



Parent and Student Handbook

2017 – 2018 Academic Year



General Information

School Mission

The mission of the World Academy of Tirana (WAT) is to cultivate internationally-minded students who connect their academic learning to action in the real world. Our goal is to inspire children to become active, compassionate, lifelong learners who can relate harmoniously with other people and cultures.

Philosophy

World Academy of Tirana provides an international education for students of diverse cultural backgrounds. The school's programs of study and activities foster the cognitive, aesthetic, physical, social and emotional growth of the whole child, helping each child reach his/her greatest potential in a stimulating and caring environment. Children are encouraged to develop a sense of identity, self-esteem and independence. The multi-disciplinary approach champions inquiry based learning to investigate and explore new ideas to gain conceptual understanding, while maintaining high standards of academic learning. This allows students to make meaningful connections across subject disciplines, developing higher order thinking skills. Classroom learning provide opportunities for cooperative and experiential learning, emphasizing process-oriented skills and the communicative importance of language. Students develop a conceptual understanding of global issues viewed through a local lens, taking action through school and community service related activities. Students learn to value and respect others, as well as their natural environment. Cooperation is encouraged among parents, staff, students and the community. Students leave WAT with the tools to become life-long learners and an appreciation of different cultures and viewpoints, imbued through the school's commitment to international-mindedness and its celebration of diversity of people, thoughts, ideas, beliefs and heritage.

History of World Academy of Tirana

The World Academy of Tirana was founded in 2010 in response to the request of parents who had children at the International Montessori School of Albania. They liked the international focus of Albania's first Montessori School and the ethos of its founder, Mirlinda Boshnjaku, who herself enjoyed an international education in several countries and graduated with the IB Diploma. The school's ethos can best be described as a genuine interest in students' holistic development and learning, a collaborative atmosphere, and a cooperative approach among staff. The school started in 2010 with 6 students in two villas, and has now expanded to 300 students. In 2015, WAT moved into its new purpose-built building. Renovations continue as the school transforms to meet the requirements of our IB programmes and growing enrolment.

The school became an authorized IB World school for PYP in 2014, MYP in 2016, and DP in 2017. It holds accreditation from the US College Board to deliver 10 Advanced Placement (AP) courses for senior students.

IB's Mission

The International Baccalaureate (IB) aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.



IB Learner Profile

The IB Learner Profile profiles 10 attributes that all WAT students need to demonstrate to create a better and more peaceful world. WAT teachers help students to develop the attributes and reflect on appropriate behaviour. Specific behavioural expectations are the result of our interpretation of the IB Learner Profile.

Inquirers: Students are naturally interested in other backgrounds and appreciate working alone and inquiring as part of a group. Learners show independence and actively enjoy learning.

Knowledgeable: Students are knowledgeable about a variety of backgrounds of other learners, aiming to increase their own knowledge, and are therefore punctual and prepared for lessons.

Thinkers: Students critically and creatively recognize and approach complex social problems and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators: Students express their feelings, needs and wants clearly and confidently in a variety of social situations and for a range of audiences. Students consider others' perspectives when communicating, refrain from language or gestures that could be considered offensive, express gratitude, apologize as needed, request politely, and gain attention in a polite manner.

Principled: Students act with integrity and honesty, and a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, group and community (students, teachers, parents and support staff) whether in class, on the playground or on Field Trips. Students accept responsibility for their actions and resulting consequences. Students respect others' belongings and displays, seeking permission before touching. Students return school gym and play equipment to designated places, and hand in their own work on time.

Open minded: Students understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories; are open to perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities; and are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of viewpoints, willing to grow from experience.

Caring: Students demonstrate empathy, compassion and respect toward the needs and feelings of others. Through their commitment to service, they act to make a positive difference. Students behave courteously, considering their own and each other's safety, belongings and interests, sharing play equipment fairly while refraining from pushing, shoving, rough play or fighting. Students store their belongings in designated areas in an organized way and tidy up the classroom. In and out of class, students walk and talk calmly and quietly.

Risk takers: Students approach unfamiliar situations with uncertainty, having independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas or strategies, while courageously defending and articulating their beliefs.

Balanced: Students understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and for others.

Reflective: Students give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience, and are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations to support their learning and personal development.



Student Academics

Resources

In line with IB Standards and Practices, the school utilizes a wide range of resources and experiences rather than one specific textbook for teaching and learning. Children read a range of fiction and nonfiction texts from different countries, acquire information through various media (i.e. texts, online library collections, journals, guest speakers, artifacts, etc.), have access to digital learning platforms for English literacy and numeracy skill development, and engage in relevant experiential learning experiences, which may include working with math manipulatives, conducting experiments or investigations, and participating in field trips.

WAT also stresses the need for balance between different aspects of life, such as academic, work, social and lifestyle, and sets the goal to help all WAT students develop healthy habits that will benefit them for life. To support this goal, WAT has a playground for PYP students and Sports Court for MYP students to use during breaks. Students also participate on school and intramural teams in football, basketball and volleyball.

Program Requirements

Student Portfolios: A portfolio is a collection of student work that is designed to demonstrate trials, tribulations, successes, growth, creativity and reflection. Teacher and student will select work, based on the different criteria, for the portfolio throughout the year, providing the opportunity to reflect on the student's learning. The grade will determine how portfolios are developed and used. The portfolio provides evidence of academic growth and the PYP in practice.

Personal Project: MYP Grade 10 students are required to complete a major project, completed over the academic year, on a topic of their own interest and choosing. This represents a culmination of their learning in the MYP. MYP teachers will advise individual students on the project. An Exhibition of Personal Projects will be held June 8th to give parents an opportunity to appreciate and celebrate the creative talents of their child as they learn about new inventions, literary works, original pieces of art, performances, science experiments, and real products that our students have produced.

Extended Essay: DP students are required to demonstrate independent research and writing skills through the development of a 4,000-word extended essay over their two years of studies. The Extended Essay is a focused investigation of a student-chosen topic related to one of the DP subjects. WAT teachers guide and monitor student progress as they identify their topic, focus their research question, source their information and structure their 4,000-word essay.

Theory of Knowledge: DP students are required to complete a Theory of Knowledge (ToK) course, which is an interdisciplinary study designed to tie knowledge and skills from all DP courses together. Through ToK, students will develop a greater understanding of how knowledge is acquired, shared and interpreted by peoples of different backgrounds and cultures. Students will learn to challenge pre-conceived assumptions and viewpoints, sharing new ideas to broaden their perspectives.

Creativity, Action, Service (CAS): CAS allows students to benefit from experiential learning by identifying an over-arching CAS Project, setting development goals that will allow them to demonstrate the 8 CAS Learning Outcomes, and initiating and organizing activities, usually in the local community, which address at least one of the CAS components and contribute to the goals of their larger CAS Project. CAS assists students in their interpersonal development, leadership skills, and encourages civic engagement and social responsibility.



Albanian/English Languages

As PYP Albanian mother tongue students study 40-minutes/day and MYP students study 45-minutes/day, international classmates learn Albanian three days/week and participate in French acquisition, dance or music classes for the other two days/week. All students study English at A or B level; PYP students' language studies are included in their Units of Inquiry while MYP students attend 4 45-minute classes/week.

Homework Policy

Playtime is an important part of childhood. Children are encouraged to actively participate in opportunities to play and be involved in other activities outside of school. Parents are encouraged to establish routines for their child(ren) to dedicate time each day to continue learning and reading at home. Assigned schoolwork completed at home each day should not be a burden to parents; rather it should be an extension of what is being taught and being learned in class.

Hence the school recommends a daily regimen for learning at home:

- as a means to consolidate skills, knowledge, concepts and attitudes taught in class
- to encourage students to develop effective study skills and take responsibility for their learning
- to give parents a chance to see what is being taught and learned in school
- to give students the opportunity to conduct research and prepare materials for class discussion
- to ensure students complete class work they were unable to finish during school hours.

Grade level	Minutes per day for research & projects	Minutes per day for math skills*	Minutes per day for reading skills**	Minutes per day for Albanian work
Kindergarten	0	10	10**	0
Grade 1	10	10	10**	10
Grade 2	10	10	10**	10
Grade 3	15	15	15	15
Grade 4	15	15	15	15
Grade 5	20	20	20	20
Grade 6	20	20	20	20
Grade 7	25	25	25	25
Grade 8	25	25	25	25
Grade 9	30	30	30	30
~Grade 10	30	30	30	30

~Grade 11/12 students should expect on average 30 minutes/day per subject for assigned work, reading, research, projects, and more time to complete summative assessments at the end of each unit.

*Math computational skills will be developed using **Khan Academy** and **IXL** digital learning platforms.

Literacy skills will be developed using **RAZ Kids digital learning platform.

Parents can help their child develop good study habits that will last a lifetime if they:

- find the best time each day for students to work quietly and undisturbed
- provide a quiet, well-lit work area where the TV and cell phone are turned off
- allow use of tablets or laptops only for school research and to complete digital learning exercises
- promote independence by encouraging students to complete their own schoolwork
- remind students when assignments or projects are due and helping to create a timeline
- show an interest in your student's learning, assignments and/or projects
- refrain from completing the student's work or project (you already passed this grade!)
- communicate with the teacher if the student is experiencing difficulty with a task or work
- notify the teacher if the student continually cannot complete assigned schoolwork in the designated time frame



- encourage students to borrow books from the school library to read in the evening.

Reporting

Calendar of Reporting for PYP, MYP & AP: (see assessment policy)

- Wednesday, September 20th – ManageBac Training, Parent Information Night & Meet the Teacher
- Monday, November 6th: Term 1 Progress Reports Issued on ManageBac
- November 8th/9th: PYP Student-led Conferences / MYP-AP-DP Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences
- Monday, January 29th: Semester 1 Report Cards Issued on ManageBac
- Wednesday, January 31st: PYP Student-led Conferences / MYP Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences
- Friday, April 13th: Term 3 Report Cards Issued on ManageBac
- Tuesday, April 17th: PYP Student-led Conferences / MYP-AP-DP Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences
- June 14th: Second Semester Ends – Last Day of School
- June 19th: Final Report Cards Issued on ManageBac

Student-Led Conferences: have PYP students lead their parents through the school to view their work while discussing learning, academic and social goals they have set for the following Term. Student-led Conferences will be held November 8th/9th, January 31st and April 17th as referenced in the calendar.

Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences: will be held November 8th/9th for Term 1, January 31st for Term 2, and April 17th for Term 3 to allow parents to discuss their child(ren)'s learning progress with all teachers.

Co-Curricular Activities

WAT encourages all students to join co-curricular activities that offer opportunities to expand their learning outside the classroom. A link to the Co-curricular Activity Registration Form is emailed to PYP parents at the beginning of each Term to register the student for half-hour lunchtime and 45-minute after-school activities. MYP-AP-DP students are emailed the form to sign-up for their preferred Co-curricular Activities.

Co-Curricular Activities are appropriate for age groups: PYP 1 to 2, 3 to 5, and MYP-AP-DP 6-12 students. Activities are offered 30 minutes after lunch for PYP and MYP students, and 45 minutes after-school from 15:15 to 16:00 for PYP and 15:15 to 16:15 for MYP-AP-DP.

Some activities will require payment of a nominal fee to cover material and resource costs. Some activities require special clothing, shoes, supplies or equipment that parents are expected to provide. Activities will be organized for each 9-week Term from:



- September 11th to November 10th
- November 13th to January 26th
- January 29th to March 30th
- April 9th to June 8th

Co-curricular Activities may be offered one day/week for the whole year, two days/week for two Terms; or four days/week for one full Term. Most activities will limit the number of students to be accommodated. A wait list will be established for students who are not able to enroll. Some activities are selective (competitive WAT sports' teams, school play, music production, Destination Imagination, Model United Nations, Robotics, Lego League, etc.) and students will vie for a position on the WAT school team.

Centre for Mathematics in Education (CEMC) Contest: MYP students will participate in the CEMC Contest for Mathematics in the Spring to track students' Math progress. Top-scoring students will be recognized at the annual Awards Day Ceremonies.

Field Trips: Students will have opportunities to visit sites of interest in Tirana, such as the zoo, botanical garden, National park, museum and theaters. All field trips will support or enhance students' conceptual learning for their current curricular unit. There will be a minimal cost for Field Trips. Parents must sign the Parent Permission Form for the student to attend. Parent chaperones will be needed for most Field Trips.

Week Without Walls: MYP students' academic learning will be enriched through experiential learning expeditions in Albania (Grade 6), to another Balkan country (Grade 7) or European cities (Grades 8 to 10). Students will investigate and learn about other cultures, historical sites, geographical landscapes, political and economic systems; practice linguistic skills in another language; participate in science research projects; and gain leadership skills and independence. Students' exploration of diverse cultures, societies, systems and globally relevant issues will increase throughout the MYP, from a 3-day excursion for Grade 6 students to a week-long experience in another European country for Grade 8 to 10 students.

Each year, teachers will identify the most relevant societies, civilizations, science research sites, political and economic systems, and global issues for our students to explore; ones to enrich their academic learning. The WWW expeditions will be the week of April 21st to 28th and cities are selected according to their potential learning opportunity. Parents will receive information for Week Without Walls excursions in November.

HOUSE System

WAT students are divided into 4 HOUSES: Red, Blue, Green, Yellow. HOUSE Advisors try to maintain an equal number of students from each grade, boys and girls, and athletes to artists to academics, in each HOUSE. Students will be informed of their HOUSE at the end of their first week of school. Students can purchase the HOUSE colour t-shirt to be worn on Assembly days and for intramural competitions between HOUSES.

Students can earn HOUSE points for excellent demonstration of IB Learner Profile attributes. They can also lose HOUSE points for infractions of WAT's Student Code of Conduct. HOUSE points are totaled each month, with the winning HOUSE awarded the HOUSE CUP at the end of each Semester.

Older students in each HOUSE can be named by the HOUSE Advisor to lead their HOUSE as a school prefect.



Opportunities for Parent Involvement

Program Support: In providing a high-quality education that is relevant to the needs of the students, WAT relies on close collaboration with its parent community to:

- obtain advice and support for resourcing its educational programs;
- access resources, speakers etc. from business, community services and NGOs for learning experiences.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the WAT community to support school programs, chaperone Field Trips, and provide educational resources or contacts through their businesses, services and organizations.

Co-Curricular Programme: Parents are encouraged to offer their expertise to lead a co-curricular activity to enrich the education for our students. Please speak with the Dean of Students or Head of School to discuss.

Parent-Teacher Community (PTC): Parents are welcome to join the Parent and Teacher Community (PTC). This organization has, as its primary goal, promotion of a strong school community through the organization of parent-led community events. Each class will appoint a Parent Rep who will be a member of the PTC.

The PTC appoints members to the WAT Parent-Teacher Advisory Council (PTAC) who discuss specific issues, provide feedback for school plans, and support the school by communicating with the parent community.

End of Unit Celebration: PYP Grade teachers organize these end-of-unit celebrations as each Unit of Inquiry ends and invite parents to attend. This is an opportunity to witness, in action, your child's learning through concrete examples of student work which may include exhibitions, posters, performances and portfolios.

Play Dates and Birthday Parties: Parents may celebrate their child's birthday at school by bringing one healthy snack for each child in the class, providing parents arrange this with the Class teacher at least 2 days in advance. Parents are required to provide everything required to serve the snack i.e. plates, forks, napkins.

If parents plan to distribute invitations at school for classmates to attend their child's birthday party outside of school, all classmates must be invited. If parents plan to invite only a few students, they need to phone or email those students' parents directly. Please do not ask teachers to distribute invitations.

If parents organize a party out of school, invitations must clearly state how students will travel from school to the party. Each parent is required to call or email the Information Desk by 12:00 if their child will not take the bus home that day. No child may leave school by alternate means without parental permission.



Daily Routines and School Attendance

Student Arrivals/Departures

WAT opens its gates at 8:00 am for students to enter the campus. Students will congregate in the lobby until 8:15 when they can proceed directly to their PYP classroom or MYP-DP-AP Homeroom. **Attendance is taken at 8:25** by classroom/Homeroom teachers and **classes start at 8:30**. The school day ends at **3:00 pm for PYP, 3:13 pm for MYP, and 3:15 pm for AP-DP** students.

Parent roles and responsibilities in dropping off students include:

- Parents are encouraged to drop their child(ren) off from 8:15 to 8:25 at the roundabout inside the gate.
- Parents of Early Years students are asked to park and take their child directly to the Early Years Centre.

Student Departures: Parent roles and responsibilities in picking up students include:

- Parents may pick up PYP students at the roundabout inside the gate at 3:00, but no later than 3:15 pm.
- PYP students to be picked up by parents after school will wait on the walkway leading to the roundabout until 3:15 pm, then will be returned to the Reception Lobby to be supervised until pick-up.
- PYP students are only allowed to leave campus with a parent or registered care-giver.
- Parents who pick-up child(ren) after-school will wait in the Reception Lobby or Bistro either until 3:00, when teachers bring their PYP students to the Lobby, or until the child(ren) finish co-curricular activities.
- If someone else is to pick-up the child(ren), parents are required to email or phone the information desk before 3:00, giving details of the person to whom the child should be released.
- A parent, who arrives after 3:15 to collect their PYP child(ren), will be charged a **Supervisory Fee of €5 for each 15 minutes or part thereof** that the parent has arrived after 3:15.

Bussing Transportation

Parents will be informed of the drop off and pick up point, and time for their child, and will have the driver's cell number. If a bus change is needed or you have questions about bussing, email info@wat.al or call the Information Desk at **0696056123** from 8:30 to 12:00:

- If your child will be late or absent from school, notify the bus driver before 7:30 to avert morning pick-up and by 12:00 to change afternoon drop-off. Changes after that time may not be possible.
- Drivers are not allowed to change regular bus routes to drop students at a different location.
- Drivers are not allowed to wait for a child in the morning or a parent in the afternoon.
- Parents are required to ensure their child(ren) are waiting outside when the bus arrives.
- If the parent is not waiting when the bus arrives, the child will be returned to School for parent pick-up.
- At WAT, busses pick up/drop off students on the paved lane adjacent to the school building.



Bus Safety:

- All buses are equipped with seatbelts.
- Teachers will remind students to buckle their seat-belts and buckle seat-belts for younger students.
- Each bus will have a co-teacher to accompany the students.
- Parents will be called 5 minutes before the bus arrives and must be waiting when it arrives.
- Parents are required to stand on the right side of the street where students can access / exit the bus easily without crossing the street.
- Students will be dropped off at the appointed place to a responsible person. If no one is at the drop-off point when the bus arrives, the student will be returned to the school for parent pick-up.
- Students are expected to be courteous and respectful at all times while riding the bus, to remain in their seat with seatbelts fastened, and refrain from eating or drinking on the bus.

Student Attendance

Late Arrivals: Attendance is taken at 8:25 by Homeroom teachers. Classes start at **8:30**. MYP-AP-DP students who arrive **late after 8:25** are required to obtain a **Late Card** from the Reception Desk and submit it to their teacher to gain entry to class. Bus students who arrive late will obtain a Late Card, but this will not be recorded as Late by teachers. Students who are driven or brought in by parents must obtain a Late Card.

When a student arrives late, parents will receive an email from ManageBac. After 3 Late arrivals, the student will be informed that disciplinary action will take effect upon further late arrivals. Late arrival by students disrupts classroom teaching and impedes an effective learning environment. Disciplinary action for late arrivals will consist of work detention after school or additional disciplinary measures.

Absences: Students are expected to attend each of the 180 teaching days/year. If a student misses more than 8 "unexcused" days (without sufficient justification), the student will be subject to disciplinary action. When the child(ren) will be absent, parents are required to call or email the Information Desk **by 8:30** to notify teachers of the absence. If the school has not been notified before **9:00** of a student's absence, the parents will automatically receive an email from ManageBac, notifying them of the student's absence.

Teachers post all assignments on Google Classroom. Students who are absent from school are expected to complete all school work during their absence before returning to school. Upon prior notification of the absence, a schedule for completion of school work can be agreed upon by teacher, student and parent.

Extended absences (not including emergency situations) must be approved in advance by the Head of School to ensure a plan is developed to help the student keep up with school work and fulfil program requirements.

Snacks/Meals

Nutritious and balanced snacks and hot lunches are provided at school each day by a catering company. Students are not to bring food to school unless pre-approval has been given for a specific medical reason such as an allergy. DP-AP students may purchase food and drinks from the Bistro during Break and Lunch.



Student Code of Conduct

The Student Code of Conduct describes our beliefs about how we communicate well as a close and diverse community. The Code of Conduct establishes behavioral expectations for all students studying at WAT, and are communicated to students that are appropriate to the student's developmental level.

WAT's Student Code of Conduct is grounded in the IB Learner Profile attributes. We believe changes in behaviour can be achieved through helping students to develop IB Learner Profile attributes. However, repeated violations or severe infractions of the Student Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action.

General Expectations

- **Access to Facilities:** Students will not access school facilities outside of school hours without first obtaining approval. Students are not to be in the Reception Lobby between 8:30 and 15:00 unless speaking with the Reception staff or instructed by administrative staff to wait there.
- **Appropriate Language/Gestures:** Students at WAT can expect to be treated with dignity and respect. As a result, students will refrain from using vulgarity, insults or hand gestures that are inappropriate for an academic setting. Students are to remember that WAT is a multi-cultural institution, demonstrating respect for others by refraining from using words, phrases and gestures that may be unacceptable for people from other cultures, religions and backgrounds.
- **Bullying:** Under no circumstances is bullying tolerated at WAT. Bullying in the form of physical abuse or altercation (pushing, shoving, fighting); verbal abuse between students or directed at another student or teacher; accusations (written or digital) by gossiping, belittling or making lewd comment; or threatening by any means; is strictly prohibited and will result in severe consequences that could include suspension.
- **Drugs and Alcohol:** Drugs (including tobacco) and alcohol are not allowed on WAT premises, and shall not be consumed on, or prior to coming to school. Students who are deemed to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be suspended.
- **Weapons:** Weapons are strictly prohibited on WAT premises. Possession of guns, knives, or any instrument primarily designed to cause bodily harm, is prohibited.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment will not be tolerated at WAT. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome touching, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that tends to create a hostile or offensive environment.
- **Use of Cell/Smartphones:** DP students may only use smartphones in **designated areas** at **designated times**. Use of phones at other times or in class (except when specifically instructed or allowed by a teacher) will result in the phone being confiscated each morning for **one week**, and kept for the remainder of **each day**.
- **Destruction of School/Personal Property:** All WAT students are expected to respect school property and the property of others. Students will be required to pay for any damages done to school property or the property of others, whether intentional or not.

Dress Code

- **Personal Hygiene and Cleanliness:** Students are expected to maintain personal cleanliness and hygiene to ensure a positive learning environment. Students are to take showers after PHE classes



and bring all necessary hygiene items in their kit. No perfumes, colognes or after-shave with an odor may be worn.

- Students are required to wear neat clothing each day that is practical, clean and seasonally appropriate. T-shirts and sweatshirts may not display inappropriate words, pictures or slogans. Clothing, especially **jeans, are not to have holes** and should fit properly (not skin-tight or hanging baggy below the waste).
- Shorts, skirts and dresses are to be no shorter than the middle of the thigh. Shirts, blouses and sweaters are to cover shoulders, stomach including midriff, back and breast.
- Shoes are to be comfortable and fit properly. Flip flops and **high spiked** heels are not allowed for safety reasons; sandals should have a backstrap. Cross trainer sports shoes are required for PHE classes.
- **No hats or head coverings** (other than for religious purposes) are to be worn inside the school building.
- **Sunglasses** are not allowed to be worn indoors.
- During PHE classes or fitness-related co-curriculars, students should wear appropriate athletic clothing and cross trainer sports shoes with socks, or football cleats for football practice and games.

Academic Honesty

According to the IB, academic honesty is a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning and assessment. It is a fundamental core value that the IB aims to promote and develop in its community of learners worldwide.

WAT also attaches great importance to good academic practice. We believe it is an important set of values, essential for the development of principled students. Hence our Academic Honesty Policy aligns with the IB Learner Profile and its attribute of being 'principled'. Principled learners act with integrity and honesty, taking responsibility for their actions. By promoting a strong culture of academic integrity among our students, we aim to prepare them for professional integrity in their careers. WAT's Academic Honesty Policy tries to ensure academic honesty within the school so no student gains an unfair advantage over others.

WAT's Academic Honesty Policy specifies what constitutes infractions of the policy, and consequences for non-compliance. **Students and parents are expected to read the Academic Honesty Policy and must sign and return the form to school to verify that they fully support its principles and implementation.**

Use of IT

WAT expects students to bring their own device (laptop or tablet) to enhance their learning, promote collaboration and facilitate the creation and sharing of knowledge. In order to promote responsible digital citizenship and use of technology, WAT has developed a Responsible Use of IT Policy with guidelines for use of IT at school and for school activities. **Students and parents are expected to read the Responsible Use of IT Policy and must sign and return the form to school to verify that they fully support its principles and implementation before students can gain access to WAT's digital community.**



Admissions and Class Placement

Admission is open to students of any nationality, gender, ethnicity, linguistic and religious backgrounds. New students are admitted throughout the year, provided places are available and applicants have submitted a complete application file, accompanied by the mandatory, non-refundable application fee of €200 per child.

The enrolment process will include an interview for the parents and child(ren) with the Admissions Officer who will become acquainted with the family and introduce them to the school. The family will also have an interview with the Head of School, when appropriate.

New families must submit previous report cards or notarized copies that will be kept as part of the student's record. For entry to MYP and DP, we require the student to complete an entry assessment at the school.

Once a place has been offered, it will be held for one month. Entry into a grade is based upon the child's age as of December 31st, and thus students are placed with their peer groups.

Once the child has been accepted to WAT, parents will pay a reservation fee of €1000, which will be credited toward the first tuition fee payment.

WAT aims to create heterogeneous groups for each class to maintain a balanced student body. Each class is balanced by gender, language abilities, and academic performance to facilitate the appreciation of diversity, positive social interchanges, and collaborative learning. At the end of the year, teachers recommend student placement for next academic year. The Head of School assigns students to classes and classes to teachers. To ensure the best placement of students, parents may not advocate a preference for a class or teacher.

Children with Unique Needs

WAT appreciates a diverse community, but is not equipped to provide an appropriate academic program for students with significant learning needs and may not be able to accommodate students with certain physical challenges. Parents are expected to report all relevant information related to learning needs and/or physical challenges, allowing the school to make an informed decision as to whether it can provide adequate learning support within the framework of its programs to address the unique learning needs of the student, without impinging upon other students' learning. WAT reserves the right to terminate enrolment if parents have not disclosed full information for their child(ren) to the school during the admissions process.

Withdrawing or transferring from the school

Enrollment is for a full academic year from September to June unless alternative dates have been agreed upon with WAT's administration. If the child is to be withdrawn from school, three months' prior notice must be given in writing, otherwise the family will be responsible for payment of the full year's tuition fees.

Financial obligations

School fees are payable with one of two payment schemes, giving parents the most suitable choice: full tuition fee with discount or by semester payable in advance. If a family is transferred during the school year, the family must give 3 month's written notice to be eligible for a prorated refund of tuition fees.



Visitor Procedures

All visitors to the school should report to the security post at the gate. The security guard will then:

- contact the information desk by telephone
- issue a visitor badge
- request the visitor to sign in
- visitors may use the car park inside the campus

Upon entry into the building, the information Desk staff will greet the visitor(s), establish identity and purpose of the visit, and escort the visitor(s) to the correct person or place in the building. Upon departure, the visitor(s) will stop at the security post to hand in their visitor badge.

- Groups not required to wear badges: students, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents, catering staff
- Groups required to wear badges: prospective parents, suppliers, contractors, etc.

Privacy Policy

The school will strive to protect the privacy of the community in accordance with the individual wishes of community members. Our community members' right to privacy will be reflected in our school's approach to all information shared publicly about school activities and community members in any forum. Specific guidelines for application of this general principle will include, but not be limited to, the following:

Permission for publication of photos and personal materials: The school retains the right to publish photos or videos of students without identifying names, unless parents expressly request in writing their child(ren) be excluded. The school will not publish photos or videos that identify its community members by name.

Blogs: The following information will not be included in blogs:

- Full names of students or name and faces together
- Photos or videos of students whose parents have withdrawn their consent to publish
- Personal information (addresses, contact details)
- Field trip information: date, place, address and times of excursions; information about purpose of the trip; who should come; how much to pay; and what to bring. Field Trip information will be sent to parents via email or on the Parent Permission Form that must be returned by the student.

Private dissemination of personal material: WAT requests that all parents follow these guidelines and not post photos, videos or written details that identify members of the WAT community on private websites or other social media applications, without permission of the people to whom the material refers. Community members are requested to consider these guidelines when taking photos at WAT community events or on school premises. Tagging WAT community members in private photos is also discouraged.



Communications

Email Policy for Parents and Teachers

Parents are provided with their child's teacher's email address to communicate about student behaviour or academic learning progress. Please use email only for non-urgent matters. Urgent matters are best addressed in-person. Teachers will respond to emails no later than the next school day, depending on the importance of the matter and teacher's availability. School policy for group emails is to BCC all recipients to respect privacy. Teacher school emails appear as: `firstname.lastname@wat.al` (ex: mary.smith@wat.al).

Parents must notify WAT of any change in email address for the parent/legal guardian of students. Important information concerning students, such as academic performance or behavioral concerns, may be sent to parents to the email provided at registration unless changed. WAT staff will not be held accountable for parents not receiving critical information if the information is transmitted via the email address provided during registration. Parents are asked to contact the Information Desk to provide an updated email address.

Parent/Student Communication During School Hours

Parents are **not allowed to call students on their cellphones** during school hours. If an emergency arises, parents are to call the Information Desk, and a staff member will arrange for the student to take the call.

Issue/Conflict Resolution

General Guidelines: In line with our Vision, Mission and Values, WAT parents, staff members and students can expect to be treated with respect and courtesy at all times, with care taken to preserve dignity and personal integrity. The following guidelines are designed to support the achievement of this expectation.

- Parents, staff and students will actively promote and support WAT in the community, highlighting the school's positive attributes, reserving issues of concern for resolution through proper process.
- Parents, staff and students will respect and comply with the policies of the school, as determined by the Board of Directors, the Council of Ministers and the Government of Albania.
- Parents, staff and students will support WAT to encourage student attendance and punctuality.
- Parents, staff and students will attempt to resolve issues of concern by engaging in appropriate interactions with the relevant people. All interactions shall:
 - have the goal of achieving outcomes mutually acceptable to the parties concerned
 - be conducted in a calm and reasonable manner
 - be issue-based, avoiding personal conflicts
 - give due consideration to the points of view of all parties concerned.

An appropriate time and place shall be mutually arranged for discussing issues that are sensitive, contentious and confidential, or in need of prolonged consideration.

In the event of a parent, staff member or student being dissatisfied with the manner in which an interaction is conducted, an appointment will be made with the Head of School for further discussion.



The Head of School shall resolve conflicts objectively, using an issue-based approach to broker reconciliation, giving due consideration to all points of view.

In the event of a student displaying unacceptable behaviour, the adult involved shall follow due process. If the involved adult is not a staff member, they will refer the issue to the Head of School. In the event of unsatisfactory performance or behaviour of a staff member, the Head of School shall follow due process.

In the event of irresolvable, inappropriate and unreasonable behaviour by a parent, the Head of School will confer with the Head of Administration and Board Chair to consider offering assistance to the family with relocation to an alternate school.

Issue	Point of contact
Your child's behaviour or wellbeing, first contact:	PYP Classroom / MYP-AP-DP Homeroom teacher If the issue cannot be resolved with this teacher, next contact the IB Coordinator, then Dean of Students.
Your child's academic progress, first contact:	PYP Classroom / MYP-AP-DP Homeroom teacher who will organize a meeting with subject teachers if appropriate. If the issue cannot be resolved with these teachers, please contact the IB Coordinator.
Extended absence from school (i.e. holiday, surgery, etc.):	PYP Classroom / MYP-AP-DP Homeroom teacher will post schoolwork assignments on Google Classroom and mark submitted work.
Organization of either the primary or secondary school (e.g. co-curricular activities, playground duties, Health and Safety, communications or assessment / reporting strategies), email:	John Jaques, Dean of Students: john.jaques@wat.al Nancy Sanderson Swartz, Head of School: hos@wat.al
Fee payment, admissions and withdrawal, email:	Information Office: info@wat.al
Your child's attendance at school (to notify WAT of lateness or unexpected absences), email:	Information Office: info@wat.al
Logistics such as bus transport, catering, email:	Information Office: info@wat.al
If administrative issues have not been resolved by the Information Office, email:	Gladiola Dona, Head of Administration: gladiola.dona@wat.al
School-wide operations: All issues above after the parent has contacted relevant staff members but the issue has not been resolved satisfactorily.	Nancy Sanderson Swartz, Head of School: hos@wat.al
Issues regarding strategic direction of the school (e.g. educational programs, fee schedule), email:	Board President & CEO: ceo@wat.al

WAT as a community will grow stronger if all issues are discussed at an appropriate, directly relevant level. Before or after discussing an issue with the relevant person, should a parent need to discuss the issue with the Head of School, a meeting will be scheduled. We value our parents and want to hear their suggestions, opinions and concerns to improve the school, but note it is best to speak with the person directly involved.

Parents and staff are requested to adhere to these lines of communication. If staff are contacted by a parent to discuss an issue outside their area of responsibility, they will refer the parent to the relevant person.



Publications

Throughout the year, WAT uses various publications to inform the WAT community of events and programs.

Name	Audience	Purpose	Medium & distribution	Publication date and frequency	Authors	Editor
Facebook page	Closed group only for WAT students, parents and teachers	Inform WAT community of school events and programs	Facebook	Continuous, as items come up	All members of group can publish	
Website	Anyone interested	Inform prospective teachers, parents	www.wat.al		School administration	Head of School
Class Blogs	PYP Parents	Inform parents of happenings in class that week, what is scheduled for next week and class routines and events	Blogs	weekly	Class teacher and possibly students	Class teacher
Newsletters	PYP, MYP, DP - AP Parents	Inform parents of upcoming events and clarify school philosophy	Email	coverage of school news emailed last Friday of each month	Head of School	Head of School

Health and Safety

Emergency Evacuation Drills: Emergency evacuation drills are held several times a year. Students walk in file and in silence out of the building when they hear one long continuous ring of the school bell.

Food: Nutritious balanced meals are served in the lunchroom. Students receive a mid-morning snack and a full course meal of soup, vegetables, protein and cereal at lunch.

Other Items: *Emergency details* - During registration, parents are asked to complete a form with emergency details. Please inform the Information Office when these details change.

Accidents - Minor accidents are reported to Reception and treated by the school doctor, nurse or teacher with knowledge of first aid. The doctor will write a note to the family to explain what happened. If a child is seriously injured or ill, the doctor will accompany the child to the nearest/preferred hospital. Parents will be notified immediately and instructed to meet the child at the hospital.

Illness - Please do not send your child to school when ill. If a child is ill upon arrival at school or becomes sick during the school day, parents will be phoned to come and collect their child.



Administering Medicine – The doctor will only administer medication in exceptional, urgent cases and with prior written consent of the parent. Please contact the doctor in such cases.

Keeping Children Indoors during Breaks is not allowed – Children who are well enough to attend school are also well enough to play outdoors.

Infectious Disease – As a child with an infectious disease may affect others at school, please be vigilant for signs of infectious disease with your child. In case of serious infectious disease, the school requires a medical clearance certificate that the child is no longer contagious before a return to class. If your child has an infectious disease, please notify the Information Desk as soon as possible so parents of other students in the class can be informed to more quickly recognize symptoms of the disease to take appropriate measures.

Period of communicability for childhood illnesses to help parents determine how long to keep a child home:

Conjunctivitis (sore, red eyes)	with antibiotic treatment, as long as eyes are reddish
Chicken Pox	one day before appearance of rash until all scabs have gone
German Measles	seven days before to four days after appearance of rash
Impetigo and other skin infections	as long as the lesions are active
Fungal infections of the skin	24 hours after application of the medicine
Influenza	as per your physician's advice
Mumps	24 hours before glandular enlargement until swelling subsides.
Typhoid Fever	For as long as topical bacilli are present in the excreta, usually after the first week of convalescence.
Head lice infections	If live lice or eggs are found on a student's head, the student will be sent home for treatment for two days.

Facilities

Library: WAT has two well stocked libraries with a wide range of books and media resources to provide stimulus, enjoyment and entertainment for students, teachers and parents. Students learn a variety of skills to foster their research abilities and to develop healthy digital learning practices.

Each library offers a wide variety of fiction and nonfiction books, ranging from picture books for Kindergarten students to novels for early readers to graduate students, as well as reference and teacher resource books. Used books are welcomed from families who no longer have use for them. PYP students have one class a week in the PYP library and are encouraged to select books to take home to read. MYP-AP-DP students have access to the Secondary Library throughout the day to conduct research, collaborate on group projects, complete assigned schoolwork, and to read books. Parents are required to compensate the school for lost or damaged books.

Lost and found: If an item is lost, the concerned student may ask their classroom teacher for assistance. Found items are deposited in the Lost and Found box near the Reception Desk, where they will be kept until end of the Term. Unclaimed items will be given to relief organizations in Tirana.

Bistro: The Bistro is open for Parents throughout the day, selling high quality beverages and snacks. Grade 11 and 12 students may purchase items at the Bistro during Morning Break, Lunch or unassigned periods.



Doctor's Office: The school doctor's office is open during school hours. The school administers medication only in urgent situations and only after parents have provided written permission.

Playgrounds: The school has a playground for Early Years and PYP 1-5 students, and a multi-sports court for PYP 3-5 and MYP 6-10 and DP-AP 11-12 students. Students may also use the area at the front of the school for recreational purposes, providing they do not damage the plants, trees or lawn equipment.

Cafeteria: The school has a cafeteria where all Early Years to Grade 12 students and staff have lunch.

Additional Documents

In addition to the parent – student guide, the following documents contain practical information for parents and are available on the School Website at www.wat.al or on ManageBac:

- Mission and Philosophy
- School Calendar
- Class schedules
- Master Timetable
- IT and Acceptable Use Policy
- Academic Honesty Policy

The following documents provide curriculum information and are available on ManageBac:

- PYP Programme of Inquiry
- MYP Unit Planners for each subject
- Scope and Sequence for all PYP disciplines
- Scope and Sequence for all MYP disciplines/subjects
- Assessment Policy

The following documents are available upon request:

- Organizational Structure
- Lines of Communication
- Staff List with assignments
- School Campus: parking regulations

