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# Admissions Policy

Adopted March 1, 2017  
Last Update August 15, 2023

## Section 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

The American English Academy (AEA) is a private coeducational international school which offers a full U.S. educational program from pre-kindergarten (age 3) through Grade 12. Based on international best practices and accreditation requirements, the school's curriculum follows the U.S. Common Core Educational Standards. The learning program is in English language, student-centered, and includes a wide range of after-school activities and sports. The school year starts on September 15 and ends on June 30.

Through its partnership with Abraham Lincoln School, licensed by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education, AEA offers an optional Dual Language Program which is developed for the specific requirements of local students. The Dual Language Program meets the national educational standards and it is available only for local students (native Bulgarian speakers) from the age of 5 to Grade 12.

The American English Academy is fully accredited by U.S. Middle States Association – Commission on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CESS).

AEA is an independent, secular, private school without affiliation to any religious, political or interest group, which operates guided by its mission - *“At the American English Academy, we motivate young individuals to explore their path toward success. Our students expand their creativity and knowledge in a secure and welcoming environment where meaningful relationships are built through empathy.”*

## Section 2: ADMISSIONS CONCEPT

The American English Academy operates a selective admissions policy and welcomes applications from students who have demonstrated high motivation, good command of the English language, excellent social skills, and eagerness to learn. American English Academy expects parents and/or guardians to show respect and concern for others by their attitude towards the admission procedure and further as part of the school's community.

All applicants for Grades 1-12 are subject to further evaluation which includes an entrance interview, an English language skills assessment, and accordingly to the individual case – a general placement test.

Admissions to the American English Academy are based on the capacity of the school to meet the educational needs of the applicant, and the potential of the applicant to benefit from the education provided. In addition to the above, all applications are further evaluated in consideration of language support, special needs, class size and demographics. All admissions are subject to availability, and in case their designated grade-level is full, students may be included in the wait pool upon parents' request.

Priority of admission is given to applicants in the following order: *children with siblings currently studying at AEA; children who have been studying in other international schools; children of parents with international citizenship; children of parents with Bulgarian citizenship.*

### Section 3: ADMISSIONS TIMELINE

American English Academy accepts students throughout the entire school year, provided that there is available placement in the respective grade level. All applications are reviewed on individual basis when submitted and there is no deadline for application. After being carefully evaluated, new applications will receive either ‘*approved*’, ‘*rejected*’, or ‘*continued for further assessment*’ status. Approved candidates are enrolled and registered at AEA only after an Agreement for educational services is signed between the school and student’s parent/representative. The complete ‘*application to enrollment*’ process usually requires about ten to fifteen days, provided all the application documents are submitted within the given time frame and no further assessment of the applicant is required.

Approved applicants are admitted to the school based on the chronological order of their application submission, acceptance, and registration. Therefore, we strongly advise interested parents to submit an admission application at their earliest conveniences in order to secure placement in the desired grade level.

### Section 4: STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The student body of the American English Academy incorporates children from about 40 different countries. Cultural diversity is one of the most distinguishing features of AEA and the school aims to maintain a balanced mix between international and Bulgarian students. In order to provide enriched international experience and active intercultural exchange, AEA maintains an approximately equal ratio between international and local students. In this environment our international students gain a better perspective and appreciation of the local culture, while at the same time our students from Bulgaria benefit from the enriched international diversity.

### Section 5: GENERAL PLACEMENT

New students are placed in a specific grade level based on their previous educational experience, and their age. Thus, for example, a student who has completed 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in a previous school most probably will be admitted to 4<sup>th</sup> grade at AEA. Applicants’ assessment results provide additional guidelines in regard to students’ most adequate placement. The following table illustrates the AEA general placement age requirements as of academic year 2022-23.

Level	Applicant’s Year of Birth	Class Size	Level	Applicant’s Year of Birth	Class Size	Level	Applicant’s Year of Birth	Class Size
K3	2020	10	Grade 3	2015/2014	20/40	Grade 9	2009/2008	20
K4	2019	20	Grade 4	2014/2013	20/40	Grade 10	2008/2007	20
K5	2018	20	Grade 5	2013/2012	20	Grade 11	2007/2006	20
K6	2017	20	Grade 6	2012/2011	20	Grade 12	2006/2005	20
Grade 1	2017/2016	20/40	Grade 7	2011/2010	20			
Grade 2	2016/2015	20/40	Grade 8	2010/2009	20			

Please note that each applicant is assessed on a case-by-case basis, but the Kindergarten placement is based on the year of birth only. Due to the specifics of our student population and the fact that our students come from different educational systems, there are instances where additional criteria are

applied. In general, students should be no more than twelve months older or younger than the average age for their grade.

#### TRANSFER FROM ELEMENTARY TO MIDDLE SCHOOL – GRADE 4 TO GRADE 5

AEA's elementary department (grades 1 - 4) has 2 classes per grade level (total of 40 students per grade level). In middle and high school (grades 5 to 12), the American English Academy has 1 class per grade level with a maximum capacity of 20 students. For this reason, multiple selection criteria are applied in grade 4. Only 20 students who fulfill these criteria are promoted to middle school (grade 5). The selection criteria are based on the following components:

**Measure of Academic Progress (the MAP test results from a 3rd extra February Winter session)** - 60% weight.

**GPA score in the 4 core subjects English, Math, Social Studies, and Science** (as registered in Sycamore for the 1st school semester) - 30% weight.

**Regular Attendance** (as a percent of the total time of instruction for the 1st semester) - 10% weight. *We recognize the importance of the ratio between boys and girls in middle school. Therefore, we will keep it in Grade 5 the same as it is in Grade 4.*

#### EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM TRANSFER

The school allows transfer of students from the Dual Language to the International Program only. For this purpose it is necessary for the parents/guardians to submit the relevant application to the academic leadership and indicate objective reasons for their desire. The school does not allow transfer from the International to the Dual Language Program.

## Section 6: TUITION FEE RATES

#### NEW AND RETURNING STUDENTS FEES

The following tuition fees are applicable for both new enrollees and returning students who are continuing their education for a consecutive academic year. A non-refundable application and capital fee are charged upon students' admission for their first school year at the American English Academy (*no application fee is charged for children whose siblings are already studying at AEA*). Wait pool registration is charged with an additional fee of 55 EUR.

The AEA tuition fee is all-inclusive and no additional charges are made in relation to the educational process. The capital fee is dedicated to the continuous development of the school facilities. All fees listed below are VAT inclusive.

The American English Academy accepts new students year-round based on the availability of placement. Tuition fee installments are paid in accordance with the *AEA Standard Payment Plan* as described below. Please note that new students are enrolled only after an Agreement for educational services is signed between the school and student's parent/representative. The first installment for new students is due within a month after enrollment, while returning students' first payment is scheduled for April 15.

### **Tuition fees - school year 2023/24:**

<b>Standard Payment Plan</b>		
Application Fee	450 EUR	Due upon student's application
Capital Fee	1 750 EUR	One-time fee, new students only
Tuition Payment 1	50 %	Due by March 31
Tuition Payment 2	30 %	Due by July 31
Tuition Payment 3	20 %	Due by December 15

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Annual Tuition Fee - International Program, SY2023/24</b>	<b>Annual Tuition Fee - Dual Language program, SY2023/24</b>
Kindergarten (K3-K5)	7 500 EUR	7 500 EUR
Advanced K (K6)	9 900 EUR	9 900 EUR
Grade 1-8	11 500 EUR	13 200 EUR
Grade 9-10	8 900 EUR	8 900 EUR
Grade 11-12	8 900 EUR	9 500 EUR

#### **PARTIAL YEAR ENROLLMENT AND EARLY WITHDRAWAL**

We recognize that in many cases international families need to relocate at a very short notice, sometimes for a period which is not known in advance. Aiming to facilitate this transfer, AEA offers the option for both partial year enrollment and early withdrawal. In such cases, tuition fees are calculated on a prorated basis in accordance with the enrollment period. Partial year enrollment option is offered for students in K3 - Grade 12. Individual payment plan is applied. A non-refundable application fee of 450 EUR is charged additionally for all new students (*siblings of AEA students excluded*). A capital fee of 1 750 EUR is charged upon the enrollment of each new student.

<b>Enrollment Period</b>	<b>Tuition Fee</b>
Students enrolled within 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter	25 % of the annual tuition fee is charged
Students enrolled within 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter	50 % of the annual tuition fee is charged
Students enrolled within 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter	75 % of the annual tuition fee is charged
Students enrolled within 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter	Full annual tuition fee is charged

#### **ADDITIONAL FEES**

Additional school fees cover optional non-pedagogical and pedagogical services, such as: *school meals, transportation, and after-school activities*. All listed fees are VAT inclusive.

<b>Optional Service</b>	<b>Additional Fee Per Academic Year</b>
School meals (breakfast and lunch)	1000 EUR (K6-Grade 3), 1100 EUR (Grades 4-7), and 1200 EUR (Grades 8-12)
Transportation – round trip	2150 EUR per student, fee is updated annually
Transportation – one direction	1450 EUR per student, fee is updated annually
After-school activities	Fees are set in accordance with the respective average price range for Sofia City

**DOCUMENT CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE**

## Section 7: ENROLLMENT PROCEDURE

### KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT PROCEDURE

Enrollment procedure	Description of the process	Parents submit the following documents
<b>Step 1: Application</b>	Parents submit an application form. If possible, a personal visit to AEA is scheduled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Admission application (<i>AEA form</i>)</li> <li>▪ Bank transfer/cash receipt for the payment of the application fee</li> </ul>
<b>Step 2: Assessment</b>	An assessment procedure is conducted at AEA Kindergarten. The child is introduced to a group of other children for a period of 1 h and 30 min. During this period, the child is under the care and supervision of the school's counselor and the Kindergarten director.	
<b>Step 3: Preliminary Registration</b>	The child is pre-registered as a new student for the respective kindergarten group and school year. The preliminary registration is valid for a period of one month and parents are invited to sign an Agreement for educational services. Preliminary registration is cancelled and the reserved place is announced open if the Agreement for educational services is not signed within the given time frame.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Registration card (<i>AEA form</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>Step 4: Agreement for Educational Services</b>	An Agreement for educational services is signed between the school and a parent/guardian of the child. The child is registered as a new student for the respective kindergarten group and school year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bank transfer/cash receipt for the payment of the capital fee</li> <li>• Agreement for educational services</li> </ul>
<b>Step 5: Medical Documents</b>	Prior to child's actual admittance to kindergarten, parents need to provide mandatory medical documents and test results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immunization record translated in Bulgarian</li> <li>• Health-prophylaxis medical card completed by a Bulgarian GP</li> <li>• Single negative test for pathogenic intestinal bacteria and intestinal parasites, carried out not earlier than 15 days before the child's admittance to kindergarten</li> <li>• Blood and urine tests carried out within 1 week before the child's admittance to kindergarten</li> <li>• Medical note from a General Practitioner stating the lack of contact with others with infectious diseases, issued not earlier than 3 days before the child's admittance to kindergarten</li> </ul>

## ENROLLMENT IN GRADE 1

Enrollment procedure	Description of the process	Parents submit the following documents
<b><u>Step 1:</u></b> <b>Application</b>	Parents submit an application form. If possible, a personal visit to AEA is scheduled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Admission application (<i>AEA form</i>)</li> <li>▪ Bank transfer/cash receipt for the payment of the application fee</li> </ul>
<b><u>Step 2:</u></b> <b>Student Assessment</b>	An assessment procedure is conducted at AEA. The procedure includes entrance interview and student's evaluation test.	
<b><u>Step 3:</u></b> <b>Preliminary registration</b>	The student is pre-registered for the respective school year. The preliminary registration is valid for a period of one month and parents are invited to sign an Agreement for educational services. Preliminary registration is cancelled and the reserved place is announced open If the Agreement for educational services is not signed within the given time frame.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Registration card (<i>AEA form</i>)</li> </ul>
<b><u>Step 4:</u></b> <b>Agreement for Educational Services</b>	An Agreement for educational services is signed between the school and a parent/guardian of the student. The student is registered for the respective grade and school year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bank transfer/cash receipt for the payment of the capital fee</li> <li>• Agreement for educational services</li> </ul>
<b><u>Step 5:</u></b> <b>Medical Documents</b>	Parents need to provide mandatory medical documents not later than 30 days after student's admittance to AEA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immunization record translated in Bulgarian</li> <li>• Health-prophylaxis medical card completed by a Bulgarian GP</li> </ul>

## ENROLLMENT IN GRADES 2-12

Enrollment procedure	Description of the process	Parents submit the following documents
<b>Step 1:</b> <b>Application</b>	Parents submit an application form. If possible, a personal visit to AEA is scheduled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Admission application (<i>AEA form</i>)</li> <li>▪ Academic transcript from previous school translated in English or Bulgarian</li> <li>▪ Bank transfer/cash receipt for the payment of the application fee</li> </ul>
<b>Step 2:</b> <b>Student Assessment</b>	An assessment procedure is conducted at AEA. The procedure includes entrance interview and English language skills evaluation.	
<b>Step 3:</b> <b>Preliminary registration</b>	The student is pre-registered for the respective school year. The preliminary registration is valid for a period of one month and parents are invited to sign an Agreement for educational services. Preliminary registration is cancelled and the reserved place is announced open if the Agreement for educational services is not signed within the given time frame.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Registration card (<i>AEA form</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>Step 4:</b> <b>Agreement for Educational Services</b>	An Agreement for educational services is signed between the school and a parent/guardian of the student. The student is registered for the respective grade and school year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bank transfer/cash receipt for the payment of the capital fee</li> <li>• Agreement for educational services</li> </ul>
<b>Step 5:</b> <b>Medical Documents</b>	Parents need to provide mandatory medical documents not later than 30 days after student's admittance to AEA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immunization record translated in Bulgarian</li> <li>• Health-prophylaxis medical card completed by a Bulgarian GP</li> </ul>

## Section 8: GENERAL 'INQUIRY TO ENROLLMENT' PROCESS

