

# **URUGUAYAN AMERICAN SCHOOL**



**STUDENT- PARENT  
HANDBOOK FOR  
NURSERY - GRADE 5**

Dear Parents and Students,

A warm welcome to all Uruguayan American School community members!

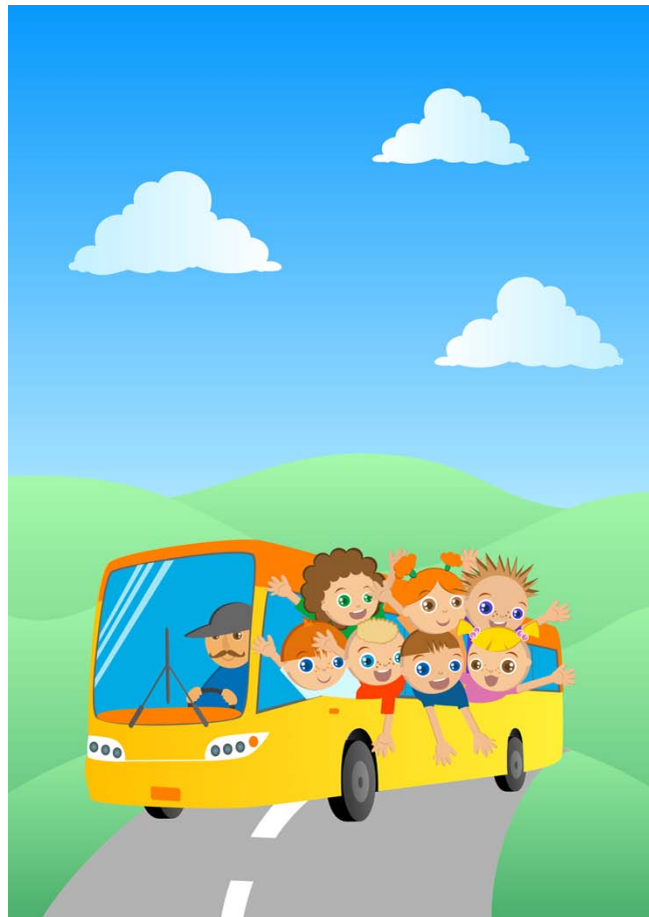
This handbook has been written to help orient everyone in our school community regarding the school's mission and to provide basic information regarding the school's programs. If you have any other questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

UAS is an excellent school because of our outstanding students, supportive parents, and our high quality faculty and staff. We look forward to everyone working together to make UAS an even better place to learn and enjoy.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael Schramm  
Director

Dr. Hugh Schoolman  
Principal



# STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK NURSERY - GRADE 5

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## **WELCOME TO UAS**

Welcome to the Uruguayan American School (UAS) Elementary School! Our elementary school has over 160 students from over 30 nationalities.

We believe that the elementary school years are critical for the development of confidence, attitudes towards learning and relationships. The UAS strongly believes that by working as a team with teachers, parents and community we bring up the best and uniqueness of each student.

Through this handbook we intend to give you a clear idea of the mission, values and priorities of the UAS. In addition you will find important information, rules and regulations. Please, do not hesitate in contact us if you still have any questions or concerns after reviewing this handbook.

### **UAS MISSION STATEMENT**

Uruguayan American School: the International School of Choice for Families Living in Uruguay.

### **UAS PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

We believe in the dignity and worth of each student and recognize the importance of his/her responsibilities to his/her fellow man in the world community.

We believe that all youth should have equal opportunity for education consistent with their individual capabilities and with their personal and social needs.

We believe that change is a constant factor in life. Therefore, education should encourage in students the development of personal values and thinking processes that will facilitate their intelligent adaptability to a changing society.

We believe that learning is an unbroken activity, continued throughout an individual's life span. Therefore, education should foster independent thinking, exploration, and experimentation as a life long process.

Goals: Guided by our mission statement and philosophy of education, the school should exert every effort to do the following:

1. Continue to provide a U.S.-oriented education for national and International children that will facilitate a smooth transition to a school in the U.S. or to any other international school, particularly at the college level.
2. Maintain accreditation with our regional educational accreditation institution, The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (S.A.C.S.).
3. Continue to provide an accredited Uruguayan Elementary program.
4. Continue to provide an integrated secondary program accredited by CODICEN (the Uruguayan Educational Council).
5. Continue to provide a program that will help students learn to express themselves fluently in both Spanish and English.
6. Provide a program that will help exceptional children in their efforts to reach their fullest potential.

Objectives: Guided by our mission statement and philosophy of education, the school shall exert every effort to do the following:

1. Develop in each student a mastery of the skills of communication and learning.
2. Develop responsible individuals who possess the ability to think clearly, logically, and independently, balanced with the indispensable degree of discipline and order, to succeed as participating members of a self-governing society.
3. Develop in each student an understanding and appreciation of cultural, social, scientific, economic, and political ideas and practices.
4. Provide physical and health education enabling the student to live an energetic, wholesome, and productive life.
5. Provide the opportunity for each student to develop and to appreciate ethical and cultural values.
6. Provide a program of student activities designed to develop competent, self-directed, responsible, social interactions in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation.
7. Develop in each student interests, skills, and attitudes that contribute to the worthy use of leisure time.
8. Help meet the needs of exceptional children enrolled at U.A.S. by providing educational opportunities that allow these special students to reach their fullest potential.

### **GOVERNANCE**

Our school is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board is composed of nine members to be elected among the able members of the Uruguayan American School Society during an Annual General Meeting upon simple majority of votes. Said members shall discharge their duties without any kind of compensation in return. Likewise, nine substitutes, who may be called in the event of temporary or definite absence of a member, shall be appointed. The members of the Board shall be elected for a three-year term. Vacancies in the Board may be filled by substitutes until new members are appointed at the next Annual Meeting to be held thereafter.

### **FACULTY AND STAFF**

The Board of Directors recognizes that the single most important resource in the development of a quality educational program is a qualified, dedicated faculty and staff. As such, the Board of Directors is committed to provide a competent, well-trained faculty and staff which is able to fit each discipline and area of responsibility in order to assure a balanced, well-run program.

## **PTO-PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION**

Our PTO school involvement is extremely appreciated by the whole community. The PTO's mission is to strengthen the UAS community and foster school spirit by assuming responsibility for the following:

- Integrating parents into the UAS community and taking advantage of our varied cultural diversity.
- Supporting our teachers with activities and overseeing the Room Mother program.
- Mobilizing our resources by raising money to support school programs and provide items to enhance the educational opportunities for our children that will benefit the largest number of students.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **ADMISSIONS**

New families contact our Elementary Secretary who guides them through our admissions process.

1. Information regarding the school and admissions requests is forwarded to new parents.
2. Meetings with Elementary Secretary and Principals are coordinated.
3. Elementary secretary and parents review process together and parents are given a New Parent Folder and are taken on a tour of the school.
4. Parents have a meeting with Principal.
5. Grade placement and individual schedules are determined and communicated to parents.
6. Parents either meet teacher before the first day of school or are requested to come early on the first day with their child to meet the teacher.
7. On the student's first day, the teacher will give out a letter that will include pertinent information regarding the teacher, class curriculum, class schedule, and teacher meeting times.
8. The teacher oversees a buddy system for all new students.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to be in their classroom ready to start school promptly at 8:00 and they finish at 15:25 for all Kindergarten through Grade 12 students. Nursery and Pre-K start at 9:30. Regular attendance and punctuality are important for the student to obtain maximum benefit from the educational program. General attendance will be taken daily and when a student is absent the school calls the home.

1. All absences will be considered unexcused until verified with the student's parents or legal guardian.
2. Students arriving late must check in at the Reception Desk. Students failing to do so may be counted as being absent.
3. Absences and tardies are recorded on report cards.

Parents of preschool students arriving after 9:30 are requested to leave their children at the reception desk so a staff member can take them to class.

## **BUSES**

Parents may contract for bus transportation through a contracted bus company. Information about this service may be obtained from the front office. All billing and scheduling of the service is arranged directly with the bus company. Parents need to tell the bus companies about making sure their students arrive to school on time. Students should be punctual for both morning pick-up and afternoon departure. The regular bus leaves the school in the afternoon promptly at 3:35 PM daily and an extracurricular afternoon bus leaves at 4:35 PM.

If parents find the need to make a change in their children's schedule on a given day, the parent must contact the school no later than 3:00 PM.

We do have basic expectations for students riding the bus.

1. Strict obedience to the bus staff
2. Remain seated until the bus comes to a full stop
3. Refrain from using inappropriate language
4. Any damage done to a school bus will be paid for by the person(s) involved
5. At the end of the day students walk to the bus and should stay in their seats until the bus leaves.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Discipline Guideline: The following guides to good discipline are recommended:

- Good discipline is always fair, dignified, and administered in good temper.
- Conferences with teachers, administrators, and parents should be used as necessary to bring about acceptable classroom behavior.
- We expect our students to respect themselves, respect others, and respect our school.
- Bullying is contrary to our school philosophy and is considered unacceptable in either verbal, visual, or physical form. Infractions will receive disciplinary measures and students engaged in physical fighting are immediately sent home.

Possible responses to misbehavior are:

1. Child is warned by staff member
2. Five minutes timeout during recess
3. Ten minutes timeout during recess
4. No recess participation
5. Lunch detention
6. In-school suspension (after three lunch detentions)
7. Suspension

## **DRESS CODE**

### School Attire

Students in grades Nursery through five are required to wear the UAS school uniform. Information about the uniforms can be obtained from the Director's Secretary.

### PE Uniform

All students are required to wear indicated sportswear to the P.E. class. It consists of a white T-shirt and a navy blue jogging suit or shorts. Tennis shoes should be worn on days scheduled for P.E. All P.E. clothing should be properly marked to avoid loss.

### Caps

The school emphasizes the importance of the use of caps during outdoor activities including recess and physical education.

## **AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

The school offers co-curricular activities to elementary students in grades K-5. During the first weeks of school, the Athletic/Activity Director sends a chart home with a list of times and days for each co-curricular activity. Parents are asked to mark the activity that they would like their child to attend and return the chart by the end of the first school week. The after-school activities will start the second or third Monday of each school semester. Any change in activity should be made in written form.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Our school recognizes the educational value of field trips. All parents will be informed about the field trip and a permission slip must be signed and returned before child is allowed to accompany his/her class. A phone call is not an acceptable form of authorization

## **INTERNATIONAL DAY**

This is a big event at school. It is organized by the UAS and UAS families in order to celebrate our different cultures and traditions. All school nationalities are present in attractive booths that share these different cultures and traditions with the entire community. This event takes place every two years.

## **INTERNET USE**

### E-Mail

Acceptable use of internet is based on common sense and respect to others as applied to all communications within the electronic environment. UAS cannot be responsible for the inappropriate exchange of written communications between students during chat sessions or email exchange that occurs outside school.

### Chat

UAS does not allow chat sessions on school computers. Experience shows the presence of inappropriate language and use.

## **LANGUAGE POLICY**

English is the official language of instruction at UAS, and all students are strongly encouraged to use it at all times except during foreign language classes. Students are required to use only English during classes where English is the language of instruction. UAS is an English speaking campus, and students are encouraged to use English in the hallways, eating areas, and during after-school activities. English oral fluency and correct written English will both be formally assessed during the school year. Formal written assignments are requested and evaluated every 2 weeks.

## **LIBRARY**

The elementary library is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Students should follow the library rules and read or work quietly without disrupting others. No eating or drinking is allowed.

Students check out different numbers of books depending on their grade level:

Pre-school: 1 (one) book per week

Grades 1-5: 6 (six) items per week.

Books and magazines are checked out for fourteen (14) days and current issue magazines, encyclopedias, and other reference materials may be checked overnight only. Books that have been reserved are held for one day.

Library materials must be returned on or before the due date. Students are responsible for all materials checked out. Undue damage or loss will be fined. For books that can be purchased locally, the student must purchase and bring to the library a copy of the lost book. For books that cannot be purchased locally, the student has to pay the price of the book plus shipping (30%), so the library can replace it. If a book is out of print, a similar title will be accepted.

All library materials must be returned at the end of each semester.

Students registered for the following semester may check out ten (10) books and five (5) magazines over the summer and winter vacations.

Proper care of library materials by all students is expected and appreciated.

Our Book Character Day is organized by the librarian. All elementary students Nursery -Grade 5 come dressed as their favorite book characters. They parade across the stage in the auditorium and announce the name of their character and what book they are from. After the parade, cake and juice is offered.

## **MANNERS – GOOD MANNERS ARE APPRECIATED**

We always say, “Good morning”.

We show respect towards all adults and all students.

We walk through the halls quietly.

We look at art work and other displays, but we do not touch them.

We put litter in its proper place: the garbage cans

We treat all school property as we would our own.

We say, “Please,” and “Thank you”.

We use appropriate language at school

## **SECURITY**

### Evacuation drills

A special signal for evacuation drills has been established. When these signals are heard, all persons should walk rapidly and silently in a line to the designated exit area. Students should leave books and belongings in the classroom. Teachers will accompany their classes to their emergency drill exit positions and immediately verify each person’s attendance according to the class register. A special signal will be sounded to return to the building quickly and quietly.

### UAS Visitors

The security of our campus is a top priority. Our security personnel have been instructed to ask all visitors, including parents, if s/he has a scheduled appointment. The security personnel will contact the receptionist to verify this appointment. Visitors will be asked to wait in the reception area until the person they are scheduled to meet arrives to receive them. Parents who serve as volunteers will also be required to follow these procedures.

### **SUPERVISION**

Elementary students are supervised at all times. At the end of the school day, students are either taken to the school bus or they stay with the teachers until parents come to school. Parents are expected to pick up their children by 3:30.

All students who want to change end-of-day procedures need to provide the teacher with a written note signed by a parent.

The instructors of After-School Activities are also responsible for putting the students on the school bus and for waiting with the students until parents come to pick them up.

Students are not allowed to stay after school unless there is an adult who has officially assumed supervision responsibilities.

It is important to note that teachers and instructors have other responsibilities after school, and we strongly emphasize the need for parents to be punctual.

### **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

The Elementary School offers both accredited United States and Uruguayan programs. The US program is obligatory while the Uruguayan Program is offered as an option. A description of all academic programs is presented to parents during Open House and all program overviews are available on the Elementary School web page for each class.

### **US PROGRAM**

- The US program (Nursery through Grade 5) is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and runs on the northern calendar (August-June). Children must be three years of age to start Nursery. The cut off date is October 1.
- Our US Preschool program hours are 9:30 - 15:25. An adaptation period is considered based on the need of the individual student and parents often participate in class activities. The Pre-school program includes preparation for higher academic learning, music, computer, PE, library periods, and psychomotricity.
- Our US program Grades K-5 includes regular academic courses, special classes (music, drama, art, computer, library, PE), ELL (English Language Learners), SSL (Spanish as a Second Language), and keyboarding.
- The US Program offers two End-of-Year Student Presentations during the month of June. The Early Childhood Presentation includes Grades Nursery - Kindergarten. The Upper Elementary Presentation includes Grades 1-5 and the official Grade 5 Transition to Middle School.

## **URUGUAYAN PROGRAM**

- Our Uruguayan Program (Kinder through Grade 5) is accredited by the Uruguayan government and runs on the southern calendar (February-December) Children must be five years of age to enter the Uruguayan Kinder. The cut off date is April 30.
- The Uruguayan and Spanish Language Learning Program End-of-Year Student Presentations (grades Kinder – Grade 5) takes place in December.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM**

All inquiries about learning differences and extra assistance are handled by the Student Support Team. The team is comprised by the Counselor, the Principal, and the Nurse. This approach ensures that all cases are handled in a holistic manner that addresses social-emotional, learning and health perspectives. Parents are considered an integral part of the process.

## **STANDARDIZED TESTING (ITBS)**

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills is administered to elementary students in Grades 2-5. These tests provide the school with the following:

1. Information as to how to meet the student's individual needs by identifying strong and weak areas.
2. Information regarding the student's skill growth from year to year.
3. Information as to our students' performance compared to the performance of students from other schools throughout the United States.

## **CLASSROOM PROCEDURES**

### **LETTER FROM TEACHER**

At the beginning of each semester the teacher sends home a letter giving personal information and specific information as to classroom rules, procedures, schedules, and materials needed.

### **BIRTHDAY PARTIES AT SCHOOL**

UAS believes that the recognition of a student's birthday is appropriate if acknowledged through school guidelines. If a student is going to invite **ALL** members of the class to his/her party, they are welcome to hand out invitations at school. To avoid feeling of being excluded or left out if not all students are going to be invite we ask parents to make phone calls or use some other method for the invitations.

Parents requesting a class party should keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. Birthday parties will be short and simple, utilizing recess and limited classroom time.
2. The parent is requested to attend and serve refreshments.
3. Outside performers are not allowed.
4. We prefer that no invitations be given

## **BIRTHDAY PARTIES AFTER SCHOOL**

It is essential that children bring written permission to attend after-school birthday parties. The school needs to be informed in writing about changes in transportation and/or changes in the adult responsible for picking up the children. Invitations handed out during school time for home parties should include all peers.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Elementary students may not bring electronic games, radios, I-Pods, nor MP3's to school. Such devices are not allowed on campus or in academic areas before school or during the school day. The school will not be responsible for the loss of these items.

## **HOMEWORK**

The school provides a homework notebook for Grades 2-5 where all assignments are written down together with the date the assignments are due. Parents are requested to review and sign these homework notebooks over the weekend. The homework notebook is also an easy way for parents and teachers to communicate since the notebook goes back and forth between the school and the home. The teachers in Grades K-1 develop their own homework notebook.

## **TEACHERWEB**

All teachers post their homework assignments and other information on TeacherWeb. Parents and students can access this website from home. It is a great tool for parents and teachers to keep informed.

## **NEW STUDENT WELCOME PROCEDURE**

- Teachers review the new student's file before student's first day
- Teachers arrive 15 minutes early on student's first day so as to meet parents and new student.
- Teachers assign one/two buddies to help integrate new student.
- On student's first day, the teachers provide the student with a letter that includes pertinent information regarding the teacher, class curriculum, class schedule, and teacher meetings.

## **STUDENT FAREWELL PROCEDURE**

- If you are leaving, please let us know so we can coordinate the transition and prepare the paperwork.
- Class teacher will organize farewell activities.
- Teacher and peers will present student a class made farewell gift.

## **TEST TAKING PROCEDURES**

Grades 1-2:

- Students have a right to privacy with private corners

Grades 3-5:

- Desks will be separated
- Students will be advised that they cannot ask each other questions.
- The only items on their desks will be their test, pencils, erasers, sharpeners, and a reading book for when test is over.

- Once the test is finished and revised, students should remain seated and read their chosen book until teacher collects tests.

## **ELEMENTARY STANDARDIZED NOTEBOOK USE**

Many of our students have double programs, three languages, and a large number of notebooks. In order to help them organize their materials in elementary school we have assigned specific colored notebook covers for each academic subject. This helps students and staff members, since at a glance they can visualize the notebook content.

The colors decided upon are the following:

English - Red  
Reading - Yellow  
Math - Orange  
Science - Green  
Social Studies - Blue  
ESL/SSL - Light Blue  
Homework - Transparent

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **LINES OF COMMUNICATION**

Due to the different levels of authority and responsibility in a school, it is very important for everyone to understand with whom they need to address their concerns. For example, if there is a concern about a classroom procedure, in most cases a parent should meet with the teacher in an attempt to understand or solve the issue. If the parent is not fully satisfied, the issue may be appealed to the school principal. If still not solved, the issue may be brought to the director. Email is the best way to communicate.

### **PARENTS REQUESTING MEETINGS**

Parents who wish to contact teachers or the principal or other administrative personnel may do so by writing or by telephoning the school office. Setting a time for a conference will ensure that the appropriate attention can be paid to the issue. All teachers have weekly conference times included in their weekly schedule and parents are requested to contact the school at least 24 hours in advance to request a conference time. The office will set an appointment or leave a message, and teachers will attempt to return calls promptly. Phone calls are not transferred to teachers during school hours.

### **FRIDAY FOLDERS**

Elementary students take home a Friday folder that may include individual work, information as to class programs, and administrative notices. Letters from the administration go home with the youngest child of the family.

### **NEWSLETTERS**

School information is sent to parents via weekly Friday flash, via email and the Friday folder hardcopy.

### **REPORT CARDS**

US Program, Uruguayan Program, and English Language Learner report cards are sent home at the end of each quarter. The report cards include separate evaluations for academic achievement, social development/behavior, and work habits.

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

At the end of the first and third quarters, the school establishes school wide parent–teacher conferences. The dates for these conferences are found on the school calendar. These conferences are designed to advise parents of student progress and/or concerns.

## **TELEPHONES**

The office telephones are maintained for school business and are not for students' personal calls. However, students may use them for emergencies with the permission of the office staff before and after school hours. Forgetting books, school assignments/projects, lunch money, or permission forms are not considered emergencies.

## **HEALTH AND NUTRITION**

### **NURSE**

UAS employs a full time qualified nurse. The following information pertains to the services of the school nurse:

- 1. It is essential that the nurse have accurate medical records for your child. Therefore, the school must have an annual update of the child's medical form and required immunizations on file.**
- 2. Parents/Guardians need to inform administration of any changes in their address, phone numbers (work, home, cell) and contact information. This information is extremely important in case a child is sick or injured at school.**
- 3. Parents are requested to inform the nurse of illnesses during the school year so she can follow up on the child's health condition.**
- 4. If students need to receive medication during school hours, the nurse has to be advised since Uruguayan Medication Policy must be followed.**

### **CONTAGIOUS SITUATIONS**

1. A student who has a contagious disease may not attend school until a statement is presented from the attending physician informing that the student is able to return to class without danger of harming or infecting others. Students who become ill while at school may leave after contact is made with the parent/guardian listed on the emergency card.
2. The school's head lice policy states that children with evidence of head lice will be sent home. In order to return to school the child must not show any evidence of eggs nor lice. The school nurse will develop monthly check- ups in the elementary classes. Parents who notice that their children have head lice are requested to share this information with the school nurse as soon as possible. Hopefully working together we can keep head lice out of our school.

## LUNCH

All lower elementary teachers are present when their students have lunch, and the upper elementary teachers take turns supervising the older students' lunchtime.

1. The school menu is published in the monthly newsletter.
2. The cafeteria offers two daily options and lunch tickets are sold at school.
3. Students may bring their own lunches. It is important that they include their own cutlery and cup since the cafeteria does not provide this for students who bring their own lunch.
4. Students walk to the cafeteria, wash their hands, and wait quietly in line.
5. Students return their plates, etc. to the proper container. There are two garbage bags, one for food leftovers and one for paper and plastic trash.
6. Students are requested to brush their teeth after lunch as recommended by our health curriculum. The school will request that all students bring a toothbrush and toothpaste at the beginning of each semester.
7. Good manners and cooperative behavior are always expected in the cafeteria.
8. Food purchased from local fast food chains is not allowed in the school.

## SOFT DRINKS

Following our health curriculum recommendation, students are not allowed to bring soft drinks to school. We recommend water, juice, chocolate milk, and milk for lunchtime and class celebrations.



# STUDENT - PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PAGE

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

We have received a copy of the U.A.S. Elementary Student–Parent Handbook. We understand it is our duty to study the handbook and become familiar with its contents, follow the procedures set down, and ask questions of the teachers, counselor, or administrator if we are unsure or have any concerns.

Student's Name	Grade	Student Signature
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

NOTE: This acknowledgement page must be signed and returned to the Grade Level Teacher no later than a week after receiving this handbook.

