

Parent and Student Policy Handbook



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1.) Philosophy and Mission Statement

The GASFL was founded in the summer of 2002 to serve the German community in South Florida.

The school now offers an English preschool program, as well as a daily full immersion German preschool program.

We also offer classes for native speakers on Saturdays in our Saturday School, on the preschool through high school level, as well as German as a foreign language classes, for children and adults.

The purpose of the GASFL is to provide the students with an environment of loving care, that allows them to receive a child-centered education, obtain German and English language skills, and experience the support and care they need, to develop their mental, physical, emotional, social, and intellectual skills to their highest potential. This is accomplished by providing developmentally appropriate activities and guidance in the German and English languages.

In the full immersion German program, all students will enhance and advance their ability to speak, read, understand, and write the German language at their individual skill levels in a German-speaking environment and gain a genuine understanding of the German culture, traditions and present-day life.

The teachers at the GASFL act as guides and helpers in the children's natural desire to learn. Teachers prepare the classroom, its materials and guide students gently towards their individual goals. Instruction methods emphasize natural learning processes, play, and fun. The GASFL recognizes that students learn from their peers, and that they can be positive role models for students both older and younger than themselves.

The German-American School community respects each child as a unique person. We value our student's physical, emotional, social and cultural individuality, and seek to establish a trusting relationship between teachers, parents and children so that students can grow and learn in a way that fits their personal needs. The German-American School classrooms, enriched by the unique personalities and perspectives of each student, provide an environment in which children can feel confident in exploring their own interests, thoughts, and feelings.

By introducing elements of the German, European and American cultures, the GASFL supports the understanding of multiple cultures. We design activities that highlight traditions specific to German-, and English-speaking cultures in a manner that invites and respects the individual background of all students. Discussions such as "What festivities does your family celebrate?" establishes an awareness of the differences and commonalities between people and cultures in the global community. We model a peaceful, embracing attitude about the world, while encouraging a desire within our students to go out into the world to explore, find, experience and learn.

2.) Nondiscriminatory Policy

The GASFL admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or any other school-administered programs.

3.) Ages & Hours of operation

The GASFL daily preschool is open to children from 1 through 5 years of age. Hours of operation Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Parents dropping children off, or picking them up outside our official hours of operation, will be charged \$5.00 for every 15 minutes.

The classes on Saturdays are held between 9:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. on 31 Saturdays between August and May. The School calendar is tailored to the public school calendar and major holidays to accommodate families and keep absences at a minimum. The school reserves the right to alter the calendar if necessary. Please review our calendar on our website, <http://www.deutscheschulefl.com/images/Jahreskalender.pdf> , to see the dates we are not in session. We offer classes for all age groups on Saturdays.

4.) Registration / Enrollment Procedures

The completed enrollment package together with the registration and material fee completes your child's enrollment. In order to plan accordingly for each school year, please register early in May, so we can select and train the teachers, order necessary materials and adjust our curriculum accordingly. You will find our Registration Forms online under <http://www.deutscheschulefl.com/english/forms.html> . A copy of the child's immunization records (blue and yellow form) for the preschool registration must be returned with their enrollment package. A non-refundable registration- and material fee will be charged for all students. If you register during the second half of a school year (January –May), you will receive a 50% discount on your registration for the following school year.

5.) Curriculum

The preschool classroom at the GASFL is equipped with exclusively educational material and we have incorporated some aspects of the 'Montessori Method' and its materials into our curriculum. The 'Montessori Environment' is quiet, respectful, and non-competitive. Children move freely and purposefully throughout the classroom choosing materials they wish to "learn" with, returning them to the shelf as they found them before moving on to new work. Lessons are usually presented individually, with ample opportunities for group interaction during circle, music, art, and outdoor activities. Most lessons are independent from the language spoken and are wonderful instruments for a full immersion language setting.

Language development, alphabetic and numeric skills, music, art, problem solving, math, science, and social skills are some of the most important areas supported by our curriculum. Cultural awareness, creativity, independent learning and individualization are central goals of the program as well.

In our 'Saturday School' the teaching principles of 'Learning with the Head, Heart, and Hands' like those of 'Learning with All Your Senses' play a particularly important role. The full immersion concept of our German program is based on the research based belief that languages are best learned in situations, in which students play, explore, create, sing, and learn. All textbooks and materials used in the Saturday classes are imported from Germany.

6.) Standardized Testing

AATG (American Association of Teachers of German) Test

In December, or January the AATG National German Examination is administered to students in higher grades. This test is generally offered to high school students learning German. It measures a student's German proficiency. The exam tests listening comprehension, reading and conversational skills, applied structure of grammar and idioms in context, and reading comprehension. There are three different test levels: Level 2 corresponds two years of high school German language classes, level 3 to three years, and level 4 to four years. The teacher determines the test level that is appropriate for each child. Our school is administering the test to qualified students.

Deutsches Sprachdiplom (DSD) A2, A2/B1, B2/C1 It is the standardized new testing according to the Common European Framework of References (CEFR). Formerly known as "Zentrale Deutschprüfung" (ZDP), the "Sprachdiplom I und II" has been revised, The DSD I is administered in spring and the DSD II in the fall.

Advanced Placement Test in German Language and Culture College Board Test to receive college credits for German

http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/teachers_corner/2257.html

7.) Attendance

Regular attendance is crucial to a child's adjustment to school. Students should not miss classes for reasons other than illness or unavoidable emergencies. If classes are missed, it is the parent's responsibility to inform the teacher. Also, arriving at school on time assures that your child does not miss out on any of the activities planned for the day. Older children develop friendships and teacher relationships, and derive greater benefit from the curriculum, when they attend as much as possible. If your child is absent, please inform the school and contact the teacher for the assignment of the week (Saturday students).

8.) Tuition

Payment is to be made by the 1st of each month, and considered past due after the 10th of each month. Tuition is required in advance each month and is non-refundable. A late charge fee will be added to tuition received after the 10th of the month. Please make checks payable to German School of Ft. Lauderdale. A returned check fee will be charged in the event of insufficient funds. The yearly registration fee is non-refundable. It is our policy not to make up, or refund class days missed due to illness, vacations, natural disasters etc. If you wish to have additional attendance days on a temporary basis, they may be available as space permits, for an hourly fee. Monthly tuition for Saturday classes is pro-rated and based on the total number of classes offered between August and May and not classes per month. Extended absences in the Saturday School need to be disclosed before the first of the month, for that month's tuition to be waived. There is no guarantee that the spot in the class will be held.

Tuition paid for the preschool is pro-rated as well and includes all holidays. Tuition between September and May is due in full on a monthly basis in the German program. At the English program you may pay weekly. We do not prorate, or discount any absences due to illness or personal reasons or vacations. Tuition between June and August can get paid on a daily, weekly or monthly basis in both programs. Each student's attendance days must be disclosed by the 1st of each month for the invoice to be written up.

Admission to school may be denied if you become 30 days past due and no previous arrangements have been made.

9.) Food/Nutrition

The preschool children will have a breakfast/snack at about 9:30 a.m. and lunch at 11:30 a.m. The lunch break at the Saturday School is from 12:00 – 12:30 p.m. on the playground of the elementary school. Please provide healthy breakfasts, snacks, and lunches, such as bread/crackers, fruits, sandwiches etc., no candy and sweets please. We do have refrigerators and microwaves in the classrooms, so we are in a position to warm meals up as needed. Snack donations are always welcome.

We firmly believe that, when setting the table and having a meal all together every day, the children benefit from the warm, family-like atmosphere, conversations, and communication at the table, as well as from having age and developmentally appropriate responsibilities.

10.) Dress Code

Dress: Please dress your child in washable play clothes that he/she can easily take off and put back on when using the lavatory. It is essential for your child's comfort and independence that he/she does not have to worry about staying clean and that he/she

can go to the restroom with minimal assistance from the teacher (if already potty trained). To climb safely, run fast, and have fun, your child must wear closed shoes daily that fit well and have good ground traction.

Fridays is our 'Spirit Day', please have all children wear a German – American School T-Shirt.

11.) Arrival, Dismissal and Supervision

Arrival: The before care at the preschool begins at 7:00 a.m., class starts at 8:30 a.m. At the Saturday school classes start at individual times. All children should be taken into the classrooms by the parent or designated adult. Children may not be left in the classroom unless there is a teacher present. Do not drop off your child outside and let him/her go into the school by him-/ herself. Circle time in the preschool starts at 9:00 a.m. and the classroom doors will stay closed until 9:30 a.m. to avoid interruptions during this important time of learning. If you arrive after 9:00 a.m., please wait until 9:30 a.m. for your child to enter the classroom.

Preschool sign in and sign out: Parents must locate their child's name on the class roll each day and indicate the time their child has arrived. This procedure is to be repeated at the end of the day.

Dismissal: Preschool dismissal at 1:00 p.m. and 3:00p.m. will be done from the side gate, dismissal after 3:00 p.m. will be done from the front door, or the back classroom door. We offer a late pick up time until 6:30 p.m. with an additional fee. If your child should ever need to be picked up by anyone other than persons stated on your registration forms, please notify the GSFL in writing. Advise the person that they must present their driver's license before the child will be released to them.

In the Saturday School, children will have to stay with the teacher until the parents arrive at the classroom doors.

Supervision: All students are supervised during their classes at all time, as well as their lunch breaks and on the playgrounds. The school grounds are private property, only to be used by GASFL students during their breaks and under the supervision of GASFL teachers and staff. Siblings and friends need to be supervised by the parent or guardians at all time. The GASF is not liable for incidents on the playground during parent's supervision.

12.) Materials / School Supplies

The books handed out to the students are the property of the GASFL. Students are responsible for returning books in good condition at the end of the school year. Please do not write into the books! Families will be charged for the replacement of lost or damaged books. All other materials and their costs are covered by the yearly material

fee. Books may be purchased at cost. Workbooks are paid for through the registration and material fee and belong to the students.

Preschool Daily: snacks & lunch, complete change of clothes, blanket and pillow for nap time, diapers and wipes, if necessary

Preschool/ Saturday: Colored pencils, Pencil, Eraser, Pencil sharpener, yellow 3 prongs, 2 pocket folder

German as a Foreign Language 1,2,3,4': Pencil, Eraser, Pencil sharpener, composition book

1st Grade: Colored pencils, Pencil, Eraser, Pencil sharpener, yellow 3 prongs, 2 pocket folder

2nd- 10th Grade: Colored pencils, Pencil, Eraser, Pencil sharpener, yellow 3 prong, 2 pocket folder, Composition book, Small notebook, green 3 prongs, 2 pocket folder for science

13.) Homework

Homework is crucial to our student's progress and they are expected to be prepared for class. Weekly homework assignments will begin at the elementary level. In more advanced level classes this will also include reading assignments, essays, and long-term projects. Practice with parental involvement and encouragement is important at all levels.

Parents are expected to reinforce the learning process outside the classroom and encourage their child/ren to use supportive materials.

The general guidelines for the weekly homework are as follows:

1st / 2nd Grade: 5-10 minutes per day (Mo. – Fr.)

3rd - 5th Grade: 10-15 minutes per day (Mo. – Fr.)

6th – 10th Grade: 15-20 minutes per day (Mo. – Fr.)

14.) Extended Leave / Cancellation

In case of extended absences for Saturday classes, class fees can only be refunded if notified before the first of the month. Based on availability, there is no guarantee that the student will be able to return to his/her class. Tuition payments for Saturday classes are done on a monthly basis.

Cancellations of private classes need to be announced 24 hours before the scheduled class, in order for the tuition to be waived, or refunded.

15.) Substituting

In the event, that a teacher or day care personnel must be absent, there will be a substitute; Saturday classes may be joined together.

16.) Health policies

We can admit your child to the classroom only when healthy. We depend on our parents to help us maintain this policy. Parents, whose children are found to be ill, will be called to pick them up.

Children are to be kept home when they have shown any of the following symptoms within the previous 24 hour period:

- Temperature over 100 F/ 38C degrees
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Any symptom of the usual childhood diseases: Scarlet Fever, German measles, Mumps, Chicken Pox, and Whooping Cough
- Sore throat
- Croup or any uncontrolled cough
- Any unexplained rash
- Any skin infection: boils, ringworm, impetigo
- Pinkeye or other eye infection

Children sent home from school with any of these symptoms are not eligible to return to class the next day (24 hour rule) unless they have a written explanation from their physician. This policy is for the protection of your child, as well as the other children. Parents will be notified when a child has been exposed to a communicable disease within the GASFL. Please notify the school immediately if your child has been exposed to any contagious disease.

If your child becomes ill while at GASFL, you will be notified by phone and asked to come pick him/her up. Your child will be made as comfortable as possible until you arrive. Please be sure that your phone numbers on file are current. The person given as emergency contact must be available and willing to come and pick up the child from school quickly. If there are changes in this information, notify the office (in writing).

17.) Medications and First Aid

All medications must be handed to a staff member and the parents must sign the Medication paperwork, authorizing the staff to administer the medicine. Please do not place medication in your child's lunchbox or backpack. All medication must be in the original container, be labeled with your child's name and include directions regarding their administration.

Teachers are expected to clean any wound and apply band aids/ bandages to keep the area clean until pick up. If needed, ice packs will be applied to reduce swelling. In case of a life threatening emergency 911 will be called and first aid will be applied.

18.) Conferences / Parent- School Communications

Parents are welcome to visit any time; please notify the teacher, or director, if you plan on visiting. Questions about your child's classroom, homework, academic progress etc.

should first be directed to your child's teacher. Parents may contact the Principal if a matter requires further attention.

If you desire a conference with your child's teacher or with the principal, please call and schedule a time to discuss your concerns. Please keep in mind, that pick up and drop off can be hectic periods and not conducive for a conversation about your little one. If you have any questions or concerns about the policies or procedures of the Saturday- or preschool, please call and make an appointment to meet with the principal. The school provides parents with program information at the beginning of the school year, as well as throughout the year via e-mail. Parents can also obtain updated information from the website at www.germanschoolfl.com .

19.) Birthdays

Birthdays are special occasions. We observe this special day at school for all birthday children once a month. Your child's teachers will discuss it with you in advance, they will let you know, what you can bring to make the party a success. You are welcome to take part at the Birthday celebration.

20.) Discipline

At the GASF, we believe that by positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior discipline concerns are kept to a minimum. Positive ways to reach a child are explored. The teachers at the GSFL may only use positive methods of discipline that encourage self-esteem, self-control and self-direction. These could include using praise and encouragement of good behavior, reminding the child of behavior expectations by using clear, positive statements and redirecting behavior using positive statements. A motivated and challenged child is less likely to pose a discipline problem.

If a child misbehaves, the inappropriate behavior is discussed and alternate behaviors are provided and reinforced. If the behavior continues, the child is removed from the stressful situation with a toy or book. Alternatively, a brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, may be used. Some preschool groups also use a reward system (Star System) for the children, as a disciplinary measure, which promotes good behaviors.

In case a behavior truly becomes unmanageable, and for continued or serious offenses, teachers will work with the Principal. Violations of the school's rules are dealt with on an individual basis according to the specific incident. Teachers will resolve minor offenses, such as disruptive behavior in class. After consultation with the parents in a conference, the Principal will decide on a resolution. The GASF maintains the right to have a child removed from the school, if the behavior does not improve. This will only be upon the recommendation of the director.

Serious offenses include, but are not limited to, physical violence, possession or use of weapons or other dangerous objects, possession or use of drugs, including alcohol or

tobacco, vandalism and triggering of false fire alarms. Such offenses constitute illegal behavior and may result in disciplinary actions up to, and including expulsion. Please be sure to advise us of any situation occurring outside of our school (such as a divorce, death in the family etc...) or of any medication that may affect your child's behavior.

21.) Student Conduct / Saturday School

Students are expected to comply with the following rules:

- 1.) Show proper respect for teachers, staff, and classmates at all times.
- 2.) Be punctual when arriving for class and returning from breaks.
- 3.) Respect personal property, in particular "The German – American School" building and its property, as well as the property of the GASFL. Parents shall be held responsible for any damage caused by their children.
- 4.) Clean up after snack periods and help at the end of the school day to return the classroom to its original condition.
- 5.) Come to class properly prepared to participate fully in all classroom activities. This preparation includes bringing completed homework assignments, the class textbook and workbook, a notebook, paper, pen or pencil, and any other materials required by the teacher.
- 6.) Please note: the following are not allowed during class:
 - Eating, drinking and gum-chewing
 - Listening to music (i.e. iPod)
 - Telephone calls, games, etc.

22.) Parent Initiative / Parent Involvement

The parent initiative of the GASFL has launched a volunteer system to make several cultural German events possible and to keep tuition cost as low as possible.

An added benefit of the volunteer system is increased involvement of the parents in their children's educational experience at the school.

All families are kindly asked to pay \$100.00 at the time of their registration, \$50.00 per parent to support the volunteer system. The money will get refunded at the end of the school year, if each parent actively volunteered at one of the school events. Our school offers a variety of jobs for a variety of interests/skills. Although we hope that as many of you as possible can actively participate, we realize that this may not be feasible for some families. Therefore, we offer the option of paying a "non-participation fee" (\$50/parent or \$100/family). Please select two (2) job choices per parent from the volunteer signup sheet in the order of preference or agree to pay the non-participation fee. While we will make every attempt to accommodate your job preference, all positions have to be filled to maintain the quality of our program. If you do not indicate

any job preferences on the signup sheet, we will assign you where most needed. The parent initiative notifies parents of their volunteer job assignments. Parents are encouraged to also participate in their child's preschool life in various ways. Several parties will be held during the year. We will put up a list asking for donations and volunteers to assist. Parents will have opportunities to meet other parents and will become involved in making our school a great place for their children by attending our annual celebrations such as St. Martin lantern parade, St. Nikolaus and advent celebrations, mother's day, summer/year end party etc.

23.) Library

The library will be a volunteer-run service. The library is open to the students at GASFL. The use of the library is free. The library has a selection of books and magazines for children. Operated by parent volunteers, the school library supports the work of the teachers as well as parents' efforts to continue the learning process between school days. The library will be open on Saturdays. The library welcomes donations of any suitable material. In addition, parents can make contributions to the library.

24.) Contact information

German-American School of Ft. Lauderdale
4200 N 65th Avenue
Davie, Fl. 33024
School: 954- 391-9847
Owner / Director Cell: 954-288-7599
germanschoolfl@aol.com
www.germanschoolfl.com
Director: Svenja Iglesias