



German International School of Houston

German-English Dual Language Immersion Program

ONE CHILD. TWO LANGUAGES. UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES

6221 Main Street, Houston, TX 77030

Phone: 832-831-6843 - E-mail: office@gish-houston.org - www.GISH-Houston.org



Parent Handbook 2023 – 2024

German International School of Houston (GISH)

6221 Main Street, Houston, TX 77030

GAES dba *German International School of Houston* is formally recognized as tax exempt under section 501(c)(3) EIN 26-2709647, and a licensed facility with TDFPS Operation Number 1657223.

Non-Discrimination Policy: GAES dba *German International School of Houston* does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, or handicap in administration of its educational policies, admission policies or in its employment practices.

Updated in December 2023



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July 15th, 2023

Welcome to the *German International School of Houston (GISH)*!

We are honored that you are a part of our school community.

This is our sixth year at our present location and growing to now serving students from PS2 to 1st Grade. We believe that quality care and education is a partnership between parents and the school. At *GISH*, it is our mission to partner with parents, and to provide students with lifelong learning so that they contribute to their communities as insightful, effective, and caring individuals.

Our teachers care for each individual child and make them feel welcome in the classroom. Independence and social skills are the most important aspects of an early childhood setting. Both heavily rely on the ability to communicate effectively with others, nonverbal and verbal. Children learn to speak a language best through meaningful interaction and exposure. It is our mission to foster the German and English language development of our students through age-appropriate, interactive and hands-on experiences, as well as the exposure to the German and American cultures.

The partnership between parents and school is an important aspect in the success of our program. This Handbook outlines the School's policies and procedures that build the framework for our program, and is designed to ensure that your family has a positive experience with our School. Please take the time to read through this Handbook, as it provides the fundament for an organized and engaging learning environment that is as safe as possible. If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this Handbook, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Again, we welcome you to *GISH* and to our wonderful learning community, a place where energy, enthusiasm, creativity, passion, and dedicated teachers await your child.

It takes a community to raise a child! We are honored to be a part of yours!

Sincerely,

Bianca Reich

President of the GAES Board of Directors



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1. *GISH* - Program

1.1 Program Description

GISH is a small German - American School serving students ages two (2) to five (7) years in the Houston area, offering a German-English Dual Language Immersion Program.

Our program is dedicated to enriching the lives of our students, parents, and teachers through cross-cultural interaction. Students learn a second language naturally through exposure to stimulating content and a language rich environment.

The **vision of *GISH*** is to provide an international education, focused on inquiry-based learning with the goal of fostering confident, respectful, caring, creative and responsible lifelong learners and global thinkers.

It is our **mission** to provide an excellent educational experience for our students while developing and supporting the knowledge of both languages (German and English). We foster cross-cultural understanding that enables our students to actively participate as citizens in a global community.

Instructions are provided from Monday through Friday in classrooms with a low student/teacher ratio (ideally 8:1). *GISH* focuses on small group interaction, important for language acquisition in both German and English. Our 2023-2024 academic school year is based on ten (10) months (186 instructional days) from August 7, 2023 to May 30, 2024, and we offer summer enrollment to accommodate our families.

1.2 Dual Language Immersion

Immersion (lat. *immergere*=to plunge into, to indulge) has proven to be a highly successful method of foreign language acquisition using a very natural approach. The key to success is a distinct separation of languages – either room/space or person. At *GISH*, we separate by person. The American teacher uses exclusively English whereas the German teacher uses German only.

Brain research and cognitive studies on language acquisition have shown that children learn more in their first six years of their lives than at any other time. This applies to young children's unique language learning abilities as well. Research also unequivocally demonstrates that children who are raised from birth or early age with two or more languages develop high levels of competency in those languages. The languages become the medium for learning rather than the object of learning. A multilingual education starting at an early age opens doors for a successful future in our global society.



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1.3 Educational Philosophy

Our program provides a teacher-directed, child-engaged classroom setting. Besides the learning of two languages, we provide children with interactive and age-appropriate hands-on activities that promote the cognitive, physical, social-emotional and language development. Small group settings allow for direct social and verbal interaction with teachers and peers. **Our goal** is to enable children to become self-sufficient, independent, critical thinkers and social individuals.

1.4 Language Exposure in the Classroom

In the classroom, teachers stay in their language (German or English) unless communicating with parents, authorities, emergency situations or other situations that require a student to understand the teacher or directions given. Our goal is to provide equal exposure to both languages.

In addition to free play, students will participate in **circle time** and **small group** activities. During small group activities, the target language is based on the executing teacher.

Our teachers focus on the children's needs first. Our priority is to make each child feel safe and secure. Language is never forced. Students can freely choose in which language they communicate with their peers during the day. Teachers emphasize on the use of their target language in their group time and will model, motivate, re-direct and assist children to use the teacher's target language.

No prior knowledge or experience in German and English is required for the preschool classes. Knowledge or experience in German and English is required for the elementary classes.

1.5 Curriculum

Learning at the ***German International School of Houston*** takes place through a thematic curriculum. Educational activities include storytelling, reading, singing, art projects, fine and gross motor activities, math and science projects, nature exploration and celebration of German and American holidays.

We believe in hands-on and inquiry-based learning through exploring, discovering, experimenting, and observing the environment. Our goal is to build the foundation for a positive learning attitude. We provide a variety of activities that fit the student's individual needs and developmental level: physical, cognitive, and social-emotional.

GISH focuses on small group activities that provide the basis for language acquisition. Being surrounded by German and English speakers gives students the opportunity to develop and expand their vocabulary, and to feel good in an international environment.



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Our teachers guide students throughout activities by providing encouragement and assistance. Natural curiosity motivates children to engage in interactive and hands-on activities.

The Elementary School curricular is organized into English, German, Math, Science, Social Studies, PE and Art. Students are challenged to develop their understanding of basic concepts and learning that will accompany them throughout.

For both Kindergarten and First Grade: We give four quarterly progress reports that will detail students' progress in the various academic areas listed above. Progress reports will also detail absences and tardies for each individual student. Students will have as well periodic assessments in each academic area to evaluate their proficiency of different objectives.

1.6 Cognitive Learning

We foster cognitive learning and developmental levels through:

- opportunities for higher level thinking skills and sensory development
- opportunities for small and large muscle development
- opportunities for language development
- opportunities for social-emotional development
- opportunities to become independent, confident and competent life-long learners
- opportunities to encourage a student's natural process of inquiry
- drawing on best practices from around the world to create a relevant, engaging and challenging education
- promoting the development of the whole person, including the understanding of concepts, the mastery of skills and the development of positive attitudes
- helping the students learn to be open-minded and learn how to learn

1.7 Emotional and Social Development

GISH employees will foster self-esteem in students by providing and promoting the following:

1. We will recognize each student as a unique individual.
2. We will keep expectations for the students age appropriate.
3. We will give the students the freedom to make mistakes.
4. We will provide guidance through new activities and situations.
5. We will help tackle and complete educational activities by positive reinforcement.
6. We will give encouragement by providing students with praise while focusing on their strengths and pointing out their success and not their failures.



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7. We will accept and acknowledge each student's unpleasant feelings and emotions. All feelings can be accepted; however certain actions have to be limited.
8. We will give choices so students can develop a sense of ownership and responsibility.
9. We will provide responsibilities and expect cooperation in an age-appropriate manner. We will not take over tasks the child can complete him/herself.
10. We will keep a sense of humor and let the children see the positive side in all situations.

1.8 Promoting Indoor and Outdoor Physical Activity

GISH believes in the developmental benefits of physical activity. Physical activity/exercise includes anything that makes children's breathing faster and their hearts beat quicker. It has many health benefits for children including the development of healthy hearts, lungs, bones, muscles, and joints. It improves coordination, flexibility, strength, and muscle control while reducing health risks such as obesity, heart disease and type 2 diabetes in children. Research has shown that physical activity improves self-esteem and academic performance while decreasing stress and anxiety. Physical activities develop vital connections and lead to improved concentration and thinking skills.

In general, **two and three-year-old children** should participate in 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day. **PK-4 children** should participate in 90 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day.

Children enrolled in **elementary classes** receive a minimum of 45 minutes daily through either physical education classes or during recess.

At *GISH*, opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activities/exercise will be provided during outdoor time when weather permits, or in the classroom on days the weather does not allow for outdoor time.

Regular Day: While in attendance of our Regular Day, children will participate each day in forty-five (45) minutes of outdoor time, weather permitting, and fifteen (15) minutes structured or teacher-led activity promoting movement during the day.

Extended Day: All children attending our Extended Day Program will participate in an additional sixty (60) minutes of outdoor time, weather permitting.

Students' clothing should allow for full participation in active play throughout the day (not too loose and not too tight) and be weather appropriate. Shoes have to fit well and allow students to run, jump and climb.

Physical indoor activities are planned for rainy days.



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2. General Information

2.1 Non-Discrimination Policy

The *German International School of Houston* does not and shall not discriminate on the base of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring, and firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community, including our clients, staff, volunteers, subcontractors, and vendors.

2.2 Confidentiality

Within *GISH*, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of *GISH* that “need to know” in order, to safely care for our children. Also, this information will not be shared outside of our school community, except when the parents or legal guardians of a child have given expressed written consent.

2.3 Licensing Authority

GISH is licensed by the *Texas Department of Family and Protective Services* (DFPS), part of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. DFPS oversees Child Care Centers, Registered/Licensed Child Care Homes and Before/After Care Centers in Texas (more information under Parental Resources).

Licensed facilities have to comply with the state guidelines and regulations outlined in the **Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Child Care Centers (MS = [Minimum Standards Mar. 2023.pdf](#))**. A copy of the Minimum Standards is also available in the school office for the review by parents and teachers.

Licensed facilities are evaluated once a year through the visit of a Licensing representative. The most recent Licensing inspection report can be reviewed on the *GISH* Parent Board in the office.

2.4 Staffing

GISH is sufficiently staffed to meet the developmental needs of the students by adults who are trained in Early Childhood Education. It is our goal to employ native speakers for our target languages German and English.



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- Child/teacher ratio and group size are maintained in each classroom based on the Minimum Standards set by DFPS.
- All employees are certified in Pediatric First Aid and CPR.
- Teachers complete a nine (9)-hour on-site orientation prior to their first day in the classroom, followed by twenty four (24) pre-service hours, if applicable.
- Teachers participate in at least twenty-four (24) hours of continuing education annually (Site Director and Assistant Director thirty (30) hours).
- Teachers attend a one (1)-hour minimum workshop annually on the topic of “Abuse and Neglect”.

2.5 Parents

Parents will learn about their child’s day on a daily basis, and new information in regard to the program will be shared as needed.

Parents are encouraged to visit and participate in our classroom. However, an appointment has to be made for special activities such as reading books or visitation of more than two visitors at the same time.

A monthly curriculum and four newsletter (Aug/Sep, Oct/Nov/Dec, Jan/Feb, Mar/Apr/May) will be sent out to the parents, outlining the planned instruction and important information for the approaching months.

Two Parent-Teacher conferences per student will be held during the two designated conference dates listed on the Academic Calendar. Additional meetings can be requested at any time by the parents or teachers throughout the school year.

GISH will host at least two annual events to encourage parent participation and interaction between families (St. Martin, Christmas Market, Kindertag, etc. if possible).

Breastfeeding mothers are welcome to feed their children while visiting our program. Our employees will offer a comfortable place and the desired privacy, as long, as the practice does not interfere with our classroom instructions.

2.6 Liability of Parents for Damaged School Property

Parents are liable for any damage to school property caused by their child.

The teacher/teacher assistant witnessing any damage to school property is responsible for ensuring the students’ safety, and for reporting the damage to the Site Director in writing. The Site Director will notify the parents about the incident verbally via phone call, as well as in writing within 12 hours.



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2.7 Church Property

Parents are responsible for the supervision of their child/ren while on church ground. All *GISH* Parents are expected to be respectful towards the church property, church staff and their visitors. While on church grounds, the children should walk with their parents.

The water fountain in the courtyard is a decorative item and is not for play. Please note: it only takes a few inches of water for children to drown.

Tenant Position: *GISH* is leasing the classrooms from Palmer Church. As a tenant, *GISH* is not able to influence building closures due to unforeseen circumstances.

2.8 Classroom Arrangement and Environment

Our classrooms are designed to serve the attending students with a challenging, safe, age-appropriate, healthy, and eco-friendly environment. The classrooms are prepared by the teachers to promote an active learning environment. The equipment and variety are organized in an attractive and usable fashion that enables independent play. **Educating our students to respect the environment, all living creatures and each other is an integral part of our curriculum.** We do recycle and ask the parents to join us in this effort.

- It is important that the classrooms stay neat, clean, and organized, but still appealing, warm and inviting for children.
- The classroom is arranged to facilitate large groups, small groups and to welcome individual children.
- A sufficient amount of materials and equipment are in each classroom and are specific to the developmental needs of the serving age group. Materials are accessible for independent use by students.
- The classroom provides space for creative art and writing, math and science, book center, role-play and for manipulative play.
- The outdoor area is used as an extension of the classroom and includes a variety of activities and equipment for students of all ages.
- All materials, activities and equipment are age appropriate.
- Broken items are immediately removed, or students will be removed off/from broken equipment.

2.9 Playground Structures / Courtyard

Playground Structures:

Children may use the playground structure suitable for their age group. The smaller playground structure is designed for students two (2) years to five (5) years of age, which will be used by the preschool students.



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The bigger playground structure is designed for students five (5) years to twelve (12) years of age and will not be used with our preschool age children.

Teachers will escort students through the courtyard to the side gate of the building to the playground area, assuring the students' safety. Students will always be supervised on the playground and will always be accompanied by a teacher when leaving the playground.

Courtyard (community space):

While the playground provides our students with their outside play area, the children might use the courtyard for certain gross motor activities or during days when the playground cannot be used due to weather conditions. Under no circumstances are students allowed to play with the water fountain. One teacher will be assigned to provide close supervision of the fountain. Student activity cannot interfere with any church activities or visitors.

2.10 Students

Students are treated with respect, warmth, and individuality. All employees are trained to follow positive guidance techniques in all interactions with students.

- Employees plan age-appropriate activities and set social expectations for children in their care.
- Employees should encourage independence and initiative in students.
- Students' feelings are acknowledged.
- Individual rights of all students are protected.
- Appropriate limits are set using these rules: be kind, be safe and be neat.
- Communication between students and employees is positive.
- Activities are planned to foster self-esteem in students.
- Isolation, bullying or teasing of classmates will not be accepted and appropriate consequences will be put in place.

2.11 Discipline and Guidance Policy

GISH employees are required to follow the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Discipline and Guidance Policy (Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L).

Discipline must be:

- (1) Individualized and consistent for each child
- (2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding



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(3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- (1) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior
- (2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily, by using clear, positive statements
- (3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements
- (4) Using brief supervised separation from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- (1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- (2) Punishment associated with food, naps or toilet training
- (3) Pinching, shaking or biting a child
- (4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
- (5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
- (6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting or yelling at a child
- (7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language
- (8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom or closet with the door closed
- (9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age
- (10) Keeping a child from participating in activities or from attending active outdoor time

Children will be supervised at all times. Personnel will receive an overview of symptoms of child abuse, neglect and sexual abuse and it is their responsibility to report these.

2.12 Suspension and Expulsion of Children

Any child who is a safety threat to themselves or to others will be subject to suspension/exclusion and/or disenrollment from the program if the dangerous behavior cannot be eliminated through reasonable accommodations. Written documentation of the behavior will include all communication with teachers, parents, and appropriate support agencies as well as the steps taken to accommodate the child.

2.13 Parental Notifications

Parent notification at *GISH* take place through e-mail (preferred), remind app, phone call and text message. Parents have to make sure that they receive the communication from the School.



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2.14 Changes of Program or Policies

GISH recognizes that no Handbook can cover all areas or situations of life. Rules and procedures will be adjusted as necessary to provide students and teachers with a safe and stable environment. *GISH* will notify parents and *GISH* employees in writing of changes to the School's program or policies.



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2023 - 2024 Academic Calendar

GISH – 001 / 2023-2024 rev 6-15-23

August 2023						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September 2023						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October 2023						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November 2023						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December 2023						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

January 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

February 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

March 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

July 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

- School closed / Holidays
- First and Last Day of School: Dismissal @ 2:15 pm
- Parent-Teacher Conference Days – NO Instruction
- Teacher In-Service Days – NO School
- GISH Events (Puppet Show, St. Martin Lantern Parade, Gingerbread House, St. Nikolaus Market, Kindertag, Graduation)

- Additional Month 1 - Summer
- Additional Month 2 - Summer

187 Instructional Days
Make-Up Day: May 24, 2024



German International School of Houston

German-English Dual Language Immersion Program

ONE CHILD. TWO LANGUAGES. UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES

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Our school year counts **186 days of attendance**, with 1 Make-Up Day (May 24, 2024).

Non-instructional days are:

- 24 days break/vacation/holiday
- 2 Parent-Teacher Conference days (October 13, 2023 and February 16, 2024)
- 3 Teacher In-Service days (December 15, 2023, January 2, 2024, and May 31, 2024)

4. Operational Hours

GISH is offering operational hours from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm during the regular school year.

Regular day: **7:30 am to 2:30 pm** (pick-up period 2:15 pm - 2:30 pm)

Extended Day: **2:30 pm to 5:30 pm** (flexible pick-up period 2:30 pm - 5:30 pm)

During the **summer months June and July** operational hours are from **8:00 am to 2:30 pm** (pick-up period 2:15 pm - 2:30 pm) with extended hours from **2:30 pm to 5:30 pm** (flexible pick-up period 2:30 pm - 5:30 pm).

5. Daily Schedule

GISH provides a daily schedule outlining age-appropriate activities and routines such as circle time, small group time, transition time, lunch, rest time, etc. Daily opportunities for outdoor play will be provided when weather permits. Each classroom is required to have a written age-appropriate activity plan for the day.

Please note: **Breakfast, Lunch and Snack have to be provided from home or through our external food provider.** Please view *Meals and Food Practices* for more information.

All schedules are subject to change temporarily and permanently. Parents will be notified of permanent changes in writing.

GISH reserves the right to switch the German and the English portion of the day as needed, based on the students' needs and special events, without parent notification.

Group activities include literacy, math, science, art, music and dance, fine and gross motor skills.



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GISH-008 / 2023-2024 – 06-15-2023

PRESCHOOL - Daily Schedule 2023-2024

Issued June 15, 2023	 SNAILS – PS2 (2-3 years)	 BEARS – PS3 (3-4 years)	 OWLS – PK4 (4-5 years)
7:30 am - 8:00 am	Arrival & Breakfast Table / Ankunft & Frühstück.	Arrival & Breakfast Table / Ankunft & Frühstück	Arrival & Breakfast Table / Ankunft & Frühstück
8:00 am - 8:30 am	Free Play + Get Ready / Freispiel + Mache Dich fertig	Movement + Music / Bewegung + Musik	Movement + Music / Bewegung + Musik 8:00am – 8:30am Circle Time / Stuhlkreis 8:30am – 8:45am
8:30 am - 9:00 am	Outdoor Time / Spielzeit im Garten	Outdoor Time / Spielzeit im Garten	Small Groups Activity / Kleingruppen I 8:45 am – 9:15 am
9:00 am - 9:30 am	Outdoor Time / Spielzeit im Garten	Outdoor Time / Spielzeit im Garten	Get ready for Outdoors / Wir machen uns für draußen bereit 9:15am – 9:45am
9:30 am - 10:00 am	Circle Time / Stuhlkreis	Transition	PE/Outdoor Time / Sport/Spielzeit im Garten 9:45am – 10:45am
10:00 am - 10:30 am	Small Groups Activity / Kleingruppe	Circle Time / Stuhlkreis	Get Ready for Lunch / Wir machen uns für das Mittagessen bereit 10:45am – 11:00am
10:30 am - 11:00 am	Movement + Music / Bewegung + Musik	Small Groups Activity / Kleingruppe	Lunch / Mittagessen 10:50am - 11:20am Clean Up / Aufräumen 11:20am - 11:30am
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Lunch / Mittagessen Freeplay / Freispiel	Lunch / Mittagessen Freeplay / Freispiel	Small Groups Activity / Kleingruppen II 11:45am – 12:00pm
12:00 pm - 12:30 pm	Freeplay / Freispiel Get Ready for Nap	Freeplay / Freispiel Get Ready for Nap	Small Groups Activity/ Kleingruppen II 12:00pm - 12:30pm
12:30 pm - 1:00 pm	Nap Time / Mittagsschlaf	Nap Time / Mittagsschlaf	Get Ready for Nap / Wir machen uns für den Mittagsschlaf bereit 12:30pm – 1:00pm
1:00 pm - 1:45 pm	Nap Time / Mittagsschlaf Activity Table / Malen+Tischspiele	Nap Time / Mittagsschlaf Activity Table / Malen+Tischspiele	Nap Time / Mittagsschlaf 1:00pm – 2:00pm
1:45 pm - 2:15 pm	Wake-Up / Aufstehzeit		Wake-Up / Aufstehzeit 2:00pm – 2:15pm
2:15 pm - 2:30 pm	Dismissal / Abholzeit		Dismissal / Abholzeit 2:15pm – 2:30pm
	Extended Day: Open pick-up time		
2:30 pm - 3:15 pm	Afternoon Activity / Nachmittagsaktivität		
3:15 pm - 3:45 pm	Snack / Zwischenmahlzeit		
3:45 pm - 4:00 pm	Getting Ready for Garden Time / Wir machen uns für draußen bereit		
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Outdoor Time / Spielzeit im Garten		
5:00 pm - 5:30 pm	Story Time, Games and Freeplay / Vorlesezeit, Spiele und Freispiel		
5:30 pm	End of Day / Wir gehen nach Hause		

The daily schedule is subject to change based on the needs of the children and weather permitting.



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KINDERGARTEN - Daily Schedule – 2023-2024



Issued June 15, 2023	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
7:30am - 7:50am	ARRIVAL/ BREAKFAST	ARRIVAL/ BREAKFAST	ARRIVAL/ BREAKFAST	ARRIVAL/ BREAKFAST	ARRIVAL/ BREAKFAST
7:55am - 8:00am	GET READY	MACH DICH BEREIT	GET READY	GET READY	MACH DICH BEREIT
1st 8:00am - 8:45am	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
2nd 8:50am - 9:35am	MATH	MATHE	MATH	MATH	MATHE
9:45am - 10:45am 10:50am - 11:20am	SPORT LUNCH	RECESS LUNCH	SPORT LUNCH	RECESS LUNCH	SPORT LUNCH
3rd 11:30am - 12:15pm	DEUTSCH	KREATIVES GESTALTEN	DEUTSCH	DEUTSCH	KREATIVES GESTALTEN
4th 12:20pm - 1:05pm 1:05pm - 1:20pm	SACHKUNDE Snack	ENGLISH Snack	MATHE oder SACHKUNDE Snack	SACHKUNDE Snack	ENGLISH Snack
5 th 1:20pm - 2:05pm	VERTIEFUNG IN DEUTSCH, MATHE ODER SACHKUNDE	SCIENCE	SHOW & TELL; VERTIEFUNG IN DEUTSCH, MATHE ODER SACHKUNDE	VERTIEFUNG IN DEUTSCH, MATHE ODER SACHKUNDE	SCIENCE
6 th 2:10pm - 2:55pm	KREATIVES GESTALTEN	SOCIAL STUDIES	KREATIVES GESTALTEN	KREATIVES GESTALTEN	SOCIAL STUDIES
3:00pm - 3:15pm	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL

GAES dba German International School of Houston is formally recognized as tax exempt under section 501(c)(3) EIN 26-2709647, and a licensed facility with TDFPS Operation Number 1657223. Non-Discrimination Policy: GAES dba German International School of Houston does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, or handicap in administration of its educational policies, admission policies or in its employment practices. Information updated June 2023

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1st Grade - Daily Schedule – 2023-2024



Issued June 15, 2023	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
7:30am - 7:50am	ARRIVAL/ BREAKFAST	ARRIVAL/ BREAKFAST	ARRIVAL/ BREAKFAST	ARRIVAL/ BREAKFAST	ARRIVAL/ BREAKFAST
7:55am - 8:00am	GET READY	MACH DICH BEREIT	GET READY	GET READY	MACH DICH BEREIT
1 st 8:00am - 8:45am	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
2 nd 8:50am - 9:35am	MATH	MATHE	MATH	MATH	MATHE
9:45am - 10:45am 10:50am - 11:20am	SPORT LUNCH	RECESS LUNCH	SPORT LUNCH	RECESS LUNCH	SPORT LUNCH
3 rd 11:30am - 12:15pm	DEUTSCH	KREATIVES GESTALTEN	DEUTSCH	DEUTSCH	KREATIVES GESTALTEN
4 th 12:20pm - 1:05pm 1:05pm - 1:20pm	SACHKUNDE Snack	ENGLISH Snack	MATHE Snack	SACHKUNDE Snack	ENGLISH Snack
5 th 1:20pm - 2:05pm	ÜBUNGSSTUNDE IN DEUTSCH, MATHE ODER SACHKUNDE	SCIENCE	SHOW & TELL: ÜBUNGSSTUNDE IN DEUTSCH, MATHE ODER SACHKUNDE	ÜBUNGSSTUNDE IN DEUTSCH, MATHE ODER SACHKUNDE	SCIENCE
6 th 2:10pm - 2:55pm	KREATIVES GESTALTEN	SOCIAL STUDIES	KREATIVES GESTALTEN	KREATIVES GESTALTEN	SOCIAL STUDIES
3:00pm - 3:15pm	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL

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6. Enrollment Policy

6.1 General Information

GISH has a first-come-first-serve policy for enrollment. Currently enrolled students and their siblings have priority for re-enrollment and admission.

How to enroll your child:

- 1) Visit and tour the school. Make yourself familiar with our routines and procedures.
- 2) Submit a completed **Enrollment Contract** together with the corresponding payment (checks made out to **GAES dba German International School of Houston**).
- 3) Our office will confirm the receipt of the enrollment contract and update you on your child's enrollment status before any fees are endorsed.
 - a. If we hold an opening for your child, you will receive an e-mail with our **Admission Information Form, Parent Handbook**, and invoice for any outstanding fees. All applicable payments have, to be submitted to finalize your child's enrollment.
 - b. If an opening is not immediately available, you have the choice to place your child on our Waiting List. Our office will contact you once an opening becomes available.
 - c. For children transferring from other schools and enrolling in K+ classes, an individual teacher-child assessment will be held to determine the child's language readiness, class placement and date of admission.

The following information needs to be submitted for each child **before the first school day to finalize your child's admission**:

- **Enrollment Contract**
- **Enrollment Fees** (see Enrollment Contract)
- **Predated checks or proof that automatic payments** through your bank have been set up for the remaining tuition payments of the school year as outlined in the Enrollment Contract.
- **Signed Acknowledgement of Parent Handbook**
- **Admission Information** (including **Vision and Hearing Screening** for children of four (4) years of age)
- **Health Statement signed by a physician and not older than 12 months**
- **Updated Immunization Record**
- **Certified copy of court order in custody cases** (if applicable)
- **Allergy Action Plan for Students with Allergies** (completed and signed by a physician; only for students with allergies, please contact the office)

All forms will be e-mailed to you after your child has been offered an opening.

The School has to be informed immediately of any changes to the information in these forms!



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6.2 Waiting List

You have the option to place your child on our Waiting List. A **\$175.00 non-refundable fee** applies, which will be credited towards the Enrollment Fees upon enrollment. Openings are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Parents will be notified of an opening via phone call and follow-up e-mail.

Siblings of currently enrolled students receive enrollment priority over the Waiting List. Parents may withdraw their child from the Waiting List by written notice.

6.3 Re-Enrollment

Re-Enrollment is scheduled at the beginning of the calendar year for the upcoming school year. Returning students and siblings are given priority enrollment.

6.4 Siblings

Siblings receive priority enrollment after currently enrolled students are placed. Siblings will receive openings on a first-come, first-serve basis. Waiting List placement for siblings is recommended! Sibling status does not guarantee an opening!

6.5 Payment Policies

Please note: ***GISH accepts checks, money orders, bank checks, and Zelle.***

No cash or credit/debit cards are accepted!

All payments must be dropped off during hours of operation at our office or have to be mailed to the School.

To ensure the continuity of the program, *GISH* requires that the 10 months of tuition are paid as outlined in the Enrollment Contract. A payment schedule will be issued by the school office for students joining us during the school year.

All payments are to be made out to **GAES dba German International School of Houston.**

Payment Options: Tuition and Fees:

Parents may choose between one (1) Annual Payment or a Monthly Installment Plan.

1) One Annual Payment:

Check or One-time Bank Payment. All related transaction fees are to be paid by the families.



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2) Monthly Installment Plan:

Pre-dated Checks or monthly Automatic Bank Payments. All pre-dated checks are to be submitted by July 15, 2023, or before the first day of attendance for students starting during the school year.

The first and second tuition deposit payments are considered your April and May tuition payments. Regular tuition payments begin in August 2023 for 8 remaining payments. Tuition is based on annual costs per child and is paid in ten equal monthly installments from August - May regardless of when holidays, absences and vacations occur. Tuition is due on the 15th of the month.

Automatic Bank Payments are to be set on the 5th of each month to arrive on time. A set-up confirmation is to be sent to the school office. All related transaction fees are to be paid by the families.

Additional Fees: A 10% late fee will apply after the 25th of the month and will be enforced. A charge of \$50.00 will be assessed on each returned check.

Payments through company:

We happily work directly with your company regarding your child's tuition payment. Parents are responsible to initiate the first contact between the company and the office.

6.6 Refund Policy

All paid tuition and fees are non-refundable. Refunds or allowances in tuition cannot be made for absences in the event of illness, vacations and extended personal leaves or at the occasion of holidays, unexpected school closings, or other circumstances.

Dismissal:

Tuition may be refundable for school-initiated dismissal of a student or family while in attendance. The Board of Directors will decide upon each case, after gathering information from teachers and parents. The Board of Directors holds the right to not issue any refunds.

Withdrawal:

All withdrawals are to be submitted in writing to the school office or via email to office@gish-houston.org.

6.7 Family Tuition and Volunteer Hours

Parents choosing the Family Tuition commit to 10 hours of volunteering during the school year. It is possible to opt out of the Volunteer Hours through a one-time payment.



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6.8 Probation Period

All students are enrolled on a **20-school day probationary period**. For students whose overall placement in our program is in question, conferences with the teachers and parents will be held during this period to determine continued enrollment of the child. The School reserves the right to suspend or terminate any enrollment contract.

6.9 Court-Ordered Custody

A certified copy of a court-ordered custody agreement has, to be on file before the first day of attendance of a child.

If a court-ordered custody is in place, a meeting with the Site Director has to be set up to review the court order. The meeting will determine if other documents are necessary. The child's attendance will be put on hold until all necessary documents are received. The parent enrolling the child in our program is responsible to inform the other custody holder about their child's enrollment in our program and must provide *GISH* with the contact information including current address, phone number and e-mail address of the custodian.

Any parental agreement which is not in alignment with the custody court order must be submitted in writing and confirmed by both parties.

6.10 Children with Disabilities

Parents are required to notify our team of any known disabilities, developmental delays or other medical history that might influence their child's development. **Failure to do so may result in termination of the child's enrollment.**

GISH will accommodate children with special needs to the fullest extent possible for the School, while providing the child with a safe and developmental supportive environment. However, if the child's special needs require modifications beyond our building structure, our teachers' professional backgrounds or if they interfere with our program's philosophy, we cannot guarantee enrollment.



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7. Daily Routines

7.1 Family/Student Identification on Campus

All *GISH* students, parents and regular assigned pick-up persons will have to identify themselves to the security guard in the parking lot, the church receptionist or other church personnel. For easy identification, all parents/regular assigned pick-up persons and students will receive a school badge during orientation. Students should have their badge attached to their lunch bag or backpack.

For Drop-Off/Pick-Up outside of the regular drop-off/pick-up hours, a doorbell has been installed at the gates on the right side of the Palmer Church main entrance. Please leave your current *GISH* parent car decal visible in your car during this time.

7.2 Student Drop-Off

The drop-off of children will be completed outside, in front of the green metal gates facing the church parking lot. Parents will park their car in the parking lot and walk their child safely to the covered area in front of the metal gate and make themselves noticeable by ringing the doorbell (located at the right gate) or calling the school phone. A *GISH* team member will meet the family in front of the gate, perform a health check and walk the child inside.

Please ring the doorbell only once and only if you and your child are ready for drop off.

Please DO NOT let your child press on the doorbell.

Children are absolutely prohibited from climbing on the metal gates!

SNAILS (PS2) + BEARS (PS3): Should be in school no later than 8:15am if they are not bringing their breakfast. If your child brings breakfast, he/she should arrive between 7:30 and 7:45am. If you are arriving past 08:30am, you will use the church's main entrance and you will have to take your child to the playground for him/her to join their friends AFTER dropping off the child's belongings in the blue wagon located at the gate at the stairs on the way to the playground.

OWLS (PK4): Your child has, to be at school no later than 7:45am. Children bringing breakfast have to arrive at 7:30am.

DOLPHINS (K) + FOXES (1st): Your child has, to be at school no later than 07:45am. Children bringing breakfast have to arrive at 7:30am.



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Communication at Drop-Off:

Good communication between parents and the School is important. Parents should update the staff member responsible for welcoming your child in the morning about the child's well-being. Longer conversations will be scheduled after drop-off or pick-up times to assure all families with a smooth drop-off and pick-up routine.

The School is a Cell Phone Free Zone:

Parents must refrain from the usage of their cell phones during drop-off and pick-up.

Please finish your phone call in the car before you take your child out of the car for drop-off or start a call after you have securely buckled your child in the car after pick-up.

Separation:

Saying good-bye to parents can sometimes be hard, especially in the beginning of a school year, or on the first days in a new school. At *GISH*, we work together with the parents to provide the child with a smooth transition into the classroom. If a student has severe separation anxiety, a special drop-off routine will be developed in a parent meeting. If a student feels upset at drop-off, our teachers will be there to provide comfort and help the child to integrate into the classroom.

A staff member will call the parents (or send a text message) with an update as soon as the student has been integrated into the group. We will also contact the parents if the student cannot be comforted and no progress on integration is made. Our team will work together with the parents on techniques to ease the separation anxiety.

7.3 Late Arrival

Please let our office know about any late arrival in the morning. **Students should arrive at school no later than 7:45/8:15/8:30 am depending on their classroom (see below).** After this time, the teachers guide and take part in play situations and cannot assist the child with the transition.

Students who arrive late miss out on free play time and often have problems integrating into the group. Arrival during circle time results in disturbance for the whole group.

SNAILS (PS2) + BEARS (PS3): Should be in school no later than 8:15am if they are not bringing their breakfast. If your child brings breakfast, he/she should arrive between 7:30 and 7:45am. If you are arriving past 08:30am, you will have to take your child to the playground for him/her to join your child's friends AFTER dropping off the child's belongings with a *GISH* staff member.

OWLS (PK4): Your child has to be at school no later than 7.45am. Children bringing breakfast have to arrive at 7:30am.

DOLPHINS (K) + FOXES (1st): Your child has, to be at school no later than 07:45am to avoid Tardy Slips. Children bringing breakfast have to arrive at 7:30am.



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Doorbell:

For Drop-Off/Pick-Up outside of the regular drop-off/pick-up hours, a doorbell has been installed at the gate on the right-hand side of the Palmer Church main entrance.

Please ring the doorbell only once and only if you and your child are ready for drop off.

Please DO NOT let your child press on the doorbell!

Children are absolutely prohibited from climbing on the metal gates!

7.4 Student Release Authorization

Parents are considered **First Party** members. Parents can authorize **Second Party** members in their child's Admission Information Form. All second parties are authorized, after previous notification from the child's parents or guardian in writing to: directorns@gish-houston.org, to pick-up the child from the facility.

In cases of **Third Party** pick-up (parties not designated in the Admission Information Form), we require a written notification (preferably by e-mail) in advance. **For any deviation, parents are responsible to call the school office.** If Third Party pick-up has not been clearly communicated, the parents will be called. The student will not be released until we have reached a parent and received the necessary confirmation.

Picture-ID required for pick-up:

All persons are to identify themselves to the *GISH* staff by a valid photo ID when picking up a child. *GISH* will keep a copy of the drivers' license or other form of official picture ID (such as passport) in the student's file for all first, second and third parties. If your license has expired, you are obligated to bring/send a copy of the new driver license/photo ID to: directorns@gish-houston.org.

Information Release:

A person authorized to pick-up your child (including the emergency pick-up person) will not receive any sensitive information about your child and/or your child's day, except with a written parental authorization on file to provide such information. Details will be provided via a closed envelope in the child's backpack, and parents will be called or receive information via e-mail, depending on the details to be shared.

7.5 Student Pick-Up

Student pick-up at 2:15 pm to 2:30 pm: Parents will drive up in their car and wait in line in front of the green metal gate or park their car and pick-up by foot. A staff member will escort the child safely from the classroom to the gate. Parents are to get out of the car to receive the child and are responsible for buckling their child into their car seat.



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NOTE: The parking lot entrance must always remain accessible and cannot be blocked. Only two cars can wait in line in front of the metal gates. Car number three+ is asked to loop around and wait in line until a space opens or park their car and pick-up by foot.

Student pick-up Extended Day between 2:30 pm to 5:30 pm: Parents will park in the parking lot and walk up to and wait in front of the green metal gates. Please ring the doorbell (located on the right gate) or call the school phone if the door bell is not answered. Parents may call when they leave work/home to allow staff time to prepare the child for pick-up.

Parents and students need to wear identification badges when leaving the facilities.

Communication at Pick-Up:

Good communication between parents and the School is important. The staff member responsible for dismissal will provide parents with information about the child's day at school at pick-up. Longer conversations will be scheduled after pick-up or drop-off times to assure all families with a smooth drop-off and pick-up routine.

The School is a Cell Phone Free Zone:

Parents must refrain from the usage of their cell phones during drop-off and pick-up.

Please finish your phone call in the car before you take your child out of the car for drop-off or start a call after you have securely buckled your child in the car after pick-up.

7.6 Sign-In and Sign-Out of Students:

Students will be signed in and out by a *GISH* team member. The daily attendance list will be logged into the childcare managing system.

7.7 Policy for Late Pick-Up

Parents are responsible to be on time for their child's pick-up, and to call the School, if they are running late. **The Regular Program ends at 2:30 pm and the Extended Program ends at 5:30 pm.** Arrival after 2:35 pm and 5:35 pm is considered late.

A late pick-up fee of \$20.00 per family will be charged for pick-up after:

- 2:35 pm for our Regular Program (students move automatically into Extended Day Flex)
- 5:35 pm for our Extended Program

A late pick-up fee of \$25.00 per family will be charged for pick-up after:

- 5:40 pm for our Extended Program



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Parents arriving late will be asked to sign a late slip and will receive an invoice from the office. Late fees are due upon receipt. Late Pick-Up fees are non-negotiable and will also apply for late pick-up through a third party. In case of a late pick-up, parents are required to call the School.

The Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) has to be contacted if neither a parent/guardian nor the person designated as Emergency Pick-Up for the child can be contacted within one (1) hour after the end of our operational hours.

7.8 Student Absence

Illness or Vacation:

Parents are required to notify the School between 7:30 am and 8:30 am if a student will not be able to attend school or will arrive late.

Please send an e-mail to office@gish-houston.org and directorns@gish-houston.org or call (832)-831-6843 leaving a detailed message including the reason for the absence and possible return date.

Extended absences outside of the regular closing dates:

For any extended absence outside of the regular closing dates, please send a written notification one week prior to our office.

Early Return:

If a student returns earlier than planned, parents need to inform the office in advance to allow the teachers to plan for the student's attendance.

7.9 GISH' Right to Refuse Admission into the School

GISH reserves the right to refuse admission to a child or the group of children for the following reasons (non-exhaustive list):

1. Need to maintain compliance with Licensing Regulations
2. Child seems too ill to attend
3. Domestic situations that present a risk to the child, staff of other children
4. Parents' failure to maintain accurate and up-to-date records
5. Incomplete or late return of required documentation

7.10 Dress Code

Students:



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Always consider the functionality of your child's clothing. Students need to wear comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing and shoes.

For safe playing in the School and for reasons of hygiene, we request **Crocs, non-skid socks or soft house shoes**. **House shoes or socks will be sent home on a regular basis to be washed and cleaned.**

In the case of rainy weather, please send your child with a rain jacket as the students will go outside rain or shine. Also, please provide rain boots for your child to be stored in school. Overalls, waterproof jumpsuits work well for our younger children in the Snails and Bears classrooms.

Please DO NOT send your child with oversized or too tight shoes, as they can be detrimental to your child's foot health and create a hazard in tripping.

We also request the outfit to be age appropriate, therefore:

- NO underwear should be visible
- Girls have to wear leggings/biker shorts or modesty pants underneath their dresses/skirts
- NO flip-flops
- NO tops or dresses with spaghetti straps, unless a t-shirt is worn underneath
- NO face paint or facial tattoos

Please note that we may request you to pick up your child if your child is not dressed weather or age appropriate.

We reserve the right to introduce the “GISH School Uniform” if the dress code is not observed.

At *GISH* we believe in hands-on learning, and it can get messy. The color we use is mainly water-based, and we provide each child with her/his own smock for painting projects. However, **clothes can get dirty, and color can fail to wash out**. It is safe to leave the nice clothes at home and send your child in older clothes. Hair bows, clips, bands, charms on crocs, bracelets, etc. are easily lost. Necklaces are NOT allowed. Please leave these items at home.

Every student needs to have a set of extra clothing (including a thin jacket) provided by the parents and stored in their cubby. Students that are currently toilet training need to have more sets of extra clothes.

Parents:

Parents are required to be dressed in appropriate clothing while on the School's and Palmer Church' premises or when involved in school related events. Inappropriate clothing would include revealing, extremely short, ripped/torn (in inappropriate places), and/or see-through articles of clothing. Anything with suggestive or vulgar language is prohibited.



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7.11 Handwashing Policy

Students and staff must wash their hands in the morning upon arrival, after using the restroom and changing diapers, before and after eating, when coming inside from the playground or from outside play and when soiled. The staff will monitor and assist a student when needed.

To wash and dry their hands, students will use child appropriate hand soap and disposable paper towels provided by the School.

New staff will be informed about the handwashing routines and practices.

7.12 Bathroom Policy

Our students use the bathroom between the classrooms, and the bathroom located in the entrance hall of the church might be used as needed under the supervision of a teacher. Additionally, K and 1st grade are using their hallway bathroom.

Open-Door Bathroom Policy:

GISH has an open-door bathroom policy for all students and bathrooms, and toilet and sink can be used simultaneously. Students who express the need of privacy may use the toilet individually and close the door to the extent that the teacher still has easy access. Please notify our Site Director if our open-door policy interferes with your cultural background.

Pull-ups and wipes:

For children who are not toilet trained, parents have to supply diapers or pull-ups, organic wipes and any diaper ointment needed for their child. Please provide pull-ups that can be **opened and closed on the side** and allow changing without taking off the pants. **All items should be labeled with the child's name.** Students should be toilet trained by three (3) years of age. Please notify our teachers if your child needs to be reminded to use the bathroom frequently and provide three (3) extra sets of clothes for possible accidents.

7.13 Insect Repellent

Parents provide written permission to apply insect repellent.

During outdoor time, the teachers will apply the insect repellent of the parents' choice as outlined in the child's **Admission Information Form**.



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Parents provide the first bottle of Cutter Insect Repellent (natural insect repellent pump spray), or the insect repellent of the parents' choice as outlined in the child's **Admission Information Form**, no later than August 7, 2023. Parents will bring the second bottle on January 3, 2024 if requested by the school.

Parents providing their own insect repellent:

Please note that we require pump spray, since aerosol spray produces "fog" and is unsafe to inhale. Insect repellent must be handed directly to a teacher. Parents will be asked to re-stock their child's individual insect repellent as needed.

7.14 Sunscreen

Parents provide written permission to apply sunscreen.

For outdoor time, teachers will apply the sunscreen of the parents' choice as outlined in the child's **Admission Information Form**.

Parents will provide the first bottle of *Babyganics* SPF50+ Pump Spray, or the sunscreen of the parents' choice as outlined in the child's **Admission Information Form**, no later than August 7, 2023 and the second bottle on January 3rd, 2024 if requested by the school.

Parents providing their own sunscreen:

Please note that we require lotion or pump spray, no aerosol spray. Sunscreen must be handed directly to a teacher. Parents will be asked to re-stock their child's individual sunscreen as needed.

7.15 Screen Time

GISH does not offer television time for its students. Teachers might use the School's tablets or laptops for curriculum enrichment.

Kindergarten and 1st grade students will be introduced to school owned Apple i-Pads as part of their curriculum.

7.16 Nap Time

Licensing requires that all students in the Snails and Bears classrooms rest for 60 minutes each day. Nap times are visible on the Daily Schedule. Students not sleeping, will get up after one hour of rest and do a quiet table activity. The Owl students rest for 45 minutes.

Children in the elementary classrooms do not nap.



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7.17 Show-And-Tell

On show-and-tell day, students are allowed to bring in ONE (1) toy from home, which they will present to their classmates during circle time. The toy has to fit inside the backpack and cannot be oversized. Show-and-tell days will be outlined in the monthly curriculum, and changes will be announced in the *GISH* Newsletter. Parents are responsible for keeping up to date through the curriculum on their child's show-and-tell day.

7.18 Animals, Personal Toys/Items and Belongings

No personal pets are allowed at any time on the school premises.

Students are asked not to bring personal toys to school. Please leave those items in the car at drop-off. No electronics are allowed. *GISH* is not responsible for any personal belongings of our students. In case your child needs a personal item in the morning for emotional security, **it is limited to 1 item only** and has to stay in the cubby during the remainder of the school day. Visitors must store their personal purses out of reach.

7.19 Writing Curriculum and Phonic Awareness for Pre-Kindergarten Students (Owls)

Each language has a designated letter day once a week, in which the group focuses on the phonic sound, and how the letter looks like through different circle time activities.

The Preschool has been using the writing curriculum and material of **Handwriting Without Tears** since 2008 in the classroom. The multi-sensory and interactive approach of the program made it a perfect fit for our School. Parents are encouraged to visit the HWT website at www.lwtears.com to learn more about this program. Over the years we have found that this program is a great child-friendly approach to handwriting. Students will only focus on uppercase letters. While lower case letters exist, and will be introduced in print, our students will not be introduced into writing lower case letters in this classroom.

8. Evaluation of Student Performance

8.1 Parent-Teacher Conference(s)

Two Parent-Teacher conferences are held per school year for each student. Parent-Teacher conference dates are outlined in the Academic Calendar. The conferences will include a detailed developmental



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assessment of the child. Issues and questions from the teachers or parents can be addressed during the conference. Children starting at a later time during the school year will have their conference rescheduled, in order to give the teachers time to observe your child.

Parents can always request a conference if they have acute concerns or problems with their child that they want to discuss with the teachers. Our teaching staff on the other hand will invite parents for an extra conference, if needed, to update them on the development of their child, or to discuss any problems that the child may have in the classroom.

Parents can also request a call from the child's teacher with specific questions concerning classroom routines or behavior in the classroom.

8.2 Student Portfolio

Each teacher will be responsible for the documentation of behaviors and skills observed in each student. These anecdotal notes and collected work will be used in parent-teacher conferences. Samples of art and work projects will be collected on a regular basis and kept in the student's art file until the end of the school year.

9. Meals and Food Practices

Please note: ***GISH is a PEANUT FREE and TREENUT FREE Zone!***

This means NO hazelnuts, walnuts, almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, pecans, pistachios and more, as well as NO related products like Nutella, Peanut Butter, Almond Paste/Marzipan... For more information, please check out the following link:

<https://www.foodallergy.org/living-food-allergies/food-allergy-essentials/common-allergens/tree-nut>

If our teachers find any nut related product with your child, we have to put this product to the side and ask you to bring another lunch/snack for the day.

Please DO NOT bring Granola bars to school, stating: It may contain: nut, tree nuts etc.

Food Choices:

GISH does not provide food to children while in care. Parents are responsible for their child's nutritional needs and will provide a balanced breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack and emergency snack for their child based on the hours of attendance. Food can be provided from home or ordered through ***The Simply Fresh Kitchen*** (www.thesimplyfreshkitchen.com). At pick-up, our teachers will give feedback about your child's lunch (she/he liked it, too much, not enough...). Children are growing fast! Please adapt the quantity you pack for lunch/snack accordingly to your child's needs.



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Food cannot and will not be shared!

Reusable Water Bottle:

All students must bring from home their personal and filled water bottle – **no perishable liquid (juice or milk)**, since WATER bottles will be taken outside during “Outdoor Time.” Water bottles will be accessible throughout the day and refilled if needed with Alpine Spring Water (Geyser Crystal) or from the drinking water fountain (Ozarka Spring Water) in the office. Milk can be served in the morning at breakfast but needs to be in a separate container. Only individual packaged milk that does not require refrigeration can be served at lunch.

Parents providing food from home:

Parents providing food from home provide the students with their individual lunch bag holding reusable containers and utensils. Lunch boxes must be labeled with the child’s name or initials. All children will eat out of their container. Please note that children cannot eat from napkins but may use the lid of the container as a tray. **Parents are responsible for providing reusable utensils for their child each day in a utensil pouch or Ziploc bag applicable to both, brought or bought lunch. Please wash the dirty plate (if applicable) and dirty utensils and return them clean the next day.**

Please avoid sending special containers which cannot be replaced if lost.

Refrigeration/Reheating:

Please provide your child with food that can be consumed at room temperature or use thermos containers to keep the food warm or ice packs to keep the food cold until lunch time. Due to the regulations of the Department of Health and Human Services, *GISH* cannot refrigerate or reheat food.

Parents ordering food through *The Simply Fresh Kitchen*:

Please provide a food container if you would like to receive your child’s leftover food. If no empty container is provided, the leftovers have to be thrown out. Parents are responsible for providing reusable utensils for their child each day in a utensil pouch or Ziploc bag. Please wash the dirty utensils and return them clean the next day.

Please remember to place your order on the first of each month!

Emergency Snack:

Each child will receive their individual “emergency snack box”. Parents are required to fill the snack box with individual packaged snacks with long expiration dates. This emergency snack will stay in the child’s cubby and will be offered to the child if needed.

Food Allergies:

Our team will inform our parents in writing about any food regulations due to allergies in the classroom.



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Exempt Food:

Parents are responsible for abstaining from packing exempt food items (No nuts, tree nuts etc.). Please note that we will not serve exempt food items, and you may have to pick up your child early if there is no other food that we can serve.

Celebrating Birthdays:

We celebrate your child's birthday in school. For this occasion, parents can bring a special treat like muffins or cookies, mini cupcakes are perfect, individual juice boxes, napkins or plates. **All food items have to be store bought and delivered in their original packaging listing the ingredients.** No-mess sugar frosting is allowed. Our team will inform you about how many students we are expecting in class on that day. No open flame candles are allowed on school property.

Children in the Owl classroom celebrate their birthday the Wednesday after their actual birthday.

Outside Food:

For limited special occasions or celebrations, the School will provide a treat for the whole class. Special treats are announced in the curriculum, newsletter or through bag tags in advance. Parents may exclude their child from receiving special treats by sending a written notice.

10. Field Trips, Get Together Opportunities and Community Involvement

During the hot summer months, *GISH* may offer outdoor activities involving water. For the children to participate in these supervised water activities, such as splash and wading pools, the School needs the permission from the parents (see **Admission Information Form**).

10.1 Field Trips

Our program may take students off campus for nature walks or community enrichment. Field trips are announced in advance, and parents must sign a permission slip for their child to participate. Students are required to wear their school t-shirt to attend the field trip.



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10.2 Get Together Opportunities

Several social events and get-together-opportunities for families will be offered by *GISH* throughout the school year (if possible). These events will be announced in the curriculum, and detailed information will be provided in the *GISH* Newsletter or by e-mail.

10.3 Community Involvement

We like to invite people from the community like Firefighters, Dentists, Mail Carriers or Police Officers into our classroom to broaden our learning experience. Special visitors will be announced to the parents in writing.

11. Photo Taking / Social Media

Pictures will be taken on a regular basis to document students' learning. No names will be used in pictures that are accessible for the public.

To take pictures at school, the School's camera or cell phone has to be used. No personal cameras or cell phones are allowed in the classroom, unless authorized by the Site Director.

No visitors (INCLUDING PARENTS) are allowed to take pictures in the classroom. Picture taking is allowed outside of the regular classroom setting, or special classroom events to which all parents are invited.

The School holds the right to use student pictures in school publications and related websites. Any objection has to be submitted in writing.

12. Parent-School Communication

With any question about *GISH* policies and procedures, please contact the office (office@gish-houston.org) or the Site Director (directorns@gish-houston.org). We also appreciate parent feedback. A meeting can be scheduled, as needed.



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13. Parent Involvement and Responsibilities

13.1 Parent Involvement

The success of *GISH* depends on parental involvement. We envision various ways to accomplish this goal:

- active participation in school events,
- volunteering for enrichment programs,
- offering support for activities or help at special occasions.

Any other ideas are welcome. Please contact the *GISH* office to schedule an appointment to talk about your ideas.

13.2 Parent Responsibilities

Parents hold the following responsibilities:

- **Please make sure you have set up your computer/e-mail provider to accept e-mails from the following e-mail addresses:**

***GISH* Office:** office@gish-houston.org

Site Director: directorns@gish-houston.org

GAES Board of Directors: board@gaeshouston.org

- Check your e-mail on a regular basis, since we use this media as our primary source for communication
- Read our e-mails, curriculum and quarterly newsletter to stay informed about events and other things going on in our classrooms
- Help us establish a good communication between parents and the School
- Give us a heads-up in the morning if there is something that could affect your child's behavior that day (did not sleep well, woke up early or did not eat breakfast...)
- Be on time for drop-off and pick-up
- Cell phone use is not allowed while dropping off or picking up your child
- Call the office by 8:30 am at the latest, if your child is absent or if the family is running late
- Collect your child's belongings at pick-up
- Bring in new clothes if your child has been changed in school
- Pay tuition and late fees on time
- Update us on any changes in address, phone number or e-mail address
- Update your child's immunization record
- Provide a balanced lunch and snack if you do not order through *The Simply Fresh Kitchen*
- Complete your volunteer hours (Family Tuition Rate) without delay
- Follow the School's Dress Code (point 7.10)



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- No inappropriate language on the School's premises and/or church property at any time
- No physical/verbal punishment of your child or other children on the School's premises and/or church property
- Smoking is prohibited anywhere on the School's premises and the church property
- All parents are required to follow the School's and Palmer Church' safety procedures at all times
- Confrontational or threatening interactions with employees, parents, children, members of the church, visitors etc. are not allowed
- Fire arms of weapons are not allowed on the School's or Palmer Church' premises

13.3 Confidentiality Policy

Parents are not allowed to share any confidential or sensitive information that they may learn, with other parents and/or outside the school community. This includes, but is not limited, to names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, disability information, health related information etc.

13.4 Staff Employment by *GISH* Parents' Policy

GISH Parents are not allowed to solicit any *GISH* staff member for the purpose of employment. Employment refers to any relationship between *GISH* employees and *GISH* parents outside of the School's services, and is not limited to baby-sitting, house-sitting, mother's helper, nanny services and carpooling, whether or not those services are voluntary or paid.

GISH employees are not allowed to work for current *GISH* families. Furthermore, they are not allowed, to participate in any social networking relationship with *GISH* parents and are not allowed to accept friend requests on media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat or Instagram.

14. Safety

14.1 Classroom Visitors

Visitors (interested parents, maintenance personnel, job applicants, volunteers...) may be allowed to enter the classrooms by appointment.

Visitors may ring the bell at the gate on the right-hand side of the Palmer Church main entrance or call the school cell phone. They will then be greeted by a school staff member.



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To prevent unexpected and unwanted visitors from entering our classrooms, all entrance/exit doors will not be accessible from the outside during the hours of operation.

To ensure a safe environment for our families and students, **all visitors must be signed-in and out** by a member of the school staff. This will apply also to grandparents and other family members, family friends, volunteers, and vendors, as well as service personnel. A record is kept in the school office. Visitors may be screened for temperature and illness symptoms as necessary.

To assure a smooth transition of our daily routine, all visitors aside from parents or legal guardians joining us during our operational hours need a confirmed appointment. Please contact our school office to schedule a date and time for a visit or volunteer opportunities.

Parents and Legal Guardians:

Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to visit and observe their child as well as the premises and equipment, and to participate in our classrooms without securing a prior appointment. They may be screened for temperature and illness symptoms as necessary. An appointment has to be made for special activities such as reading books or visitation of more than two visitors at the same time.

Our School reserves the right to end/shorten any visitation if the presence of a visitor interrupts the classroom instruction, has any impact on our students or their behavior, or compromises our daily routine, as well as the teachers' attention towards our students to any extent.

14.2 Parking

Parking is permitted on the church parking lot (**access from Fannin St.**) during drop-off, pick-up, parent/teacher conferences and school events. The public parking lot on Main St (Hermann Park and Zoo) can be used but has a three (3) hour time limit and ticketing/towing is enforced.

Parking in front of the building and gates is prohibited.

Parents are responsible for the supervision of their child while crossing the parking lot. Students should hold an adult's hand while walking in the parking lot.

Please note that parking around the *GISH* campus and in the church parking lot is at your own risk. The School is not responsible for theft or damage to vehicles or their contents. ***GISH is not liable for any damaged cars (including broken windows) and stolen items in the parking lot.***



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14.3 Emergency Procedures

GISH employees are informed about the location of the following: **first-aid kit, fire extinguisher and emergency phone numbers**. All *GISH* employees are trained in emergency procedures, evacuation practices and evacuation routes. A log of all emergency drills is posted in the office.

Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP):

GISH has established an Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) for emergencies such as: severe weather alert, lock down of the building, hurricane, and lost/missing child. A copy of the EPP is located in every classroom, in the emergency backpacks and in the office for parental review (Parent Handbook folder).

- **Fire/Explosion/Toxic Fumes/Chemical Release:**

Exit signs and fire escape routes are posted in each room. There will be a fire drill every month (announced and unannounced).

- **Severe Weather (Tornado):**

Students will be taken inside a windowless room. A severe weather drill will be performed every three months.

- **Lockdown:**

Students will stay in a designated area. A lockdown drill will be performed every three months.

Emergency involving/concerning a single student:

The Site Director and instructed staff members will contact the parents via phone. The student will remain with our staff at a safe place.

Emergency Situation:

In case of an emergency situation, *GISH* will contact the parents as outlined in the Admission Information Form. If the parents cannot be reached, the School will contact the child's Emergency Contact. **Emergency notices may be sent out via Remind 101, text message and e-mail if the situation permits.**

If immediate pick-up is necessary, pick-up has to be coordinated between the caretakers.

All students will remain with our staff at a safe place.

Evacuation:

In case of an evacuation, the pick-up spot will be the **South College parking lot @ Rice University (Cambridge and Main St)** if not communicated differently by the School.



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Severe Weather closures:

Please note that *GISH* follows the decisions of the Houston Office of Emergency Management (OEM) as announced on the radio and the local TV channels.

14.4 Emergency/Facility Closings

In case of a last-minute facility closure due to unforeseen safety or unsanitary situations, all parents will be notified via phone immediately. Parents are responsible to arrange pick-up of their child within an hour after receiving the notification. Only one emergency closing per school year will be made up through the make-up day, as outlined in the Academic Calendar. Closures announced after 11:00 am will not be made up.

14.5 Child Abuse and Neglect

All *GISH* employees are required by law to report suspected child abuse within 48 hours. **Failure to report abuse or neglect is a Class B criminal offense.** All staff members will attend an annual workshop of a minimum of one (1) hour on this topic. By law, professionals may not delegate their duty to report to another person such as a coworker or family member.

The Abuse and Neglect Hotline is 1-800-252-5400, or reports can be filed online at:

<https://www.txabusehotline.org>

What is Abuse and Neglect?

Definitions by the Texas Family Code (TFC):

Abuse:

- Physical abuse is deliberate actions resulting in injuries to a child or genuine threats of such actions, or concerns about physical injuries of an unexplained or suspicious nature.
- Sexual abuse includes sexual indecency, sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault. Failing to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct to a child. Using the child for the creation of obscene or pornographic material.
- Emotional abuse is an emotional or mental injury caused by the parent or caregiver that results in an observable effect on the child.

Trafficking:

- Labor trafficking: parent or caregiver forcing a child into labor or services that are unhealthy or harmful to the child.
- Sex trafficking: parent or caregiver receiving compensation for forcing a child to engage in prostitution or other sex acts.

Neglect:



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- Neglectful supervision means improper supervision of a child, which could have resulted in/with the possible result of substantial harm.
- Medical neglect is failure to seek, obtain or administer medical treatment with the possible result of substantial harm.
- Physical neglect is the failure to provide a child with the necessary food, clothing, and shelter to maintain a healthy life.
- Abandonment is when a child is left in a potentially harmful situation by the parent or caregiver with no intention to return.
- Refusal to accept parental responsibility is when a child has been out of the home for any reason, and the parent or caregiver refuses to allow the child to return home.

If parents feel they need assistance with possible child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse, they are encouraged to get help. Please call the National Parent Hotline at 1-855-427-2736 or visit www.helpandhope.org/find-help/html.

To report any suspected abuse or neglect, the statewide Abuse and Neglect Hotline is 1-800-252-5400.

14.6 Anti-Bullying Policy

At the *German International School of Houston*, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all students and staff so they can learn and work in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from oppression and abuse. Bullying is an anti-social behavior and affects everyone. All types of bullying are unacceptable at our School and will not be tolerated. All students and staff need to be able to report about bullying behavior. Our School will act promptly, and effective action will be taken. **We are a TELLING school:** This means that anyone who is aware of any type of bullying that is taking place is expected to report to a teacher and/or the Site Director immediately.

What Is Bullying?

"Bullying behavior abuses an imbalance of power to repeatedly and intentionally cause emotional or physical harm to another person or group of people. Isolated instances of hurtful behavior, teasing or arguments between individuals would not be seen as "bullying" (Torfaen definition 2008).

Bullying generally takes one of four forms:

- **Indirect:** being unfriendly, spreading rumors, excluding, tormenting, taking away or damaging personal items, writing notes or drawing pictures
- **Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, slapping or any form of violence, touching or showing private body parts
- **Verbal:** name-calling, teasing, threats, sarcasm



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- **Cyber:** All areas of internet misuse, such as nasty and/or threatening e-mails, misuse of blogs, gaming websites, internet chat rooms and instant messaging, mobile threats by text messaging and calls

Common examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

- Racial bullying
- Homophobic bullying
- Bullying based on disability, ability, gender, appearance or circumstance

Implementation in our School for our students:

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- 1) If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of the staff who has been approached.
- 2) A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Site Director.
- 3) The Site Director will interview all concerned parties and will record the incident.
- 4) Parents will be informed within 24 hours after the School is aware of the incident.
- 5) A follow-up meeting will be held within a week after the School has notified the parents.
- 6) If necessary and appropriate, a psychologist will be consulted at the expense of the parents/guardians of the students involved.

Implementation with our students:

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their class teacher or a member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the student
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the student became involved
- Establishing the wrongdoing and the need to change
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude and behavior of the student
- If necessary, consulting a psychologist at the parents'/guardians' expense

The following disciplinary steps, depending on severity and/or continuity of the behavior may be taken:

Disciplinary Steps	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Reminder of expectations / re-direction	x		



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Separation from the group, but within the class / assigned activity (example: move play/work area)	X		
Verbal apology	X		
Letter of apology (drawing)	X		
Student/Teacher and/or Student/Administrator conference	X	X	
Reflection of own behavior and plan about problem solving	X	X	
Loss of special privileges	X	X	
Parent/Teacher conference		X	
Behavior plan/contract		X	
Early dismissal for the day			X
Exclusion from school (short-term/long-term)			X

Monitoring, evaluation and review:

The School will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

Prevention of bullying in the classroom:

We will use some or all of the following to help raise awareness and prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, this may include:

- Writing and implementing a set of school rules
- Signing a behavior contract
- Using Art, Drama or Music to reinforce awareness
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- Having regular discussions in the classroom about bullying, why it happens, and why it matters to prevent it from happening

14.7 Biting

Biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children through two and a half (2.5) years old. *GISH* employees will work on identifying situations which provoke or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. Children will not be punished or harshly disciplined for biting. They will be redirected to different activities in separate areas of the classroom.

Parents will be notified by Incident/Illness Report of a biting incident. The name of the other child will not be disclosed as well as any other information of the other child involved.



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14.8 Gang-Free Zone

Gang-Free Zones are designated areas around specific locations where gang-related activity is prohibited and subject to increased penalty under Texas Law. The specific location includes day care or child care centers. The Gang Free Zone is a radius of 1000 feet around your child care center. For more information on what constitutes a Gang Free Zone, please consult Sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code. The motivation behind establishing a Gang Free Zone is to deter certain types of criminal activities in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties.

14.9 Safety of Children's Products

All facilities licensed through the Department of Family and Protective Services are required to assure that there are no unsafe children's products in their facility. The Site Director is responsible for reviewing the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) recall list at www.cpsc.gov. In addition, she/he must certify annually in writing that each of the recall notices has been reviewed. This form will be posted on our parent board for our parents to review.

15. Illness and Medical Policies/Procedures

15.1 Location of First Aid Kit

The **First Aid Kit** is located in the office (red cubby in brown shelf marked FIRST AID). An additional First Aid Kit can be found in the emergency backpacks.

Students' medication is stored in a second red cubby in the brown shelf marked STUDENTS MEDICATION.

15.2 Immunization Requirements

GISH students must comply with the **State of Texas immunization requirements**. While attending school, each student must comply and be vaccinated following the schedule set forth by the State of Texas. **Failure to do so may result in your child being excluded from school.** Parents are responsible for keeping their child's immunization record updated. Please note that the Health Department requires the signature of a medical professional on the immunization record. If you choose to exempt your child from complying with the regular State of Texas vaccination practices, an official affidavit must be submitted for the child's file. The Exemption Form can be requested online at <https://corequest.dshs.texas.gov/>.



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If an outbreak occurs of any vaccine preventable disease, any student not properly immunized will not be able to attend school.

15.3 Daily Health Checks

Upon arrival, the site director welcomes the students in the morning and will give a health check to each student. If there are any doubts about the student's health, she/he refers the child to the Site Director. The Site Director will call the parents for all unexplained rashes or bruises or other symptoms that were not communicated to the staff during drop-off.

15.4 GISH Illness and Exclusion Policy

Sick Children:

Sick children should not be brought to school. A student who does not feel well, has body temperature greater than 100°F or has a contagious disease, must remain at home until the child is symptom free for 24 hours, with a normal body temperature of 98.6°F/37°C **without fever reducing medication**, or is no longer contagious.

If a student misses school due to illness, the parents or guardians must notify the GISH office, explaining the nature of the illness.

Children will be sent home if:

- The child cannot participate comfortably in the program's activities including outdoor play
- The child is in greater need of care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of other children in care
- The child has one of the following symptoms, unless a medical evaluation by a health-care professional indicates that you can include the child in the program (written documentation required)
 - Fever, temperature of 100 degree and above taken digitally from the forehead
 - Vomiting, if it happened twice at school
 - Diarrhea, if it happened twice at school
 - Reddish or pink eyes, with/without drainage
 - Head lice
 - Symptoms of an infectious disease and signs of a possible severe illness such as:
 - Abnormal breathing
 - Mouth sores with drooling
 - Behavior changes
 - Croup cough, consistent nasal drainage, with/without fever
 - Any undiagnosed rashes



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- Signs of abdominal pain, headache, unusual tiredness, unusual paleness, or irritability

When a student becomes ill or shows any of the above symptoms, the parents are contacted to pick up the child. **After notification, the sick student must be picked up within one (1) hour.** The student will be provided with a nap mat, pillow and blanket and will be taken to the school office until parents arrive. If the school office is not staffed, the child will be separated from the main group and placed within sight and hearing distance of a staff member until parent arrival.

To avoid endangering the health of other students or putting your own child's health at risk, we ask you to respect the following:

- Fever may indicate an early sign of an infection. Normal body temperature is 98.6°F/37°C up to 99.7°F/37.6°C. If your child's temperature should rise above 100°F/38°C in the night or in the morning before school, your child should remain at home. Your child's temperature should return to normal for 24 hours without fever reducing medicine BEFORE returning to school.
- If your child vomits and/or has diarrhea during the night, DO NOT send him/her to school for 24 hours, EVEN IF she/he is feeling better. Stomach viruses usually last 24-48 hours.
- An ear infection can be very painful. If your child complains of pain in one or both ears during the night or in the morning before school, keep him/her at home and consult with your child's physician.
- Frequent coughing can interfere with your child's learning as well as the learning of other students. If your child has a cough with cold or a cough with nasal congestion, keep your child at home and consult with your child's physician.
- Thick, green, or yellow nasal discharge could indicate a sign of an infection. If your child presents these symptoms, keep your child at home and consult with your child's physician.
- If your child wakes up with one or both eyes crusted over, has yellow or clear watery drainage from one or both sides, has red, irritated eyes or has itchy weeping eyes, keep him/her at home and consult with your child's physician. Conjunctivitis or Pink Eye is VERY contagious.

Returning to School:

Students need to be **symptom free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.** In case of a communicable disease, such as chicken pox, pink eye, strep throat or covid..., please view *Communicable Diseases*.

Students out sick for 3+ days need to bring a return to school note from the doctor.

Vaccine Preventable Diseases:

If an outbreak occurs of any vaccine preventable disease, any student not properly immunized will not be able to attend school.



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15.5 Communicable Diseases - Notification required

The office needs to be notified in writing if your child has contracted a communicable disease. The School will notify all parents via e-mail and door posting about circulating communicable diseases. Students must be symptom free before they can return to the program.

Among the few of the illnesses/diseases requiring exclusion from school are the following communicable diseases:

- Chicken Pox
- Common Cold with fever greater than 100°F
- Conjunctivitis or Pink Eye
- Covid-19 (any variance)
- Gastroenteritis (stomach virus)
- Impetigo
- Influenza
- Hepatitis
- Measles
- Meningitis (viral/bacterial)
- Mumps
- Pneumonia (including Walking Pneumonia)
- Mononucleosis
- Scabies
- Streptococcal Infections (i.e. Strep Throat)
- Tuberculosis

Texas Department of State Health: Communicable Disease Chart for Schools and Child-Care settings
http://www.dshs.texas.gov/idcu/health/schools_childcare/resources/ or Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 97, Subchapter A, Rule §97.7 Disease Requiring Exclusion from Schools.
[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=25&pt=1&ch=97&rl=7](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=25&pt=1&ch=97&rl=7)

Return to School Note: required for communicable diseases

In the case of a communicable disease, parents are required to provide a return to school note from their child's physician stating that their child is **NOT CONTAGIOUS** anymore, prior to the student's admission to the class. Without a return to school note, attendance will be put on hold. This note must be handed over at drop-off and then placed in the student's file.



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Attention – Return to School Note:

Please check in the doctor's office that your return to school note **clearly states that your child is NOT CONTAGIOUS, stating the illness and able to return to school.** Licensing does not allow notes simply stating that the child can return to school on a specific date, the note must clearly declare the child non-contagious.

15.6 Head Lice

If live lice are found on a student, the student will be excluded from the program and has to be picked up within one (1) hour. The student may return after treatment.

All parents will be notified via e-mail, and all children in care and staff will be checked.

GISH is not holding a "NO NIT-Policy", and nits are not a reason for exclusion from school.

15.7 Injury to Student and Medical Emergencies

Minor accidents such as minor cuts, abrasions or bruises:

The person in charge will take proper procedures of cleaning the area with water and antibacterial soap, covering and/or cooling. Further treatment will be received at home. The dismissing staff member is responsible for informing parents at pick-up about the incident, as well as the assistance offered to the student.

Accidents requiring medical attention:

If the injury requires medical attention, the parents will be notified. In case of a serious injury, 911 emergency services are to be contacted, then the parents. If the parents cannot be reached, the contact listed as emergency contact will be contacted next.

Severe/Life Threatening Emergencies:

In case of a severe/life threatening emergency, the student will be separated from other students and First Aid or CPR will be applied by our staff. 911 will be called immediately. Parents will be called and informed of the incident as soon as the situation allows. One staff member will stay with the student until the parents or designated caretaker arrives.

15.8 Incident/Illness Report

This form is located in the office and Emergency Contact binders. The form has to be signed by the supervising teacher, the parent and the Site Director. The report has to be kept in the student's file.



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Teachers need to complete an **Incident/Illness Report** if/for:

- A student requires assistance or medical attention due to an accident which occurred during operational hours
- Any head bump that results in swelling or bruising
- Bites that result in a mark
- A student was placed at risk or observed an incident that placed him/her at risk
- A child has fallen ill with severe symptoms and had to be excluded from the facility
- Any observations concerning a child's health and well-being

Parents are required to notify the School if their child has been seen by a doctor due to an incident or illness that occurred at school. If a medical professional has been consulted, the parents must complete the appropriate section in the **Incident and Illness Report** and bring it to the office within 12 hours of the incident. The Site Director is required to notify licensing of any illness or injury that required medical attention.

15.9 Authorization for Emergency Medical Attention

Parents and/or guardians must complete and sign an **Authorization for Emergency Medical Attention** (part of the **Admission Information Form**) at the beginning of each school year.

In the event that a student is injured at school or becomes seriously ill, and the School is not able to contact a parent or designated caretaker, the following paragraph of the student's Admission Information Form applies (including the designated Hospital or Emergency Medical Care facility):

"In the event of a medical emergency or if I cannot be reached to make arrangements for medical care, I hereby authorize the person in charge to take my child to a Hospital or Emergency Medical Care facility. I give consent to the School to secure any and all necessary emergency medical care for my child. I prefer my child to be taken to the below designated Hospital or Emergency Medical Care facilities."

15.10 Responsibility for Medical Bills

Parents are responsible for any medical bills if their child is to seek medical emergency treatment while in care, or if their child needs to see a medical health care provider due to an injury or accident that occurred while in care.



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15.11 Administration of Medication

Please note that **GISH does not provide or maintain any over-the-counter medication and does NOT administer any prescription medication that can be administered before or after school.** If it is necessary to send medication to school, permission has to be granted by the Site Director. An **Administration of Medication Form** has to be completed and signed by the parents. Medication has to be handed directly to the Site Director and the medication usage and dosage has to be reviewed. **No staff member aside from the Site Director will accept medication for a student.**

With your signed permission, we may dispense medication when appropriate. All medication must be in the original container(s), appropriately labeled with the student's name, including English instructions on dosage and timing. A pediatrician's order must be submitted if the dosage exceeds the directions on the medication label. The order must be updated annually. Changes in the information provided should be reported immediately in writing to the Site Director. **A single dose may be administered without the written consent of parents through the authorization by the parents by phone. The Administration of Medication Form has to be completed by the parents upon pick-up.**

Under no circumstances can medication be kept in the students' personal belongings such as lunch bags or backpacks. Students are not allowed to self-administer medication.

We do keep *Aquaphor Ointment* and *Benadryl Extra Strength Itch Stopping Cream* on site, and parents can consent to their use in the Admission Information Form.

15.12 Vision and Hearing Screening/Tuberculin Testing

All students need to complete a **vision and hearing screening** within three (3) months after their 4th birthday. Results must be submitted to the *GISH* office and will be placed in the student's school file. **All test results must display the student's name, date of birth, test results, office stamp and pediatrician's signature.** Please double check in the doctor's office that all criteria are covered.

Exemption:

Parents can provide the School with a signed and dated affidavit stating that the vision or hearing screening conflicts with the tenets or practices of a church or religious denomination of which they are an adherent or member.

A Tuberculin Testing is **not** mandatory.



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15.13 Students with Allergies

Parents are responsible for informing the School about their child's diagnosed allergies and document them in the Admission Information Form. A list of allergies that are present in the classroom, including information on treatment, must be displayed in each classroom.

Information steps for parents and caregivers:

If allergies are reported, the following steps will be taken:

- Step 1:** Parents receive the Allergy Action Plan and forward it to the pediatrician or allergist.
- Step 2:** Site Director and parents will determine if an **Individual Healthcare Plan** has to be put in place.
- Step 3:** Individual Allergy Action Plan must be completed by the child's pediatrician or allergist.
- Step 4:** Parents provide medication and complete the **Administration of Medication Form**.
- Step 5:** For severe allergies, the **Individual Healthcare Plan** will be reviewed by the parents.
- Step 6:** Employees are educated about the Individual Healthcare Plan and Allergy Action Plan.
- Step 7:** Classmates and parents are educated about allergies present in the classroom, and parents receive written notice of any new food restrictions in the classroom of their child or in school.

16. Helpful Contacts for Parents

The following websites may provide helpful information:

Texas Health and Human Services:

<https://hhs.texas.gov/>

Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers (March 2023):

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/protective-services/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf>

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services:

www.dfps.state.tx.us

Local Licensing Office:

1330 E 40th Street, Houston, TX 77022

713-692-3236

General Licensing Phone Number: 713-287-3238

Child Abuse Hotline:



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Phone: 1-800-252-5400

www.txabusehotline.org

Early Child Intervention:

<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/early-childhood-intervention-services>

Harris County Public Health Department:

Phone: 713-439-6000

<https://publichealth.harriscountytexas.gov/>

www.txchildcaresearch.org

US Consumer Product Safety Commission:

www.cpsc.gov

Houston Independent School District:

(for weather related emergency closings around the School)

<http://www.houstonisd.org>

Channel abc13 (KTRK):

(for weather related emergency closings around the School)

<http://abc13.com/>



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17. Appendix

Overview of School Forms

Required Forms for Student File:

1) Enrollment Contract

2) Admission Information Form (includes)

- Emergency Release Form
- Release Authorization
- Medical Release Form
- Medical History
- Health Statement
- Permit for Supervised Water Activities
- Information about Meals, Transportation, Archway Academy, Covid-19
- Permit for Application of Sunscreen Crèmes/Lotions and Mosquito Repellent as well as Over the Counter Medication
- Immunization Record, Vision and Hearing Screening

3) Acknowledgment of Parent Handbook

Additional School Forms:

Incident/Illness Report

Please contact our office for a copy of this form.

Allergy Action Plan for Students with Allergies

Please contact our office for a copy of this form. This form must be completed by a physician.

Authorization for Dispensing Medication

Please contact our office for a copy of this form.



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School Directory 2023-2024

Administration	
Nicole Sanchez (Site Director)	directorns@gish-houston.org
Bianca Reich (Admin Director)	office@gish-houston.org
Faculty Team	
	Jennifer Fayn (Assistant Director + English Lead Teacher) Anna Wiejak (German Lead Teacher) Antje Damanik (German Lead Teacher) Christina Walter-Lang (German Lead Teacher) Inga Hilker (German Lead Teacher) Vera Peneva (German Lead Teacher) Norma Bustos (English Lead Teacher) Irene Rivas de Hernandez (English Teacher Assistant) Ruth Monterrosa (English Teacher Assistant)
Board of Directors	
Office Hours: Monday – Friday 10:00 am – 3:00 pm 832-212-6400 board@gaeshouston.org	<u>Voting Members:</u> Bianca Reich (President, Treasurer) Christian Reich (Vice-President, Secretary) Mari Gianukos Veldekens (Advisor)



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Acknowledgement of Parent Handbook

I hereby acknowledge that I have received and read the **GISH Parent Handbook 2023-2024**,

Including the following topics and policies:

- Animals on the Premises
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Breastfeeding Mothers
- Change of Program or Policy
- Child Abuse and Neglect
- Daily Health Check
- Daily Routines
- Discipline and Guidance
- Dispensing Medication and Handling Medical Emergencies
- Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedure, Release of Children
- Emergency Preparedness
- Enrollment Policy
- Field Trips
- Gang Free Zone
- Helpful Contacts for Parents
- Illness and Exclusion Policies
- Insect Repellent and Sunscreen
- Immunization Requirements
- Meals and Food Service Practices
- Meet the Administration/Director/Site Director with Questions
- Operational Policy
- Parental Notifications, Communication, Participation/Involvement and Responsibilities
- Preventing and Controlling the Spread of Communicable Diseases
- Suspension and Expulsion of Children

Student's Name: _____

Signed by both parents and/or legal guardians:

Parent/Legal Guardian (Print Name)

Signature

Date

Parent/Legal Guardian (Print Name)

Signature

Date

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