of quiet are given to remind us all of the presence of God in our lives and in the community. They provide a little time to learn to lay aside the business of our lives and relationships and be still.

The Chapel event is a community event and we give respect to our Palestinian identity with the singing of the National Anthem.

The Chapel program is designed to provide an opportunity for students to share in the celebration of the life of the school and the gifts that students bring to life in the School community. It may also be used to manage or reflect upon events which affect our lives together. The program may from time to time re-inforce the history of our school and our land, hear directly from our graduates about their successes and failures, learn something of our Quaker culture and tradition and reflect any aspect of our life and times together which is best heard as a gathered community.

Friends Schools makes every effort to make these occasions special and memorable.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The Academic program offered at the Friends School is unique to Palestine. It follows the curriculum of the Palestinian Ministry of Education, extended and developed where appropriate.

English as a second language is taught at a very early stage, and as students progress through the school, more courses are taught in English. Striving for excellence in education, the Friends Schools are willing to experiment with new teaching methodologies and insist that all materials and programs are relevant and up to date. The schools encourage hands on discovery learning and thus all science courses, for example, have a laboratory component. The use of libraries is enhanced by the book reports and referenced articles which are required from students in many of their classes.

Friends Girls School (Pre-school Program)

The pre-school program is bilingual and follows the thematic approach.

In early years children learn successfully through their interest in real events, objects or people. The themes chosen focuses on their interests. Theme work is vital in the pre-school for it enables children to develop their interests. It builds on the experience and knowledge the children have acquired outside school. Children learn about a topic or theme such as growing plants through active exploration and first hand experience (planting, watering, and measuring). The content of the pre-school program is divided into five general themes.

The English curriculum operates parallel to the Arabic and is divided into the same five themes. By reinforcing the material taught in the Arabic classes, the program aims to provide children with a solid bilingual basis. The children follow a rotating schedule of Arabic, English and Mathematics in the morning and creative arts activities at noon.

Children are taught to read by the sight reading system, in which picture/word matching cards are used to help children learn words as visual patterns prior to learning the names and sounds of the letters.

The program aims at providing the child with a pleasant atmosphere. He/she is helped to develop emotionally, socially, physically and mentally whilst at the same time learning to think conceptually. Concepts are taught through play, with evaluation done three times a year for Upper Kindergarten and twice a year for Lower Kindergarten.

Friends Girls School (from Grade 1 to Grade 6)

At the Friends Girls School most of the teaching is done in the Arabic Language, ensuring a firm foundation in the language of the society. English as a second language is taught beginning with the lower kindergarten children. As students progress through the school, additional courses in English are added. In the sixth grade children are taught Maths using the English Language. The curriculum

required by the Palestinian Ministry of Education includes Math, Science, Social Studies, Religion, Arabic Language, English Language, Physical Education and Vocational Education, Additional subjects offered at Friends Girls School include Ethics and Computer Studies. Science in Friends Schools is a laboratory subject.

Friends Boys School (Grades 7 to Grade 12)

Students in grades 7 and 8 learn all the courses required by the Ministry of Education and most are taught in the Arabic Language. English is introduced as the medium of instruction in one or two subjects in grade 7 and 8.

When students enter the 9th Grade, much of their academic program is taught in English using materials that are derived from the British International General Certificate of Secondary Education. Starting in the 9th grade, Arabic as a second language is provided for students with little or no proficiency in Arabic and such students are taught all their other subjects in English.

For the final two years of High School, in grade 11 and 12, students have a number of curricula choices. Some choose to complete their academic program in the Arabic language, preparing for the Palestinian Tawjihi Arts or Science examinations.

Most other students choose to study in English and enroll either in an American High School Program or in the International Baccalaureate Diploma program.

All Science subjects have a major laboratory component. In addition to the courses required by the Ministry of Education up to and including Grade 10, Friends Schools provide Computer Studies, Ethics and College Preparation to all students in the High School.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

The IB program is recognized by colleges and universities worldwide as well as by the Palestinian Ministry of Education who grant Tawjihi equivalency to a pass in the IB. The IB program is specially designed to provide for international mobility of students between schools and to promote international understanding. It requires students to take a balanced selection of traditional subjects as well as a course in the Theory of Knowledge. In addition, students are required to write an extended essay and to demonstrate experience in the creative arts, other activities and community service. It provides a rounded curriculum which fits closely to the ethos of Friends Schools. There are plans for the development of the School over the next five years to provide the International Baccalaureate curriculum or at least its style for the whole school.

The Friends Boys School is accredited by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) based in Geneva, Switzerland. The IBO regularly reviews the school academic program and the facilities, and requires teachers to attend IB workshops in their field of teaching.

COLLEGE COUNSELLING

Nearly all graduates of the Friends Boys School attend college or university. These graduates, regardless of curriculum, have not found it difficult to enter leading Middle Eastern, European, and North American universities. To help students with the preparation and application process, a

course is taught in the 11th grade to help students prepare for the PSAT, SAT and TOEFL exams and to select and communicate with colleges that meet a student's requirements. In addition, a member of the administration staff is responsible for completing school recommendations and insuring that transcripts are sent to the appropriate schools.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Most of our students graduate from Friends School and go on to Higher Education.

It is the policy of Friends School to encourage parents and students to research the information that they need in any choice between local, Middle Eastern, European and North American universities and colleges. Friends School endeavors to assist parents and students in this search by providing the resources through the College Counseling program. However Friends School recognizes that it is the parents and students who must make any decisions about applications and should be principally responsible for the research necessary.

Friends School has a policy to seek relationships with universities and colleges internationally that lead to full or partial scholarships for those students who can demonstrate excellence in a variety of different fields including the academic and the personal. Friends School, however, does not provide any financial assistance itself and will not seek financial support for students beyond college scholarships.

Our school has a good reputation for encouraging students to continue their Higher Education in colleges and universities at home and abroad. It is our policy at every stage in the High School to encourage students to think about their future and the prospect of Higher Education. Friends School wishes to encourage students to make sensible choices about their future with their parents, which relate to their personal interests and attributes and school achievement record. It is school policy to encourage our students to maximize their educational potential and opportunity be it at home or overseas. However, it is also our policy to encourage students to think long term about their return to Palestine and the contribution that they can make to its future development.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Stemming from the belief that every child has a right to education and from the School's Mission statement which is committed to developing the whole person, a special education program was established at FGS in September 1995. It was agreed to admit to the School those children who cannot easily be provided with an education in a classroom without support because of physical or emotional obstacles to learning where Friends Schools, within their own limitations of staffing and accommodation, can allow.

Where children are accepted into our Special Education, Friends School is obliged to provide each child with the support for learning that they need. It is hoped that as a consequence of the Schools giving special attention to learning support for particular children, greater recognition will be given throughout the School to all children's individual needs and that the program will be seen in that context.

Support services provided by the program include;

- i. screening and early detection of a special need

- ii. individual planning of a program of support for each child so identified in consultation parents, and where appropriate, with other specialist consultants
- iii. direct support in the classroom in co-ordination with the classroom teacher
- iv. additional support, where necessary, using a variety of learning materials and activities provided in a resource room. The resource room makes available a diversity of materials and techniques, which enrich and enhance learning experiences for all students.
- v. Suggested modifications to the curriculum where such modifications would be beneficial to all children.
- vi. Assessment and evaluation of the Special Needs intervention in the learning of the child.

This program will continue to expand into the Friends Boys School and will be given priority in development over the next five years.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM (PRESCHOOL CHILDREN)

The Friends Girls School offers an after school care program for preschool children from 1.30 – 3.00 p.m. each day school is in session.

The school accepts a limited number of children in this program and it is open to preschool parents who have more than one child in the school and to the children of teachers. The school accepts other preschool children if there are spaces available. Normally two staff people supervise this program to ensure the children's safety and well being.

Parents wishing to enroll their children in this program should complete an application form available from the Kindergarten and pay the additional charge of 30US\$ per month at the FGS Finance Office.

SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks at the Friends Schools fall into two categories. Those that are locally printed and used with the courses required by the Palestinian Ministry of Education. Usually these books are in Arabic and do come in hard covers and are sold by the school a week prior to the beginning of school.

The other category of books are books printed overseas and come mostly in hard cover and in English. There are not sold but rented to the students due to their high costs except for accompanying student workbooks which are sold. Arrangements are made that the rental fee is collected at the time of registration in May, and teachers distribute them to students on their first day of classes.

Rented textbooks are to be kept in the condition in which they were received. If a book is lost or damaged, a fee will be determined at the end of the school year. Students who have damaged or lost books are not given their report cards at the end of the academic year until fees for damage or loss have been paid.

Friends Schools do not provide copybooks. Students may buy them from the book stores of their choice.

ASSESSMENT

The work and behaviour of students at the Friends School is regularly monitored and assessed. Full reports are sent home to the parents every 6-8 weeks during the school year.

Kindergarten (FGS)

The teachers in the Kindergarten encourage parents to talk regularly and freely about their child's progress throughout the year however a general assessment of the progress of each child through the Kindergarten is made each quarter for both achievement in the quality of work and in behaviour.

Grades 1-12

In grades 1-12 students progress is assessed every quarter on the basis of their daily work which includes classwork, short daily and weekly tests, homework, projects and participation. In grade six, students have to sit for a final exam at the end of each semester in every subject.

The intention is to gradually increase the weight of the internal examinations to help prepare students for the seriousness of public examinations such as the Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SATs), International Baccalaureate and the Tawjihi. At the same time the school philosophy is to recognize that two short examinations a year are not a sufficient assessment of a child's ability or progress through the school.

For grades 6, 7 and 8 the combined examination mark for the two semesters weighs 20%.

For grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 the combined examination mark for the two semesters weighs 30%.

The grades recorded at Friends School are for academic progress. They follow the pattern below illustrating the equivalence between percentage marks and letter grades although letter grades are used exclusively in report cards.

EXCELLENT	A+	=	97-100%
	A	=	90-96%
GOOD	B+	=	87-89%
	B	=	80-86%
SATISFACTORY	C+	=	77-79%
	C	=	70-76%
PASS	D+	=	67-69%
	D	=	60-66%
FAIL	F	=	<60%

Behaviour

Every attempt is made to lay down clear guide lines and consequences for children to help control poor behaviour. For both the Friends Boys School and the Friends Girls School, the Rules and Expectations of Students are the same and are described later in this Handbook.

At the Friends Boys School, a point system is used which relates directly to the academic grading system above. At the Friends Girls School, a scale of Very Good, Good, Satisfactory and Poor is used to describe behaviour.

At both schools, every effort is made to reward positive behaviour that benefits the school community. At the Friends Boys School this behaviour is similarly rewarded on a points basis and these points can be used to cancel points gained through negative behaviour. At the Friends Girls School, the whole school is encouraged to recognize and reward students whose behaviour has been very good and this way positive student behaviour is encouraged.

Cheating

Cheating is a very serious offence at Friends Schools and teachers are very vigilant concerning this aspect of a student's behaviour. A student caught cheating or trying to cheat in an examination or a student found to have copied another student's work in a written assignment will receive a zero grade. As a consequence of cheating, an F for the conduct grade and no more than 50% (F) for achievement is recorded in the quarter in which the offence occurs. A parent conference will be also be required and a written discipline warning will be filed in the student's records.

Promotion to the next grade at the end of the year.

In order for a student to be promoted to the next class, they must have at least a passing grade D i.e. an average grade of 60% or above in every subject. If, at the end of the school year, a student has failed two or fewer courses, they may sit for make-up exams in those courses. In order to be promoted, the student must get a passing mark on the make-up exam/s. In addition proper attendance, with a minimum amount of absenteeism, is required.

HOMEWORK

Homework becomes an increasingly important part of a student's life as they progress through the School. It is intended that homework should be a joint activity with those parents who wish to help through the first four years of the Elementary School. This involvement with one or both parents can help give a message to the child that school is important and valued. Parents should never do the homework for the child but can assist, give ideas and encouragement.

Gradually the child should be taught to be more independent finding increasing satisfaction in working on his or her own at home. Parents should choose the right moment in the child's progress through the school to begin reducing their involvement. It is important that parents provide the right environment for students to study and that parents ensure that the students have the time to study.

Children in the very earliest years should expect to spend approximately two hours a week at home with their parents in support of what they have learned in the classroom. The time spent in support to learning through homework should, as the child progresses through the fourteen grades of our school, increase to an expectation of approximately 15 hours of independent learning a week.

It is important that teenagers maintain a healthy balance between work and leisure. Young children and teenagers both need time to relax on their own, socialize, play or just chat with their peers. However, teenagers should develop strong habits of regular study at home. It is hoped that by the

time a student reaches grade 11 and 12, they will find the discipline of preparing for public examinations easy to accept.

Teachers assign homework for all students (grades 1-12) in most of the subjects.

Homework is given so that children can

- I** independently plan and organise their study time
- M** manage resources on their own using the library and other reference materials
- P** prepare for the next day's classes
- R** review and practice what they have learned
- O** open new approaches to learning
- V** value self-discipline and responsibility
- E** explore subjects more fully than time permits in the classroom

PARENT - TEACHER MEETINGS/CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are held at the end of the first quarter and at the end of the third quarter. This is a time when parents may meet with their child's teachers and be updated to the progress of their child. At this time teachers can also share the objectives of the course and inform the parents of things that might be done at home to improve the performance of their child.

Throughout the school year, parents can request conferences with the teachers of their child. Each teacher at the school has a weekly office hour during which parents can meet him/her to discuss the progress of their children. At the beginning of the school year the office hours of each teacher is given to parents. An appointment to meet with a teacher during their office hour can be made with the school secretary.

Parents can also meet any administrator including the Principal /Head of School upon a prearranged appointment.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Friends Schools, in normal times when security is not an issue, encourage children to take part in as wide a variety of extra curricular activities as possible usually after the end of the school day. This is an opportunity for children to develop new interests and learn new skills. This is part of the Schools' responsibility as a learning environment providing children with choices which they can make voluntarily and independently. The opportunities provided can play as important a role in the student's future interests and career as the formal part of the school curriculum.

Friends Girls School

Extracurricular activities are encouraged with a variety of choices offered at school. These include:

Choir, dabkeh, karate, basketball, soccer, gymnastics, computer, art, music and pottery.

The Yearbook Committee. Each year students, under the guidance of a faculty member, are responsible for producing a yearbook, which chronicles the life of the school during that academic year.

Field Trips. Field trips by classes or groups of students are encouraged. These trips, however, must be approved by the administration and chaperoned by the school staff.

White Gifts program. It has been a long tradition of the Friends Girls School to reach out to needy families of the Ramallah/el-Bireh area at Christmas with gifts of money and goods. In the weeks prior to Christmas, classes collect money by sponsoring bake sales and donations.

Friends Boys School

Extracurricular activities are encouraged with a variety of choices offered at school. These include:

The Yearbook Committee. Each year students, under the guidance of a faculty member, are responsible for producing a yearbook which chronicles the life of the school during that academic year.

The Drama Club. Each year a group of students, under the guidance of a faculty member, prepare and put on a major drama production.

Debke or Folkdance Troupe. Each year several groups of students form debke or folkdance groups which perform at a variety of functions such as Open Day and Mothers Day.

Student Council. In the Fall semester class representatives and an administrative team are elected by the students. Working with a faculty advisor, the Student Council is responsible for organizing student activities.

Sports Teams. Each year the physical education department coaches basketball, handball, volleyball and soccer teams which compete against area schools.

Library Committee. Students have an integral part in helping the librarian run the library. This volunteer committee helps with shelving books, signing books in and out, and running the photocopier.

School Trips. Field trips by classes or groups of students are encouraged. These trips, however, must be approved by the administration and chaperoned by school staff. Parents are notified about all school trips and must sign a permission slip allowing their child to take part in such an activity. CAS. Students in the IB program are required to complete 150 hours in creativity, activity and service projects. This program is supervised by a faculty member.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

All students from grade 1-12 are required to wear school uniform. Kindergarten (preschool) children have no uniform and they are encouraged to dress in easy-to-wear clothes.

The uniform of grades 1-12 consists of;

Striped white and navy blue shirts (can be short sleeves or long sleeves)

Grey pants, shirts must be tucked in under the pants.

Maroon neckties (not required at all times)

Plain navy blue pullover with the school logo

Black belts only are allowed

Short grey pants may be worn by boys of grades 1-6, girls may wear grey jupe-culottes in the summer

The PE Uniform consists of;

Grey short sleeve sweatshirts with the school logo and navy blue shorts for girls and boys of grades 1-6 in the summer

Navy blue training suits with the school logo for grades 1-6 in the winter

Tennis shoes (running shoes)

Grey long pants for girls and boys of grades 7-12

Important notes related to uniform;

PE Uniforms are worn on PE days by girls and boys of grades 1-6, while they are worn only during PE Classes in grades 7-12.

The uniforms worn will be that sold by the school

High heels are not allowed

Make-up is not allowed

Jewelry is not allowed, except for small plain earrings, a small ring, a plain chain with a small emblem around the neck.

Extreme hairstyles for boys or girls is not acceptable.

Boys' faces, except for well-groomed moustaches or fine beards, are to be clean shaven.

Hats inside the classrooms are not allowed.

Lab coats are required for all students of grades 7-12 during laboratory periods.

All students are responsible for purchasing and wearing the school uniform which consists of gray trousers, a button-down striped shirt, a maroon tie, and for winter a navy blue sweater. This uniform can be purchased in the week prior to the start of school.

Purchasing School Uniform and PE Uniform.

School uniforms and PE uniforms are usually sold before the beginning of the school year at each school.

During the school year, at Friends Girls School (grades 1-6) students or parents are requested to fill in an order form and pay the finance office on Thursdays. On the next Saturday, parents or students should then collect their order from the Main Office (school uniforms) or the Finance Officer (PE uniforms.). During the school year, at the Friends Boys School (grades 7-12) uniforms are sold to students by the Finance Office on Wednesdays during the second break.

RULES AND EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

To be a student at Friends school, you have to know and agree with the following rules and regulations:-

Uniform: Boys and girls are expected to wear the same uniform, consisting of gray pants, striped shirt and a navy blue sweater in the winter. The uniform worn will be that sold by the school. All students are expected to come to school clean and well groomed. Extreme hair styles are not acceptable. All students are required to wear, a physical Education Uniform during P.E. classes.

Mobile Phones: Mobile phones are not to be used in the classrooms or on the school campus. Students living outside Ramallah are allowed to bring their mobiles with written permission from parents. They are expected however to hand the mobile phone into the office in the morning and to take it after the last class.

Using the Internet: Students may only use the internet under the supervision of a teacher. E-mail correspondence is allowed from a school computer but should be conducted with respect for other users and for the recipient of any message. Any abuse of this responsibility will result in the privilege of using the internet being withdrawn. The school reserves the right in the face of any abuse of the internet privilege to carry out any other appropriate disciplinary procedure. Politeness, good manners and respect for each other's views and attitudes are essential ingredients for any communication at any time.

Tardiness: Students are expected to arrive at school before the First bell at 7:45 am.

Class Attendance: Students are expected to be on time for every class. Students are expected to attend every class.

Absence Due To Illness: Students who have been absent due to illness must bring a written explanation from home for their absence. This could include a sick report from the doctor. Students who have been absent are responsible for all assignments missed. Make up work should be completed as quickly as possible.

Leaving campus: A student may not leave campus during school hours unless h/she has received permission from the school office, and is accompanied by a parent or guardian. Students are, however; expected to leave school following their last class, unless they are participating in after school activities.

Campus Areas Not Accessible To Students: Students should not enter the teachers work area and lounge. Students should not normally enter the grounds around Grant House on the FBS campus unless they have permission to do so.

Damage Accidental or otherwise: Accidents do happen. But whether damage to property is accidental or otherwise, the cost is not covered in our school Fees. Therefore the students will be

expected to report honestly and promptly any breakage or damage to windows , furnitureetc. They will then be charged to full cost of the repairs .

Damage to rented books will be charged proportional to the cost of the book.

Negative Points: The student will earn a negative point for any of the following or similar violations:

1. Unexcused tardiness to the school.
2. Chewing gum or eating bizer on school grounds.
3. Assembly or classroom minor misconduct e.g.interrupting the class.
4. Littering the School buildings or grounds.
5. Eating or drinking or carrying open containers of food or drink inside the buildings.
6. Not wearing the school uniform or not wearing it properly.
7. Inappropriate language.

Severe Misconduct: The following kinds of behavior are examples of severe misconduct;

- Smoking or possessing tobacco products.
- Stealing
- Physical or emotional violence .
- Skipping class.
- Leaving campus without permission.
- Possessing sharp objects.
- Possessing pornographic material.
- Abuse of the internet privilege
- Deliberately destroying school property
- Writing on desks, walls, doors,.....etc.

Disciplinary notices and warnings: A disciplinary notice is sent home to parents with any incidence of severe misconduct. If three disciplinary notices are received at any time during the quarter, as disciplinary warning is issued. On receipt of a disciplinary warning, the student will receive a conduct grade of no more than 50% and a F grade for the quarter.

If a student receives three disciplinary warnings during the school year, the student will be expelled from school.

Immediate expulsion: In the case of serve misconduct which causes a threat in any way to other students or to staff, a student may be immediately expelled from school before notices or warnings are issued. Parents will be asked to come and collect their child from school.

PARENT - TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Close co-operation between the school and parents is always encouraged. The Parent-Teacher Association known as the PTA, of which parents and teachers are members has several objectives. Its main purpose is to promote constructive interaction and communication between home and school. The PTA Committee Members are elected from both campuses for it is an association that works for the Friends Schools as a whole. Members of this Committee meet throughout the year to discuss issues of concern.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The Friends Schools are keen to attract talented and highly-motivated students. To ensure that a lack of financial resources do not prevent a student from enrolling in the school, a number of scholarship programs have been created which are listed below. Parents are encouraged to complete the scholarship application form if there is a financial need.

Eli and Sybil Jones Awards

This scholarship award of 100% of tuition fees is given to a child in his or her first year of school by a named donor. The award is intended primarily for a student whose family could otherwise not afford to send their child to the Friends Schools. As long as the student maintains very good conduct and a good academic performance, he or she will continue to receive the award until he or she graduates from the Friends Schools .

General Awards

This scholarship award is given to a child who has completed at least one year of study at the Friends Schools. This award is calculated for eligible families based on comparative need and awarded against a strict criteria. These awards range from 10% to 80% of tuition fees.

CONTACTING THE SCHOOLS IN AN EMERGENCY

During the present period of political instability, the School has experienced a number of emergency situations where parents have asked to take their children home, the School has decided to close at short notice or unexpected events overnight have led to confusion in the morning about the possible closure of the School.

Both the FBS and FGS will record special announcements on their phone lines 02 295 6230 and 6240 when a decision has been clearly made overnight to close the school the following morning. On all such occasions, the School will seek to ensure that a public announcement is made over local radio.

In an emergency situation during the school day where the school has to be evacuated, the School will protect and look after children in a safe place in the school grounds until collected by a parent or an adult nominated by parents. The school will endeavour to phone all parents in such circumstances. If a child is not collected by parents, the School will remain responsible for the welfare of the child and take such action as is sensible and appropriate.

SCHOOL SONGS

Forward Through the Ages

1. Forward through the ages in unbroken line,
Move the faithful spirits at the call divine;
Gifts in differing measure, hearts of one accord,
Manifold the service, one the sure reward.

Refrain: Forward through the ages in unbroken line,
Move the faithful spirits at the call divine.

3. Not alone we conquer, not alone we fall;
In each loss or triumph lose or triumph all.
Bound by God's far purpose in one living
whole,

Move we on together to the shining goal.
Refrain

2. Wider grows the kingdom, reign of live and light;
For it we must labor till our faith is sight;
Prophets have proclaimed it, martyrs, testified,
Poets sun its glory, heroes for it died.

Refrain

School Hymn in Arabic

1. We build our school on thee O Lord
To thee we bring our common need
The loving heart, the helpful word
The tender thought, the kindly deed.

Refrain:

With thee we pray thy spirit may :
Enrich and bless our School always.

2. We work together in thy sight
We live together in thy love
Guide thou our faltering steps aright
And lift our thoughts to heaven above.

Refrain: Dear Lord we pray thy spirit may
may

Be present in our School always.

3. Hold thou each hand to keep it just
Touch thou our lips to make them pure
If thou art with us Lord we must
Be faithful students and comrades too.

Refrain:

Dear Lord we pray thy spirit may
Be present in our School always.

4. We change but thou art still the same
The same good master, teacher, friend
We change but Lord we bear thy name
To journey with it to the end.

Refrain: And so we pray thy spirit

Be present in our School always.

F.B.S. Queen of Palestine

To the Queen of Palestine,
To the School where hearts combine,
Sing a song that echoes over all the lands,
Raise her standards to the sky,
Raise her reputation high,
Greet the manhood of the Royal Banner Band,
F.B.S. the boys are shouting,
F. R. I. E. N. D .S.
May her spirit that we praise,
Give her strength through all the days,
As we strive to win the battle of success.

