



American Academy Junior School – Admissions & Progression Policy

GENERAL

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the admission of children to the school and the progression of children already within the school is managed in a fair and consistent way. This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school
- Explain the minimum academic standards required for a place to be offered to a child
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place
- Set progression methodology and criteria.

Type of School

The American Academy Junior School is a private school which is academically selective. It is a coeducational school catering for children from the age of 3. Progression to the next year is based on academic performance.

How to Apply

To apply for a place at the American Academy Junior School, you must complete an application form (Appendix 1) and return it to the school office. It may be emailed to aajuniorschool@academy.ac.cy, but it must be signed by both parents and accompanied by a copy of the child's birth certificate. If the Birth Certificate does not have English written within it, a copy of the child's passport can be used instead.

What Class Do I apply for?

Class allocations in Cyprus are based on the child's age and it is unusual for a child to be in a different year group. You can check the year your child would start school in Cyprus, using this link.

<http://www.moec.gov.cy/dde/en/starting-age-for-compulsory-education.html>

If your child is already of school age, please contact the Junior School Office to confirm which year group they would be eligible to apply for.

If you feel that your child would be best suited to a different year group, you must discuss this with the Headteacher. It should be noted that the Cyprus Legislation changed on 25th February 2020 and children of foreign nationals are no longer able to join a year group which best facilitates repatriation based solely on their country of origin.

What Will Happen Once I Have Applied?

September Start

The closing date for admissions for a September start is the third Thursday of February. Applications will be accepted after this deadline, but will only be processed once the appraisals for the first cohort (those submitted on time) have been completed.

After the closing date for application, your child will be invited for an appraisal if places are available. Appraisals are usually held in March.

Please note that the appraisal fee is payable in advance of the appraisal and is not refunded if your child is not offered a place.

For applications received after the February deadline, appraisals will be held between May and July each year.

Start Date Other Than September

Receipt of your application will be confirmed by email within 7 working days. You will be informed at this point of any places available in the year group for which you are applying.

If there are places, your child will be invited to attend an appraisal.

If there are no places in that year group, you will be informed that your child has been placed on the waiting list and should a place become available, you will be invited for an appraisal. Please note that if there are several children on the waiting list, all will be invited for appraisal and a decision will be made as to which child is offered the place. This decision will be based on the standard admission criteria.

ADMISSIONS

Standard Admissions Criteria

The admissions criteria described below applies to all applicants. Having a sibling in the school already does not guarantee a place, though this may be taken into consideration when deciding between similar candidates.

Nursery

Children will be assessed against the Learning Goals of the Development Matters Framework for Early Years.

Children applying for a Nursery 1 place, should be demonstrating many of the skills within the 30-50 month bracket.

Children applying for a Nursery 2 place, should be demonstrating all the skills within the 30-50 month bracket and a significant number of those within the 40-60+ month bracket.

Parents may enter the nursery classroom where the appraisal is taking place but should expect to leave within ten minutes. It is essential that children are given the opportunity to engage with our stimulating learning environments without continuous input from a parent. Parents are not required to leave site, but are asked to wait in the reception area.

Many children enter Nursery with limited English. Despite English being the language of instruction throughout the American Academy, fluency in English is not a requirement to be offered a place within the Nursery. If Parents are unable to support English Acquisition at home, additional 1:1 support may be recommended as part of an offer of a place. If this is the case, details of what kind of support, when and any additional costs will be clearly noted within the offer letter.

Appraisals in Nursery take the form of a long observation conducted by an Early Years Teacher. They are ultimately a non-quantitative professional summary of skills demonstrated.

Pre-Junior

Children will be assessed against the Learning Goals of the Development Matters Framework for Early Years.

Children applying for a Pre-Junior place, should be demonstrating the majority of skills within the 40-60+ month bracket.

Children should have a secure understanding of phase 1 phonics.

Children will participate in a play-based appraisal observed by an Early Years Teacher and will be tested on phase 1 phonics. Children are expected to score 70%. If English is not the first language of the child, a Nagleri-Non-Verbal Assessment may also be carried out by a specialist teacher.

For children to be able to access the curriculum proficiently, a grasp of English is essential – it is the language of instruction throughout the American Academy. If a child does not have sufficient grasp of English to access the curriculum, but has demonstrated a wide range of skills at the appropriate level, they may be offered a place subject to additional support with English acquisition. If this is the case, commitment to support for English will form a condition of any offer made.

If your child requires additional support with their English, this usually takes the form of either:

- 1:1 additional lessons after school – usually 30 minutes twice weekly. 1:1 lesson can be done in person straight after school or via video conferencing a time later in the afternoon. These lessons may be led by an Early Years Teacher or a qualified Teaching Assistant.
- In class support – usually 2 lessons per day

Grade 1

Children will be assessed against the Learning Goals of the Development Matters Framework for Early Years.

Children applying for a Grade 1 place, should be able to demonstrate a range of academic skills which would have been acquired during Pre-Junior.

Where possible children are appraised using both 1:1 and group assessments. Typically, children applying for a Grade 1 will complete the following assessments:

- A practical maths assessment demonstrating understanding of the 4 number functions.
- A reading assessment based on Phase 1-Phase 4 Phonics.
- A practical writing activity based on a discussion about a book shared with the teacher completing the assessment.

If English is not the first language of the child, a Nagleri-Non-Verbal Assessment may also be carried out by a specialist teacher.

For children to be able to access the curriculum proficiently, a grasp of English is essential – it is the language of instruction throughout the American Academy. If a child does not have sufficient grasp of English to access the curriculum, but has demonstrated a wide range of skills at the appropriate level, they may be offered a place subject to additional support with English acquisition. If this is the case, commitment to support for English will form a condition of any offer made.

If your child requires additional support with their English, this usually takes the form of either:

- 1:1 additional lessons after school – usually 30 minutes twice weekly. 1:1 lessons can be done in person straight after school or via video conferencing a time later in the afternoon. These lessons may be led by an Early Years Teacher or a qualified Teaching Assistant.

- In class support – usually 2 lessons per day

Grades 2-4

Children will be assessed using the Cognitive Ability Test 4 appropriate to their age. This is a computer-based assessment which tests skills within 4 key areas:

- Verbal ability
- Quantitative ability
- Spatial ability
- Non-verbal ability

Children will be required to achieve an average score of 110 across the assessment.

Cognitive Ability Tests are a standardised computer based assessment which compares the skills demonstrated by a child with over 10000 children the same age. They are not assessments that children can prepare for. They are used for admissions to the Junior School because they do not give advantage to children following the curriculum of 1 particular country. It should however be noted that the language of the assessment is English.

If English is not the first language of the child, a Nagleri-Non-Verbal Assessment may also be carried out by a specialist teacher.

For children to be able to access the curriculum proficiently, a grasp of English is essential – it is the language of instruction throughout the American Academy. If a child does not have sufficient grasp of English to access the curriculum, but has demonstrated a wide range of skills at the appropriate level, they may be offered a place subject to additional support with English acquisition. If this is the case, commitment to support for English will form a condition of any offer made.

If your child requires additional support with their English, this usually takes the form of either:

- 1:1 additional lessons after school – usually 30 minutes twice weekly. 1:1 lessons can be done in person straight after school or via video conferencing a time later in the afternoon. These lessons may be led by an Early Years Teacher or a qualified Teaching Assistant.
- In class support – usually 2 lessons per day

Grades 5 & 6

Children will be assessed using the Cognitive Ability Test 4 appropriate to their age. This is a computer-based assessment which tests skills within 4 key areas:

- Verbal ability
- Quantitative ability
- Spatial ability
- Non-verbal ability

Children will be required to achieve an average score of 110 across the assessment.

A fluent grasp of English is essential to access the curriculum. Due to the demands of the curriculum in Grades 5 & 6 and the extensive preparation for Senior School Placement Assessments, we are not able to offer places to children in Grades 5 & 6 who are not proficient in English.

Who Will Be Offered a Place?

If there is 1 place and 1 application, assuming the child has achieved the minimum academic standards, they will be offered the place.

If there are multiple applicants for 1 place, a decision will be made based on ability. As an academically selective school, the place will generally be offered to the child who performed best at the appraisal. Having a sibling in the school does not guarantee a place, though the implications for families may be considered.

If another place becomes available, the school may then choose to offer a place to a child who has already been appraised and met the minimum academic standard without further appraisal if the place is in the same year group for which the child has been appraised.

Can My Child Have a Second Appraisal?

If a child did not meet the minimum academic standard, they may have a second appraisal at least 3 months after their initial appraisal. A third and subsequent appraisal will not be offered when a child has not been able to demonstrate the minimum academic standard.

How Will I Know If My Child Has Been Offered A Place?

You will be notified of the outcome of your child's appraisal in writing within 2 weeks of the appraisal. This will be emailed to the addresses provided on the application form. If the contact details change between application and appraisal, it is the responsibility of parents to inform the American Academy. No extension to acceptance deadline will be provided due to out of date or incorrect contact details on the application.

Offers will be valid for 10 working days.

How Do I Accept an Offer of a Place?

To accept the offer of a place, you must pay the amount stated in your letter of offer and send a copy of the payment to aajuniorschool@academy.ac.cy. The standard deposit at the American Academy is €1000. If your child has been offered a place subject to EAL support, this must be paid in full and in advance of a start date being agreed.

How Do I Appeal Against My Child Not Being Offered A Place?

If you are unhappy with the process, you must inform the school of your concerns in writing to aajuniorschool@academy.ac.cy and this matter will be dealt with in line with the School's Complaints Policy.

When Will My Child Start?

In the case of a September start, new students and their parents are invited in for a 2-hour induction, before starting on the first day of term. Term dates will be provided with your offer letter.

In the case of a mid-year admission, a mutually agreed start date will be reached with the parents. Please note that we do not normally accept admissions into Grade 6 after the start of the academic year.

PROGRESSION

Progression Between Grades Within the Junior School

Progression between years is subject to academic performance and attendance.

All children are expected to maintain an attendance above 90%.

There are three assessment points during the year:

- December
- March /April (Dependent on Easter)
- June

To progress to the next year, children are expected to achieve at least the expected standard across the curriculum.

Generally, the expected standard is 75% and the Above Expected Standard is 85% by the end of the school year.

The expected standard varies based on when the assessments are completed.

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Expected Standard	55%	65%	75%
Above Expected Standard	85%	85%	85%

After each assessment point parents will receive an Assessment Report which details the results as a % in each assessment. It will also detail if they are at the expected standard or not by subject.

This table will be included within the Assessment Report (it will show the assessments your child took). This child is at the expected level in Reading, above the expected level in Maths but below the expected level in Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar at the Summer Term Assessment Point. After each assessment point there is also a Parents Afternoon for parents to meet with their child's teacher to discuss progress.

It should be noted that progression is not simply based on assessments but is a professional judgement of experienced teachers. In this case, it would be expected that this child progress with some very specific intervention support to raise standards in SPaG.

Summer	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	Total	%
Maths	28/30	22/30	35/40	85/100	85
SPaG	36/60	2/20		38/80	48
Reading	38/50			38/50	76

Teachers monitor children's progress on a daily basis and will discuss any concerns they have as required.

Attendance is monitored on a monthly basis and parents will be informed in writing if their child's attendance is below 90%. If poor attendance is a continuing concern, parents will be invited in to discuss the barriers to acceptable school attendance with a member of the Senior Team.

Progression to Nursery 2, Pre-Junior and Grade 1

The Early Years Framework emphasises continuous assessment of children's skills. All children participate in age appropriate formal assessment in line with the rest of the academy. In June, Early Years Teachers confirm the professional judgement about whether a child should progress to the next grade.

Progression to Grade 2

During Grade 1, formal assessments are introduced. By the Summer Term Assessment Point children should achieve at least the expected standard in the following assessments:

Assessment Area	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard
Arithmetic	7/15	9/15	9/15	11/15	11/15	13/15
Problem Solving and Reasoning	13/25	16/25	16/25	19/25	19/25	22/25
Reading	10/20	12/20	12/20	15/20	15/20	17/20
Phonics	24/40	28/40	28/40	32/40	32/40	36/40

Progression to Grade 3

By the Summer Term Assessment Point of Grade 2, children should achieve at least the expected standard in the following assessments:

Assessment Area	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard
Maths Paper 1	55%	85%	65%	85%	75%	85%
Maths Paper 2						
Reading Paper 1	55%	85%	65%	85%	75%	85%
Reading Paper 2						
SPaG 1	55%	85%	65%	85%	75%	85%
SPaG 2						

Progression to Grade 4

By the Summer Term Assessment Point of Grade 3, children should achieve at least the expected standard in the following assessments:

Assessment Area	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard
Arithmetic- Paper 1	55%	85%	65%	85%	75%	85%
Problem Solving Paper 2						
Problem Solving Paper 3						
Reading Paper 1	55%	85%	65%	85%	75%	85%
SPaG 1	55%	85%	65%	85%	75%	85%
SPaG 2						

Progression to Grade 5

By the Summer Term Assessment Point of Grade 4, children should achieve at least the expected standard in the following assessments:

Assessment Area	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard
Arithmetic- Paper 1	55%	85%	65%	85%	75%	85%
Problem Solving Paper 2						
Problem Solving Paper 3						
Reading Paper 1	55%	85%	65%	85%	75%	85%
SPaG 1	55%	85%	65%	85%	75%	85%
SPaG 2						

Progression to Grade 6

By the Summer Term Assessment Point of Grade 5, children should achieve at least the expected standard in the following assessments:

Assessment Area	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard	Expected Standard	Above the Expected Standard
Arithmetic- Paper 1	55%	85%	65%	85%	75%	85%
Problem Solving Paper 2						
Problem Solving Paper 3						
Reading Paper 1	55%	85%	65%	85%	75%	85%
SPaG 1	55%	85%	65%	85%	75%	85%
SPaG 2						

* Note that the boundaries for expected and above expected do fluctuate based on the individual exams, however, they are generally around the levels shown. This means that in some year groups, the expected standard might be 74% whilst in others it might be 76%. This is due to the range of questions and the number of questions on each paper.

What If My Child Doesn't Achieve the Expected Standard?

If, at any of the assessment points, your child has not achieved the expected standard, you will be invited to discuss this with your child's teacher or a member of the Senior Team. In this meeting the reasons for this will be discussed and the possible interventions that can be put in place to support your child and ensure that they quickly reach the expected standard. If it is decided that extra support is necessary, this will be provided at an extra cost.

If, at the end of the year your child has not achieved the expected standards across the curriculum, they may be required to repeat the Year. You will be informed of this in writing following the Summer Assessment week and will be aware of the concerns regarding performance from discussions throughout the year.

When Will this policy be implemented?

This Policy will be adopted from academic year 2020/21, however there will be an adjustment period to allow parents and students to become familiar with the new assessment systems. Therefore, children will not be required to meet the minimum criteria until September 2022.

New children admitted to the school after 1st September 2020, will be subject to the minimum standards for progression from starting the academy. The holistic and child centred application of this policy, will apply to all children at all times. The application of this policy remains the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Can My Child Resit Multiple Year Groups?

A child is not able to join a class where they are more than 1 year older than their classmates. This means that an 8-year-old child turning 9 during the academic year cannot join Grade 1 in September because the children in Grade 1 are 6 turning 7. Where a child has not reached the expected standard in multiple years, they will not be offered a place the following academic year.

Progression to Senior School Year 1

The American Academy Senior School is an academically selective school. Acceptance into the Senior School is subject to meeting set admissions criteria and approved by the Senior School's Admissions Committee.

By the time your child has reached Grade 6 of the Junior School they will have been thoroughly prepared to enter the Senior School. Although attendance at the Junior School does not by itself guarantee a place at the Senior School, the Junior School is considered a feeder school to the Senior School and as such, children in Grade 6 who reach the required academic standard will transition to the Senior School.

In Grade 6 there are two assessment points:

- December
- March / April (Dependent on Easter)

In December, children will sit the following formal assessment tests:

- Maths
- English – Reading and SPaG

In March, children will sit a placement test in:

- Maths
- English – Comprehension & Creative Writing

The required score in each subject for automatic transition to the Senior School is 65%.

Both March Assessments will be set by the Senior School and will be based on the skills and knowledge which has been taught. **There will be nothing on the assessments that has not been covered in class.**

What If My Child Doesn't Get 65%?

It would be unusual for a child that has been consistently achieving the expected standard and above across the school, not to achieve 65% in the Placement Test, provided that they have prepared diligently and worked hard on the day. Junior School children receive preferential treatment in terms of the number of opportunities which they have to secure a place in the Senior School.

If they do not score 65%, their case will be considered by the Principal of the Senior School in consultation with the CEO and Headteacher of the Junior School. In exceptional circumstances* it may be that the Principal of the Senior School allows transition. Generally, however children will be required to sit the Entrance Exam for the Senior School. This Exam is conducted in line with the Ministry for Education Assessment Window for Private Schools. This is clearly advertised in advance of the exams.

* Exceptional circumstances might include a recent bereavement or prolonged hospital stay which has directly impacted the child's ability to attend school and perform well in the assessment tests. The Junior School will be required to provide overwhelming evidence to the Principal that the results of the Assessment Tests do not reflect the child's normal abilities. This evidence will include PiXL Tests a Maths Tests from Grades 5 & 6, attendance certificates and Maths and English Exercise Books (including homework records)

If your child is required to sit the Entrance Exam, they will be assessed in Maths and English **NOT Greek**.

POLICY REVIEW

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is applied consistently across the school.

The Policy will be reviewed as and when the Ministry of Education issues any new regulations pertaining to the admission or progression of children within the Private Education sector.

The Leadership of the Junior School in conjunction with the Board of Directors will review the 75% minimum expected standard in June 2022 and amend this element of the policy should it be deemed necessary.

Thereafter it will be reviewed on an at least 3-yearly basis.