



GEORGETOWN
INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY

Family Handbook

2024-2025

With this handbook we aim to guide you through the 2024-2025 school year. Please carefully review it so that you are acquainted with the procedures and expectations at our school. Hopefully, the handbook will answer many questions you may have. Should you have additional questions or need to clarify information contained within, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The GIA Board, Head of School, faculty, and staff wish to thank you for your trust in us, your support of our various initiatives, and your collaborative spirit. We sincerely appreciate you and all that you do to honor our GIA learning community of excellence. We wish you a most successful school year and look forward to working with each of you to bring the best possible learning experience for each family.

Vision: Georgetown International Academy is a learning community committed to academic excellence, global awareness, and empowering well-rounded individuals educated for success in life.

Mission: To provide opportunities and challenges for each student to succeed as a lifelong learner and responsible citizen in a changing world by:

- Promoting high standards of education that are grounded in research within a collaborative, student-centered learning community
- Promoting the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for lifelong development of a well-rounded individual
- Preparing students to adapt and adjust to the complexities and challenges of the increasingly interdependent and constantly changing world

- Fostering awareness of rights, duties, and responsibilities of a globally aware and socially responsible citizen with a focus on respect for other cultures and nationalities

To learn more, please visit our web site at www.giagy.org

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GENERAL INFORMATION

In-House Directory

Schoolwide

Head of School	HOBBS, Shauna hobbs@giagy.com
Director of Teaching and Learning	HILLMAN, Mark hillman@giagy.com
Director of Admissions and Development	HEISTER, Billie Jo bheister@giagy.org
Deputy Head of School (Operations) / Upper School Principal	HEISTER, Jim heister@giagy.org
Lower School Principal	ALLEN, Cathy lsprincipal@giagy.org
Student Services Coordinator	GRUENICH, Stacy gruenich@giagy.org
Upper School Counselor	BEN-ISRAEL, Leah ben-israel@giagy.org
Lower School Counselor	THOMAS, EdRienna ethomas@giagy.org
IT Manager	RAMROOP, Kevin ramroop@giagy.com KING, Jason king@giagy.org

*Please contact the Board via the Board Secretary (board@giagy.org).

Administrative and Support Personnel

Business Manager	AARON-ROSHEUVEL, Loretta rosheuvel@giagy.org
Executive Assistant	LONDON, Lizanne london@giagy.org
School Nurses	BLENMAN, Joanne nurse@giagy.org RUPAN, Rhea

Facilities Manager	SIMMONS, Michelle simmons@giagy.org
Facilities Supervisor	DICK, Mustafa dick@giagy.org
Head of Security	MAYNARD, Durville maynard@giagy.org
Accounts Technician	SINGH, Tineka singh@giagy.org
Accounts Receivable Specialist	SHARIEK, Viedmattie shariek@giagy.org
Procurement Assistant	MCTAIR, Jonika procurement@giagy.org
Human Resources Manager	COX, Amy cox@giagy.org
HR Expat Specialist	GARRAWAY, Alicia agarraway@giagy.org
HR Assistant	SOLOMON, Saskia soloman@giagy.org
Student Data	JOSEPH, Stephanie joseph@giagy.org
IT Assistant	WHITE, Kibwe white@giagy.org
Assistant Data Administrator & IT Support	ALLY, Sarah ally@giagy.org
Upper School Assistant	DEY, Kean dey@giagy.org
Lower School Assistant/After School Activities Coordinator	CHAVES, Christina activities@giagy.org
Assistant to Director of Teaching & Learning	SEALEY, Joshua sealey@giagy.org
Admissions Assistant	PERSAUD, Nashana persaud@giagy.org
Reception	DURANT, Nekisha durant@giagy.org
Facilities Staff Please contact Ms. Simmons with any questions. simmons@giagy.org	COSBERT, Juanita GORDON, Brian HEMRAJ, Robert JARDINE, Alwyn MURRAY, Sasha McDONALD, Abbegail

	AUSTIN, Dorette DAVID, Donna GARRAWAY, Karen KING, Tamara
Security guards security@giagy.org	ALLEN, Meg GARNETT, Ashley GIDDINGS, Demitry ADAMS JOSEPH, Newlander LEITCH, Owen Mc Cammon, Troy SINGH, Naomi PHILLIPS, Annika MARKS, Keith WIGGINS, Maisha

Nursery through Grade 5 Faculty

Nursery	MICHAEL, Karen michael@giagy.org
Pre-Kindergarten	CLARKE, Delmae clarke@giagy.org
Pre-Kindergarten	SIMPSON, Triciana simpson@giagy.org
Kindergarten	MEUSA, Nashana meusa@giagy.org
Kindergarten	SILVA-MAINGOT, Ana-Lise maingot-silva@giagy.org
First Grade	JEUNE-SKEETE, Susanne skeete@giagy.org
First Grade	DOWERS, Anthea dowers@giagy.org
First Grade	DUNBAR, Sarah dunbar@giagy.org
Second Grade	SAMPSON, Jevina jsampson@giagy.org
Second Grade	BELGRAVE, Angela belgrave@giagy.org
Third Grade	BENTICK, Karen bentick@giagy.org
Third Grade	PENDON, Jafet pendon@giagy.org
Fourth Grade	LINLEY, Zakiyah linley@giagy.org

Fourth Grade	KUMAGAI, Kira kumagai@giagy.org
Fifth Grade ELA	CRUICKSHANK, Diana cruickshank@giagy.org
Fifth Grade Math/Sci	PANDITA, Fatima pandita@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	ARCHIBALD, Roxanda archibald@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	BASCOM-HEMRAJ, Coretta bascom@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	BHOLO, Cheroma bholo@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	BRATHWAITE, Olivia braithwaite@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	DA SILVA, Tonette tdasilva@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	EMBLETON, Stephanie embleton@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	JAGDEO, Indi jagdeo@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	MANAWAR-KHAN, Timera khan@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	NEDD, Alisha nedd@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	ROSE, Natasha rose@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	SAMPSON, Lotoya lsampson@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	SIMON, Grad simon@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	SOFTLEIGH, Michelle softleigh@giagy.org
Teaching Assistant	THOMAS, Shevon thomas@giagy.org

Grade 6-12 Faculty

Math Department	IMADONMWINYI, Frederick imadonmwinyi@giagy.org GONSALVES, Nicola gonsalves@giagy.org RAMKISSOON, Rondel ramkissoon@giagy.org
English Department	CUPIDORE, Liscell cupidore@giagy.org LEWIS, Althea alewis@giagy.org

Science Department	GONZALEZ, Natalia gonzalez@giagy.org HILL, Michelle hill@giagy.org STEELE, Jay steele@giagy.org
Social Studies Department	ALLEN, Britton allen@giagy.org COOK, Mary mcook@giagy.org SOOKRAM, Dollisa sookram@giagy.org

Special Subjects

Early Years Specials	ALLICOCK, Narefa allicock@giagy.org
Reading Specialist/ Early Years Library	BRYANT, J'Trenee bryant@giagy.org
Art	MONTAGNE, Alysa amontagne@giagy.org GRELL, Cristina grell@giagy.org
Music	FULLER, Jarrett fuller@giagy.org SOBERS, Christian sobers@giagy.org
Library	CHUNG, Yvonne chung@giagy.org
Design Studio	DUNBAR, Jarrett jdunbar@giagy.org MONTAGNE, Elden montagne@giagy.org
Physical Education, Health	YADAV, Manoj yadav@giagy.org COOK, Ben cook@giagy.org
French/Spanish	ARCHER, Nikita archer@giagy.org
Portuguese/Spanish	BALASAR, Sharon balasar@giagy.org
Spanish	MONTOYA, Carolina montoya@giagy.org LEE, Janelle lee@giagy.org
Learning Support	BALKARAN, Savita balkaran@giagy.org DHANASAR, Sayeed dhanasar@giagy.org GOODCHILD, Jessica goodchild@giagy.org GRUENICH, Brian bgruenich@giagy.org MENDES, Melvin medes@giagy.org
Full-time Substitute	INNISS-HOYTE, Shonette hoYTE@giagy.org RHIUS, Maria rhius@giagy.org

BOARD AND ASSOCIATION

The GIA school community is led by a Head of School and a democratically elected school Board comprising seven parents and two non-voting members. The non-voting members are a teacher's representative and a representative of the US ambassador. The GIA Association consists of all parents or guardians of GIA students. The school board meets monthly and produces annual reports on activities and the financial standing of the GIA association. GIA's association is governed by "Articles and By-Laws," copies of which are available to association members upon request. The teacher's representative to the Board is elected at a faculty meeting.

The function of the Board of the Georgetown International Academy is the overall control and direction of the business affairs of the Association and school. All parents or guardians of students at the school are eligible to stand for election to the Board, provided they are not GIA employees or spouses of GIA employees. The school Board typically meets on the second Tuesday of the month, but may hold extra meetings when warranted. Regular statutory Board meetings are open to parents and personnel. The dates of Board meetings may be viewed via the parent portal.

School Board

Chair (voting)	LOWRY, Ryan
Vice-Chair (voting)	ISHOOF KAHN, Scherherazade
Treasurer (voting)	PECK, Jim
*Secretary (voting)	PEREZ, Enrique board@giagy.org
Board Member (voting)	ZAMAL, Irzad
Board Member (voting)	DRÜEPPEL, Sebastian
Board Member (voting)	LALL, Teshawna
US Ambassador's Representative (nonvoting)	TBD
Head of School (nonvoting)	HOBBS, Shauna
Faculty Representative (nonvoting)	TBD

PTO

The GIA Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) provides support to our educational program. The PTO's mission is to serve as a voice for children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and an advocate for the education and well-being of every child. We encourage every parent to become actively involved in the PTO (see the PTO calendar linked). Teachers and auxiliary staff are strongly encouraged to support the GIA PTO. The PTO email address is pto@giagy.org.

STUDENT COUNCIL

GIA's Student Council consists of elected representatives of the student community, led by four student officers. The Student Council provides students with the opportunity to be involved in the democratic process by initiating, promoting, and implementing programs and activities for student and school development. Families are strongly encouraged to support the GIA Student Council by supporting their various activities.

KEY CLUB

In June 2014, GIA became a member of the Kiwanis Key Club program. Key Club is a world-wide community service organization. Students of Grades 7-12 are encouraged to join the Key Club and actively participate in its initiatives. Key Club meets once a week during the after school activities block.

COUNSELING

All students have access to a variety of services provided by appropriately licensed personnel, including orientation to programs, schedules and facilities; information concerning school and community resources; interpretation of personal, academic, and assessment results; individual and group counseling; and educational and career planning. Personnel providing these services adhere to principles of ethical behavior by informing students of limitations to confidentiality based on legal requirements, including, but not limited to: 1) the implementation of weapons and alcohol and other drugs policies; and 2) the maintenance of the health, safety, and welfare of students..

SCHOOL AFFILIATIONS

GIA is an American Overseas School (A/OS) and thereby receives aid grants and similar benefits from the US Department of State in Washington D.C. Please refer to [Schools Worldwide - United States Department of State](#) for more information. Throughout its existence, GIA has enjoyed a special relationship with the US Embassy in Guyana, and the support of the United States Ambassador. GIA also enjoys the unofficial support of other embassies and high commissions including the Indian High Commission, Canadian High Commission, and European Union.

GIA is accredited by New England Associations of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). GIA is also a member of the American International Schools in the

Americas (AMISA), a group whose mission is to provide and promote programs and services to member schools to enhance the quality of American International Education, as well as the Association for the Advancement of International Education (AAIE), and International Schools Services (ISS). GIA is also an associate member of the TRI-association, the association of American Schools of Central America, Colombia-Caribbean, and Mexico.

HEALTH INFORMATION

Health information may be shared with school personnel on a “need to know” basis when information about your child’s health is necessary for school personnel to care for and respond to your child’s needs. It may be necessary to best serve the interests of your child that you sign a release of information between the school and healthcare providers.

Emergency Information—The school must have a way to reach you in an emergency. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to keep emergency information up-to-date.

Immunizations

Students ARE required to present proof of the following immunizations. All immunizations must be up to date:

- Measles, Mumps, Rubella
- Diphtheria
- Polio
- Pertussis

The following immunizations are recommended:

- Yellow Fever
- Hepatitis B
- Tetanus
- Covid-1

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL AND ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

SCHOOL HOURS

The normal school day for students begins at 8 a.m. Parents should drop off their children between 7:20 - 7:55 AM. Students are not allowed on campus before 7:20 am as there is no student supervision.

Beginning at 7:20 students are allowed to play on the playground and/or stay in the cafeteria. Classrooms will be open for students at 7:45 am.

Students are required to be seated in their classroom by 8:00 AM.

Students who arrive at school later than 8:00 AM or are not seated by 8:00 AM will be marked tardy for class. The last class of the day ends at 3:00 PM and

dismissal begins. Our after school activities run from 3:15 – 4:00 PM. Wednesdays are early dismissal days for students with classes ending at 2:30 PM with after school activities run from 2:30 – 4:00 PM. (see [Bell Schedule linked](#))

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Because GIA is responsible for each child's safety, we adhere to strict rules concerning student transportation, pick up, and drop off. Students are not permitted to leave school before the end of the regular day without a parent/guardian first notifying the school office. Students are expected to remain in school for all regular classes, festivals, and special events. Students will only be permitted to leave school at the request of a parent or guardian.

Parents should drop off their children between 7:20 and 7:55 AM. To facilitate the smooth flow of traffic, parents are asked to enter the campus through the entrance gate, drive to the drop-off area, and leave via the exit gate. Vans should drive through the entrance and proceed through the roundabout. They will drop off at the front of the school and proceed to merge with the cars. Vans will exit out of the second gate. With this arrangement, all traffic will flow in one direction.

After entering campus, pull into the drop-off lane to safely allow students to exit the vehicles on the left-hand side. Teachers and administrative staff will receive your children at the drop-off lane. We ask that you avoid, as much as possible, retrieving items from the trunk so that the arrival process can flow smoothly, safely, and quickly. If you would like to walk your child in, please do so by parking in one of the available visitor parking spaces.

For smoother traffic flow, please drive all the way to the end of the drop-off area or pull up directly behind the car in front of you in the drop-off lane. Following drop-off, you may pull out of the drop-off lane and use the right-most lane to exit campus via the second gate.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Nursery students enrolled in the half-day program must be picked up at 11:30 AM each day. Students of grades PreKindergarten through 12 must be picked up between 3:00 and 3:15 PM each day unless the student is participating in after school activities. Students whose parents/guardians have not picked them up by 3:15 PM will be required to wait inside the school's office.

Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Upon enrollment each family will receive an official vehicle sticker with a unique ID that is registered in Plusportals. Any vehicle picking up your child must have this sticker. If you would like an additional or replacement sticker, please request from security. To register a driver or other personnel as someone authorized for pick up, please send an email to your child's respective principal stating the name of the person and also

include a copy of the person's ID card or a picture of the person. When changing drivers or having someone else pick up your child, please notify the school via email to your child's respective principal. Your update email should include the name of the person, a copy of the person's ID card or picture of the person, and the time period for which this pick up arrangement will last.

During dismissal time, vehicles must join the queue and display the unique vehicle sticker in a prominent position on the windshield so that it is easily seen by dismissal personnel. Please note that students will not be permitted to walk home or leave with non-parents or non-guardians unless the parent has made special arrangements via the school office. **All parents and drivers must make every attempt to ensure a smooth, regular flow of the pick up queue. We ask parents and drivers not to break from the line or impede its flow.**

If you prefer to park and personally collect your student at dismissal time, you must use the visitor parking area inside the campus gates. **Parents wishing to walk their child to the car must wait in the assigned waiting area just outside the entrance doors.** Students are not permitted to walk to their vehicles without an adult accompanying them.

LEAVING CAMPUS

Students are not permitted to leave school before the end of the regular day without a parent/guardian first notifying the school office. Students will only be permitted to leave school with a parent/guardian, or someone identified as an emergency contact. Students are expected to remain in school for all regular classes, festivals, and special events.

If your child is leaving before the end of the school day, this should be communicated by calling the office or in writing to the respective school principal. Any change in your child's pick up arrangements should be communicated via email. Please send a copy of the ID of anyone authorized to pick up your child(ren).

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential to the educational process and the achievement of each student. GIA students are expected to attend all classes scheduled during the school year, except in cases of illness or approved co-curricular activities. Students are required to make up any work missed due to absence.

Each teacher is responsible for recording attendance for their classes, including absences and the number of minutes a student is tardy. Tardy minutes exceeding 40 minutes will equate to one period of absence in the recording class. The class teacher is required to inform each student and parent if they are in jeopardy of an incomplete grade.

Upper School teachers will record attendance period by period. If the minutes of tardiness combined with full absences total 20% of the class time for a particular class, the student will earn a grade of 'Incomplete' for the term unless the Head of School authorizes an exception due to special circumstances or a 'school-excused' absence. A grade of 'Incomplete' will negatively affect the GPA for students in Grades 9-12.

- **Excused absence**

A student is absent from classes due to co-curricular activities, school sponsored events, or illness, supported by parent confirmation and documentation and approved by the Head of School. These do not count towards the 20% absence limit. Absences due to a special event or other reason are permitted up to three instances in a semester.

- **Unexcused absence**

A student is absent without parent/guardian confirmation and/or for reasons not accepted by the school. These count as missed class time and towards the 20% absence limit.

Though absences are categorized as excused or unexcused, **all absences are added to the same pool of overall total absences as indicated on the report card.**

- **Tardies**

A student arrives in class after scheduled start times. These count as missed class time and toward the 20% absence limit. For example, 50 minutes of cumulative tardiness is equivalent to one absence for the specific class. However, if the student arrives after the scheduled start time of their first class but the reason for tardiness qualifies as an excused absence, the minutes of tardiness will not count toward the school's 20% absence limit.

Procedures for Absences (Excused and Unexcused)

Whenever possible parents are strongly encouraged to make arrangements for absences well in advance.

Step 1: Send request to principal via email along with supporting documentation to request categorization as an excused absence.

Step 2: Notify the reason for the absence.

Step 3: Upon return, request make-up work from the homeroom teacher. The student will be granted as many days as he/she was absent to complete the make-up work. Students may be required to remain in class during a portion of recess/lunch or after school for as many days to complete any missed assessments or assignments that require one-on-one instruction. Students will receive credit for the work completed. Students may also be required to do additional homework to demonstrate mastery of the skills learned by the rest of the class during the absence. In the case where a student missed an assessment, taking a makeup assessment will be at the teacher's discretion. Teachers will evaluate each case based on: amount of instruction received during makeup period, demonstration of student readiness, type of assessment missed.

Excessive Absences

Based on our Attendance Policy, students who miss more than 20% (9 days), but less than 30% (15 days), will receive a narrative progress report on the work they were able to do while present. This will be an addendum to the report card with the grade of Incomplete.

Students who miss more than 30% (15 days) of the class time for a particular class will be given a grade of Incomplete (I) for the term unless the Head of School authorizes an exception due to special circumstances.

The class teacher must notify the student, parent, and divisional leader if a child has missed 15% of the class time for the term.

A grade of Incomplete will have a negative effect on the GPA and transcripts of students in Grades 9 through 12.

Exceptions

Where a student is enrolling for the first time and misses more than 20% (9 days) due to a delayed start time/enrollment, he or she will receive a report card with narratives on progress. Please note that there is no 30% limit for newly enrolled students to receive a progress report in lieu of a report card.

LUNCH AND SNACK

Students receive a snack/recess break each morning and are expected to bring their own nutritious snacks and beverages from home or purchase them from the GIA canteen. Students have the option of purchasing a hot

lunch from the lunch vendor or bringing their own lunch from home. Microwaves are available for students to reheat as needed.

Lunch must be dropped off by **11:00 for lower school students and 12:00 for upper school students.**

Students must eat in the cafeteria, food will not be allowed in the halls, classrooms, or common spaces. Students will not be allowed in classrooms or in the hallways during their lunch period unless given prior approval by a faculty member.

VISITORS AND DELIVERIES

GIA's teachers and administrators welcome visits from parents and other guests, however, GIA is a closed campus. Security protocols require visitors who are not parents to provide advance notice of their arrival. All visitors, including parents, will be issued and are required to wear a visitor's pass before proceeding past reception.

Parents/guardians requesting meetings with faculty must schedule before or after school. It is important we do not interrupt instructional time.

The school is unable to sufficiently guarantee complete safety and security of personal property. Therefore, staff and students are expected to care for their own property. The school accepts no liability for the personal property of staff and students. ([Visitor Code of Conduct linked](#))

Please note that weapons are never permitted within the GIA gates.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

GIA offers a Nursery through Grade 12 curriculum that is compatible with those of US-based schools. Our school is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Accreditation protocol and GIA's Board policies require that the faculty provide a rigorous PK-12 curriculum to enrich and reflect the needs and diversity of the school's international student body.

GIA's academic program is augmented by music/band, design, drama, art, Portuguese, Spanish, and physical education. Also, GIA's curriculum is designed to take advantage of the unique educational opportunities provided by the school's location in Guyana.

The curriculum at GIA is reviewed, implemented, revised, refined, and evaluated on a frequent basis to ensure that all are up to date, and meet US and international standards. The curriculum is made up of AERO (American Education Reaches Out). These standards are US standards adapted by the US State Department, adapted to meet an international context. If you would like more information please click on the [AERO link](#).

In addition to the curriculum frameworks that outline the expectations and content for courses in each subject offered at GIA, we also offer several AP courses. The course content and syllabi for all AP courses are created and distributed by the College Board. AP exams are offered once a year and students have the potential to earn college credit depending on the score they earn from taking the AP exam. However, the score that students earn on the test does not affect the credits earned towards their graduation requirements for the actual course class time attended at GIA.

Grading system

The school year is divided into four terms of approximately 45 days in each term. Report cards are sent home at the conclusion of each marking period.

In the high school, Student grade point averages are calculated on a four (4) point scale and show the cumulative effort of high school students and are applied from Grades 9 through 12.

Grade Point System		Grade Point Average**	
Number Grade	Letter Grade	Non-weighted	Weighted*
98-100	A+	4.33	5.33
93-97	A	4.00	5.00
90-92	A-	3.67	4.67
88-89	B+	3.33	4.33
83-87	B	3.00	4.00
80-82	B-	2.67	3.67
78-79 no	C+	2.33	3.33
73-77	C	2.00	3.00
70-72	C-	1.67	2.67
68-69	D+	1.33	2.33
63-67	D	1.00	2.00
60-62	D-	0.67	1.67
0-59	F	0	0

*Advanced Placement courses in which students sit for the exam at the end of the course are assessed an additional Grade Point Average weight of 1.00.

Grade Retention or Advanced Grade Placement

At the time of admission, a student will be assigned to an appropriate grade according to his or her previous school records or, the GIA age cut-off date of October 15th. Typically, students' needs are best met by remaining at the same grade level as peers of the same age. In cases where a student is over- or under-challenged at his or her grade level, teachers will provide supplementary learning experiences. In rare cases, a student's needs would be better met by repeating the current grade or being advanced a grade, and the faculty may recommend grade retention or advancement.

Retention refers to having a student repeat a grade or subject. Advancement refers to placing a student in a grade level/subject area that is above age grade placement. The process for advancement will not begin until after the third week of classes to allow appropriate observation

time. No requests for grade advancement will be processed beyond the end of the first quarter of the current school year

Class Size

Typical class sizes are as follows:

- Early Years to Grade 2: 20 students per class, with one teacher and one teaching assistant.
- Grades 3 to 12: 22 students per class on average.

Class Placement

Student assignment to one homeroom or another will be done in an equitable way to ensure both groups have even distributions of students by gender, learning styles, cultures, cognitive and emotional development/needs, and proficiency in the English language. In support of this process, we welcome parents' insights into their children's placement along with any other relevant information but we cannot in any way guarantee to meet all parent requests. **We will not receive requests for classroom placement with specific teachers and/or staff.** Our focus and commitment is on creating the best and most productive class groups which benefit ALL students.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Statement

At Georgetown International Academy, we advocate to create an inclusive environment and foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community. To achieve our DEI goals, we recognize the importance of ongoing education, communication, and action. We are committed to continuously educating ourselves and our community on issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and actively seek out opportunities to learn from diverse perspectives and experiences. We prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusivity in all aspects of our institution, from recruitment to developing our students into globally aware and socially responsible citizens. We are dedicated to promoting equity by identifying and addressing systemic barriers that prevent individuals from accessing educational and professional opportunities. We strive to provide a safe and supportive environment where all students can thrive, regardless of their background or circumstances. We foster open communication, including hard conversations, and listen to all voices--all stakeholders play a vital role in creating a truly inclusive community. We are committed to learning and adjusting as we move along on this journey to become a place that embraces diversity, equity, and justice for our community, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, socioeconomic status, and ability.

Library

Hours of operation

The GIA Library is open from 7:45 AM – 3:20 PM Monday to Friday with the exception of Wednesdays, when the opening hours are 7:45 AM – 2:30 PM.

Checkouts

	Number of checkouts	Lending period	
Nursery and PreK Students	1*	2 weeks	*Special permission for more materials may be granted when deemed necessary for an assignment.
Grades K-2 Students	2**		**In addition to their two books, kindergarten, first and second grade students may check out an early reader of their choosing.
Grades 3-12 Students	2*		*Special permission for more materials may be granted when deemed necessary for an assignment.

Overdue

Overdue notices will be sent weekly via email through our online catalog system. Students will have 1 month to locate missing books before they are asked to replace the book lost or pay 2x book value for repurchasing and importing costs.

Lost or damaged books

If a book is lost or damaged, the book must be replaced/paid for before additional books can be checked out. Payment for a lost book is refunded should the book be found and returned in good condition. Students who owe money are not eligible to borrow more books and will not receive their final report card.

Student Conduct

GIA student behavior standards apply as well as the following special library rules:

1. Take care of library materials and return them in the same condition in which they were borrowed.
2. Leave food and drink outside of the GIA library.

Management System and Website

Library materials are cataloged using Follett Destiny. The catalog is accessible online at <https://giagy.follettdestiny.com>. Our school website www.giagy.org also contains a link to the catalog as well as to [Sora by Overdrive](#) where students can access e-books using their school email and password.

Accessible Use Policy and Parental Consent

Books in the GIA library are shelved and labeled by reading level and content classifications as defined by Follett: E/K-3rd grade, 3rd-6th grade, 5th-8th grade, young adult and adult.

Students wishing to check out fiction books 2 grade levels or more above their current class placement will require parent permission given by submission of this [form](#) in hard copy or via email to our librarian, Ms Yvonne Chung, chung@giagy.org. For example, if your child is in 3rd grade and you allow him or her to check out fiction books categorized as 5th-8th grade, you will need to sign and submit this [form](#). If you have a 4th grader, he or she does not require a signed form to check out books for 5th-8th. The form may be submitted at any time during the school year and will remain in effect in subsequent years unless revoked in writing.

HOMEWORK

GIA uses the following guidelines when assigning homework:

- Homework is related to learning in the classroom
- Homework is used to reinforce skills and concepts already taught
- Homework is not to be considered punishment
- Homework should be assigned for the purpose of preparation, recall, practice, and research

Time guidelines when assigning homework (cumulative of all courses):

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| • Grades 1 & 2 | 10 to 20 minutes |
| • Grades 3 & 4 | 30 to 40 minutes |
| • Grades 5 & 6 | 45 to 60 minutes |
| • Grades 7 & 8 | 1 to 2 hours |
| • Grades 9 through 12 | 1.5 to 3 hours |

The homework expectations for each class will be communicated to students and parents at the beginning of the year.

***Note that students taking AP classes may have additional hours of homework.**

BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

Teachers will maintain a register of all textbooks and school materials assigned to students, including the condition at hand out and collection. Textbooks must be returned at the end of the year or at the termination of a class. Students are responsible for keeping these books in good condition and will be charged if books are lost or damaged. Students provide their own school supplies, including pencils, pens and paper.

At the beginning of the school year, parents are provided with a student supply list. The supply list is general. Some teachers may ask for additional items throughout the year.

Grade level	Supplies
Nursery, Pre-K, Kindergarten	Backpack, snack bag, crayons, glue stick, safety scissors, pencils, erasers, sharpener, pencil case, pocket folder, hand sanitizer, tissues, a change of clothing in case of accidents, water bottle
Grades 1 through 5	Backpack, snack bag, crayons, markers, pocket folder, colored pencils, erasers, scissors, glue, ruler, apron or large shirt to wear during painting and other messy work, hand sanitizer, tissues, dry erase markers, water bottle, headphones
Grades 6 through 8	Pencils, sharpener, erasers, blue and black ink pens, dry erase markers, highlighter markers, graph paper, colored and white index cards, binder and index dividers, scissors, colored pencils, ruler, glue stick, 6 two-pocket folders with fasteners, student dictionary and thesaurus (hard copy or electronic), fine tip black Sharpie, colored markers, protractor and compass, hand sanitizer, lab coat (can be purchased on 2 nd floor of Fogarty's department store), tissues, flash drive, water bottle, small padlock for locker Device -laptop or tablet (please see our BYOD)
Grades 9 through 12	Pencils, sharpener, erasers, blue and black ink pens, dry erase markers, highlighter markers, graph paper, binder and index dividers, scissors, colored pencils, ruler, glue stick, 6 two-pocket folders with fasteners, post-it notes, student dictionary and thesaurus (hard copy or electronic), fine tip black Sharpie, protractor and compass, hand sanitizer, lab coat (can be purchased on 2 nd floor of Fogarty's department store), tissues, flash drive, calculator, water bottle, small padlock for locker Device -laptop or tablet (please see our BYOD section)

*Please refer to BYOD policy regarding tech device requirements for students of Grades 6 through 12.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

GIA students take externally standardized tests, NWEA Measures of Academic Progress for Growth (MAP) and the iReady diagnostic, to determine instructional needs and student placement.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Field Trips

GIA incorporates learning activities outside the classroom as well as within. Field trips are a regular and important feature of GIA's academic program. In many respects, the community and natural environment are the school's laboratory. GIA encourages class and school-wide field trips that directly or indirectly support GIA's learning goals. The school is open to field trip suggestions from parents/guardians or students.

After-School Activities

GIA organizes after-school activities that are open to the student body. These are optional and are meant to help students develop interests that are not directly provided for by the school curriculum. We invite ideas for after-school activities from all GIA stakeholders. We encourage parents/guardians, students, and teachers to volunteer their time should they have skills or hobbies that might interest students.

Holiday and School Calendar

GIA's [School Calendar](#) is posted on the school's web site. The school year is organized following a two-semester, four-term schedule. GIA observes all declared Guyanese holidays as well as the major American holidays. In addition, GIA teachers participate regularly in professional development activities that sometimes require school to be closed to students for whole or half days.

As observance of holidays and other special events has the demonstrated potential of causing disruption and misunderstanding in almost any school situation, the GIA staff has by consensus evolved a school policy with the knowledge and consent of the Board. It is agreed that our school's practice of observing and/or celebrating holidays and other special events is not for the purpose of promoting any religion, culture, political position, or interpretation of history. Our practice is rather in support of the school's mission and philosophy which commits us to sharing the rich cultural mix of both our school community and host country, Guyana.

UNIFORMS

The principals are responsible for enforcing GIA's uniform expectations.. Parents should pose questions regarding uniform expectations to their child's principal. Interpretation of the expectations are at the discretion of the principal and such decisions will be final.

- Students who arrive at school out of uniform will be given a warning. If the attire is deemed inappropriate for the classroom students will be given a new uniform to change into and their parents will be invoiced.

- Students who arrive at school in footwear that does not meet our safety requirements will sit in the office until their parents can bring appropriate footwear for them to change into
- Students who do not adhere to uniform expectations will be handled by the Principal on a case-by-case basis.

To maintain a consistent and professional appearance, all students are required to adhere to the following uniform guidelines:

Bottoms:

- Students must wear pants, shorts, or skirts in gray, khaki or navy.

Tops:

- Students must wear polo shirts or button-down shirts in gray, navy or white with the school logo. (Please note that the old uniform shirts are also permitted for the school year 2024-25.)

Outer wear:

- Students may wear hoodies, sweaters, jackets, etc, of their choice in gray, navy, or white that do not promote drug, alcohol or tobacco use, violence, discrimination, sex, etc.

Footwear:

- Students must wear close-toed, flat shoes, with a rubber or other non-skid sole. These may include rain boots when appropriate. (sandals, flip-flops, and similar footwear are not permitted)
- Students are not permitted to wear shoes with skate wheels on school property or any school-sponsored event.

PE uniforms

- PE uniforms should consist of a plain, short sleeved t-shirt and sport shorts/sweatpants to allow for comfortable movement in the same colors as indicated for their formal uniform (or the student's House shirt).
 - Lower school students should wear their PE uniforms on their scheduled PE days.
 - Upper school students will have the opportunity to change into their PE uniforms at the start of class and to then change back into their school uniforms at the end of class.
- Students must wear sneakers, track shoes, or court shoes during physical education classes and activities.

Dress Down Days

At various times throughout the year students will be allowed to attend school out of uniform. On those occasions, students are required to observe the guidelines for dress down days to maintain professionalism:

- Avoid shirts with cut-outs, lace, or see-through fabrics
- Avoid offensive words or symbols on any clothing
- Shirts must reach waistline and navel/midriff must be covered
- Shorts/skirts must be no more than 3 in above knees

On school property or at school-sponsored events, students are not permitted to have bags, folders, attire, jewelry or any other item that promotes drug, alcohol or tobacco use, violence, discrimination, sex, etc.

Exceptions

In rare cases, the principal may grant a student a short- or long-term exception to one of the rules. Parents (not students) must make requests for exceptions directly to their child's principal. Please note that in such cases parents are required to supply their children with clothing that matches the school's as closely as possible. Grounds for an exception include:

- Medical conditions that are exacerbated by close-toed footwear. (Doctor's note required)
- Skin allergies or conditions that limit students to wearing specially treated fabrics. (Doctor's note required)
- Physical conditions that make it difficult for the student to button and unbutton trousers
- Religious tenets that require specific codes of dress

Please note that all students who are new to GIA will receive an automatic one-week grace period before being required to adhere to the uniform expectations.

Please note that GIA respects students' religious customs and permits students to wear yarmulkes, hijabs, topi caps, etc.

To schedule an appointment to purchase uniforms, please contact the receptionist via email (durant@giagy.org) or by calling the main office at 225-8347 or 226-1595.

COMMUNICATION

Positive communication along established lines with and between students, parents, teachers, the administration, and the Board is essential. GIA teachers and administrators encourage open, frequent, and respectful communication among all school stakeholders. Teachers and members of GIA's office staff are required to regularly communicate with parents and encourage the exchange of ideas. We ask that all GIA Community members adhere to the following general procedures.

PlusPortal

Parents may access students' grades via the PlusPortal. Each student and parent will have usernames and passwords.

Please contact the student database administrator (see directory) for more information. In order to learn more about PlusPortals for Parents and Students you may visit <http://www.rediker.com/parentplus-studentplus>

Email

Email is a frequently used tool for communication between home and school. Please refer to the following RESOLVING CONCERNS protocol to determine who should be your first communication contact. We would like to remind everyone that, while convenient and quick, the intent of an email message can be easily misconstrued by the recipient and may cause hard feelings. If you receive an email that "doesn't feel right," please give the sender the benefit of the doubt and talk with him/her. We respectfully request that you refrain from sending an email when angry. Instead, call the office and ask for the teacher to return your call or meet with you in person. Teachers will respond to phone calls and email within 24 hours or by the following business day, depending on weekends and holidays.

Parent, Student, and Teacher Conferences

Student progress conferences are important tools for facilitating good communication and aiding mutual reinforcement and assessment of educational goals for students. Strong communication and cooperation between teachers and parents/guardians facilitate the educational and emotional growth of the child. The teacher or parent may initiate a conference. Parents are asked to attend a minimum of two conferences per academic year, occurring at the end of the first and third terms. The first conference is generally a parent/teacher conference and the second is a student-led conference. Parents are encouraged to schedule additional conferences whenever there is a special concern. Please inform the assistant to the principal or the receptionist and they will contact the teacher to arrange the conference. Teachers and other faculty members have many responsibilities and are not expected to see parents who drop in without an appointment.

Report Cards

Student report cards will be sent home electronically four times per year, at the end of each 9-week term. Report cards for Terms 2 and 4 will include narratives.

RESOLVING CONCERNS

Protocol

1. Concerns relating to the classroom must be referred to the teacher affected. Parents or guardians must request a conference with the teacher to discuss classroom concerns.

2. If the parent/guardian does not feel that the problem has been adequately resolved, he or she will be free to bring the issue to the attention of the Principal.
3. If after the above step has been followed, the parent/guardian does not feel that the problem has been adequately resolved, he or she is free to bring the issue to the attention of the Head of School.
4. If after the above steps have been followed, the parent/guardian is free to bring the concern to the Board.
 - The concern should be addressed to the Board in a formal letter that indicates the steps that have been taken and describes the resolution the parent/guardian seeks. The letter should be sent to the Chairperson of the Board who will promptly acknowledge receipt of the letter. Letters must be submitted at least one week before the regularly scheduled monthly Board meeting to enable the item to be placed on the agenda. Any complaints relating to the Head of School or employees will be heard only in an Executive Session of the Board. The decision of the Board in such matters is final. The minutes of Executive sessions are confidential, but the person filing the concern will be notified of the Board's decision in the matter within 14 days of the decision.

Meetings with Principal or Head of School

The Principals are the instructional leaders of the school whereas the Head of School has general oversight. If you have questions regarding curriculum, the academic program, etc. please contact the Director of Teaching and Learning to schedule an appointment. If you have questions of a general nature or other reasons to speak with the principal or Head of School, please schedule an appointment by contacting the respective assistant.

The Head of School is the normal channel of communication between the Board and the school community. Positive communication along established lines with and between students, parents, teachers, and administration and the Board is essential and desired.

In general, please direct queries as follows:

- Curriculum--- Director of Teaching and Learning
- Parent or Student Portal---Student Data Administrator
- Uniforms---Receptionist and/or Principal(s)
- After School Activities---Lower School Assistant
- Invoices or payments---Business Manager
- School lunch---Cafeteria vendor
- To make appointments---Receptionist
- Facilities--- Facilities Manager
- College advisement---Upper School Counselor
- Student health--- Nurse
- Discipline policy and procedures including attendance—Principal(s)
- Student Council--- Upper School Counselor

- Key Club---Advisor
- Service Learning---Upper School Counselor
- Online courses--- Data Manager
- AP Program or SAT--Upper School Counselor
- MAP Testing---Director of Teaching and Learning or Principal(s)
- To speak with Head of School---Assistant to the Head of School (Executive Assistant)
- PTO---PTO President
- Report Cards---Student Data Administrator
- Yearbook---TBD

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

One goal of GIA's discipline program is to assist each student to develop self-discipline and to learn to accept responsibility for his or her actions. Our goal is to work in partnership with parents to help each student develop sound ethics, personal accountability, and a sense of responsibility to society and the environment. Parents are important partners in the achievement of good student conduct and will be informed of behavioral concerns and disciplinary actions such as after school detentions.

The Jaguar Way focuses on promoting positive behavior, preventing unwanted behavior, and improving overall school climate. At its core, the Jaguar Way seeks to create a learning environment where students can thrive academically and socially.

Our Behavior Framework

The Jaguar Way is our behavior framework that will guide our efforts to:

Define Our Expectations: We are working on clearly defining our school-wide behavioral expectations. This will help everyone understand what is expected in different settings throughout our school.

Teach Behavior Skills: We are developing strategies to explicitly teach behavior skills to our students. This includes not only academics but also social skills that are essential for success in school and life.

Reinforce Positive Behavior: We are exploring ways to acknowledge and reinforce positive behavior. Recognizing and celebrating successes, both big and small, is crucial in building a positive school culture.

Respond to Challenging Behavior: While we aim to promote positive behavior, we are also developing a plan for responding to challenging behavior. This will involve a fair and consistent approach that prioritizes support and growth.

Data-Driven Decision-Making: We are committed to using data to inform our PBIS efforts. This means collecting and analyzing data to understand trends and areas that need improvement.

Dangerous Weapons

Students are prohibited from possessing, carrying, exhibiting, and displaying weapons, firearms, explosives, knives, or other dangerous objects while on school property or at school-sponsored events. Any device that is used with the intent to harm, threaten, or harass is considered a weapon.

Alcohol, Tobacco, Vaping Devices

GIA's campus is a smoke-free campus. Tobacco products, cigarettes, vapes, etc. are prohibited at all school events. Students are also prohibited from attending any school sponsored events while under the influence of any of these products. This applies to all students, including those who are over 18 years of age.

Violation of School Regulations

Violation of school regulations may lead to discipline sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Corporal punishment is prohibited at GIA.

*Please note, the student discipline procedures are being reviewed. The new procedures will be shared with students and parents within the first quarter of school. Until that time, faculty will follow the existing procedures listed below.

ANTI-BULLYING

Students thrive in an environment wherein they feel accepted, safe, and supported. At GIA, we believe that **all** students and staff members are responsible for creating a safe, inclusive, caring and protective environment in which everyone can work and learn in an atmosphere free from intimidation.

Bullying strikes at the basis of these values and prevents students from reaching for excellence in every dimension of life. Students are entitled to receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse. At the beginning of every academic year and at other specifically designated times students will receive training on bullying. It is important for students to notify a teacher or parent whenever they feel bullied.

Students who are bullied may develop low self-confidence or esteem, feelings of insecurity, extreme anxiety and/or depression. Students who witness bullying may experience feelings of distress, guilt, or anxiety.

Students who engage in bullying behaviors are at risk of becoming depressed, performing poorly in school, and developing antisocial characteristics (Source: Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools in Ireland, 2013).

Definitions

Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behavior, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Examples of unacceptable behavior include:

- Physical (including sexual) assault
- Verbal abuse, by name calling, teasing or making offensive remarks
- Cyber-bullying is the use of electronic technology to harass, threaten or intimidate someone; examples include using social websites, mobile phones, text messaging, photographs, videos, What's App, Snapchat, e-mail, etc.
- Indirect emotional tormenting by exclusion from social groups or spreading malicious rumors.

The above list is not exhaustive but merely represents the most common forms of bullying. To list all forms of bullying is beyond the scope of this policy.

Responsibilities of Students, Parents & Teacher

Students

- Tell/report if he or she is being bullied or is aware that someone else is being bullied.
- Help anyone who is being bullied.
- Participate in developing and upholding a creed against bullying.

Teachers

- Ensure students are supervised at all times and remain vigilant about supervisory duties.
- Model mutual respect and appropriate behavior at all times.
- Teachers are expected to take a professional problem-solving approach that is caring but calm and unemotional when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behavior reported by pupils, staff or parents. Teachers and other parties are also expected to protect the privacy of all involved and to conduct interviews with sensitivity.

Parents

- Watch for signs that their children may be experiencing bullying
- Encourage their children to "tell" / "report" if they are bullied
- Speak to the homeroom teacher/mentor, principal, or head of student affairs regarding incidences of known or suspected bullying.
- Parents and students are expected to cooperate with any bullying investigation and assist the school in resolving issues.

All reports of bullying will be investigated by the principal. If the principal determines that bullying behavior has occurred, they will contact the parents of the parties involved to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. Parents are expected to reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school.

TECHNOLOGY

Phone-Free Initiative at Georgetown International Academy

We are excited to announce that Georgetown International Academy is going phone-free for the upcoming school year. To support this initiative, we have purchased the Yondr Pouch for all students in grades 6-12. This decision is rooted in extensive research demonstrating the benefits of a phone-free environment in schools, which include enhanced academic performance, improved social interaction, reduced anxiety, and better overall well-being for students.

Research Supporting a Phone-Free Environment

1. **Improved Academic Performance:** Studies have shown that students who do not have access to their phones during school hours exhibit higher levels of concentration, leading to better academic outcomes and retention of information.
2. **Enhanced Social Interaction:** By removing the distraction of phones, students are more likely to engage in meaningful face-to-face interactions, which fosters stronger relationships and communication skills.
3. **Reduced Anxiety and Stress:** The constant presence of phones and notifications can contribute to increased anxiety and stress among students. A phone-free environment helps create a calmer and more focused atmosphere.
4. **Better Sleep Patterns:** Limiting phone use during the day can lead to healthier sleep patterns, as students are less likely to engage in late-night phone usage that disrupts their sleep.
5. **Increased Physical Activity:** Without the option to use their phones, students are more inclined to participate in physical activities during breaks, which is beneficial for their physical health and well-being.

Yondr Phone Pouch Policy

To facilitate this phone-free environment, each student in grades 6-12 will receive a Yondr phone pouch at the beginning of the school year. Below are the details of the policy:

1. **Distribution and Responsibility:**
 - Each student will be issued a Yondr pouch at the start of the school year.
 - Students are responsible for keeping their pouch for the entire year and must bring it to school every day.

- If students do not bring their pouch, the phone will go into a locked cabinet in the Upper School Office for the day. They can retrieve it at the end of the day.
2. **Usage:**
 - Students must turn off their phones and place them in the Yondr pouch upon arrival at school.
 - The pouch will be locked using the Yondr system and will remain locked throughout the school day.
 3. **Unlocking:**
 - At the end of the school day, students will have access to a designated magnet station to unlock their pouches and retrieve their phones.
 4. **Lost or Damaged Pouches:**
 - If a student loses their pouch or it becomes damaged, they will be responsible for the cost of a replacement, which is \$30.00 USD.

BYOD AND NETWORK

Technology can be used as a valuable tool to support learning and the pursuit of knowledge. Students may use devices that fall into the following categories: (1) laptops, (2) netbooks, (3) tablets, and (4) e-Readers. However, if misused, these devices can be detrimental to the learning environment. GIA has a "BYOD" (bring your own device Program). We encourage students to use personal devices appropriately. Students must adhere to the following expectations:

- Devices may not be used for personal reasons during class time. Students may use laptops or tablets for personal reasons only during designated times and in designated locations.
- Students may use devices during class time for educational purposes but only after permission has been granted by the teacher. Teachers will confiscate devices if students do not adhere to this expectation.
- During exams, each student must lodge all personal devices with the teacher at the beginning of class. Failure to do so will likely result in a grade of zero on the exam.
- School personnel are under no obligation to search for students' missing devices. Students will not be excused from class in order to search for a misplaced device.

GIA will not be held accountable for lost or stolen devices. Parents have the responsibility of determining their child's age appropriateness to take on the responsibility of having a personal device. We discourage students from leaving any electronic devices in their desks or lockers.

BYOD Program for Grades 6-12

All students of Grades 6 through 12 are required to have a device with wireless Internet connectivity capability.

Device requirements:

Machine Type	Laptop or Tablet
Platform	PC, Mac, or iPad
Processor	PC: Any modern processor (Intel i5 or AMD Ryzen 5 or higher recommended for optimal performance) Mac: Intel Core i5 or better iPad: Modern A-series or M-series processor
RAM	4 GB or higher (8 GB recommended for better performance)
Hard Drive	250 GB or Higher
Operating System	PC: Windows 10 or higher Mac: MacOS 12 or higher iPad: iPadOS 16 or higher Note: The OS must be in English and have document-creating capabilities (e.g., Microsoft Word)
Wireless	Devices should support 802.11b/g/n (2.4 GHz) and 802.11ac (5 GHz).
Ports	2 or more USB ports (preferred) Audio in/out Built-in microphone VGA or HDMI
Battery Life	At least 4+ hours (4+ cell or higher)
Browser	Chrome (recommended)

Each student will be required to sign an *Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement*, one copy of which will remain in the student's school file and one copy of which will be given to parents.

NETWORK USE GUIDELINES

General school expectations for behavior and communications apply. Users are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or in any school facility, and should be polite and respectful. Communications on the network are often public in nature. Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored. Students are held responsible for seeking appropriate materials

and avoiding other potentially offensive materials. The list below illustrates, but is not limited to, actions which are not permitted:

- Displaying, saving or distributing offensive messages or pictures
- Using obscene or vulgar language
- Damaging or disrupting computers, computer systems or computer networks
- Harassing, insulting or attacking others
- Revealing the personal address or the phone numbers of students or colleagues
- Violating copyright laws
- Using another's password or account without their permission
- Trespassing in another's folders or work
- Intentionally wasting limited resources (i.e., bandwidth, file space and printers)
- Downloading software for non-instructional purposes, such as music
- Distributing any material in such a manner that might cause congestion of the video and data network
- Using chat programs without permission
- Employing the network for commercial, political or profit-making purposes
- Accessing inappropriate sites

Violations may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the school administration.

We encourage students to use their own laptop computers. However, we require that any computers using GIA's network have up to date, comprehensive virus protection. When students are not using their laptops or other electronics, they must lodge them in the office for safekeeping. GIA is not liable for damage to or loss of computers and electronic devices or phones that have not been lodged in the office.

SECURITY AND EMERGENCIES

School Nurse – Health Room

A health room is located on the ground floor of the main building. The school nurse will be available for consultation and emergency situations. Any injury should have an accident report filled out regarding it. In cases where injury or illness is or may be presumed to be serious, the parents shall be informed. Parents must be informed of any head injury. The school nurses and other staff members have been trained as "first responders" and may be called upon to assist in an emergency.

Drills

Standfast

A standfast response is issued when there is a risk to students and staff, but the risk is not violent in nature.

A steadfast response is used when there is:

- a chemical spill
- a gas leak
- a potential risk but the nature and extent of the risk is uncertain
- a danger in the neighborhood
- civil/political unrest

Lock down

A lockdown response is issued when there is an immediate threat of violence to all students and staff.

A lockdown response is typically used when there is:

- an active shooter on the campus
- a bomb threat
- other threatening weapon on campus

On-site evacuation

Some incidents may require that part or all of the school be evacuated. An on-site evacuation is issued when there is an isolated non-violent risk on-site, but isn't a danger to the entire school or community.

An on-site evacuation response is typically used when there is:

- a fire in a classroom
- a flood in part of the campus
- a natural gas leak
- a hazardous chemical leak
- a bomb threat

Off-site evacuation

If there is an incident on-site that puts the students and staff at risk by remaining on-site, or if the campus needs to be cleared for police or fire investigation, the Head of School may determine that all students and staff must be evacuated to an off-site location.

An off-site evacuation response is issued when there is an immediate threat to the school and community, but it is safe to move the students. Usually, additional investigation is necessary after the emergency is over.

An off-site evacuation response is used when there is:

- widespread flooding
- a chemical spill
- a gas leak
- an active shooter has been contained, but investigation is still ongoing
- a confirmed bomb

eEmergency Notification (School Messaging System)

The school maintains an emergency messaging system that sends notifications to families in three formats: phone call, text message, or email to the contact information we have on file for you. Drills and tests are conducted periodically to ensure accuracy. We appreciate feedback from you in confirming receipt or reporting non-receipt of messages. Please keep your contact information up to date, by promptly informing us of any changes.

GIA FAMILY HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

The Georgetown International Academy Handbook contains important information regarding the policies and practices of the GIA.

I, _____, as the parent of

_____, have been given access to the Handbook for the 2024-25 school year. I have read the Handbook with my child and we understand and agree that we shall abide by all of the policies set out in this Handbook.

Signed Parent:

Signed Student:

Date: