



**Armenian Sisters' Academy  
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**Accredited by Western Association of Schools & Colleges  
(WASC)**

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# **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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## **School History**

The Armenian Sisters' Academy of Los Angeles, in Montrose, was founded in 1985 and is one of three schools in the United States that are operated by the order of the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. The other two schools are located in Radnor, Pennsylvania (established in 1967), and Lexington, Massachusetts (established in 1979).

In 1843, Father Andon Peter IX Hassounian, later to become the first Armenian Cardinal, saw his community's need for a monastic congregation of consecrated women, dedicated to the education of the Armenian youth. Miss Serpouhi Hadji-Andonian was a devout Christian who had decided to retreat to a cloistered convent in Italy. Upon learning of Miss Hadji-Andonian's decision, Father Hassounian urged her to remain in Istanbul. Humble and obedient, she complied. Thus, the Co-Foundress of the Congregation, Serpouhi Hadji-Andonian, in collaboration with the Founding Father, began the educative mission of the Order in 1843 with twelve students in Istanbul. The sisters' congregation was canonically established in 1847.

During the 1915 Genocide, fifteen of the Order's nuns were killed by the Ottoman Turks, and many of the Order's sisters, with hundreds of Armenian orphans, fled to Italy and found refuge in Pope Pius X and successor Pope Benedict XV's summer palace of Castel Gandolfo. The Mother House relocated its headquarters to Rome, Italy, in 1922, where it remains to this date.

## **Goals**

The Armenian Sisters' Academy goal is to provide its students a morality-based, quality education. We believe that every child is unique and valuable because each child comes from God and has an eternal destiny. We are dedicated to the development of the total child, spiritually, intellectually, personally, emotionally and socially. To implement this philosophy, the Armenian Sisters' Academy strives to achieve the following goals and objectives:

### *Spiritually*

Enable the student to develop all the areas of his/her life within the framework of the Church's teachings,

### *Intellectually*

Enable the student to:

- acquire basic skills and provide opportunities and experiences which will contribute to his/her total development,
- provide experiences wherein the student may learn to discern the difference between fact and opinion,
- encourage small group work and the increased use of independent study,

- implant discipline through the development of self control necessary for the common good, and
- provide all students with opportunities to develop a sense of values and basic integrity.

### *Emotionally and Physically*

Enable the student to:

- develop a healthy self image,
- develop principles and practices of self-care and safety, and
- provide an optimistic and respectful atmosphere in which each student feels encouraged.

### *Socially*

Enable the student to:

- foster a Christian attitude toward all types of work,
- create an atmosphere where the Armenian language, culture, and heritage may be taught and experienced,
- emphasize the heritage, responsibilities and privileges of American citizenship, and
- cultivate an appreciation of beauty in the various cultures, by providing experiences in art, music, and foreign languages.

The following states the preschool's program philosophy:

Our philosophy is to respect and accept each child and value his/her uniqueness. A.S.A. Preschool's main objective is to provide a safe and secure environment through which every child's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth are challenged to promote healthy self-esteem and self-worth. Each child is encouraged to communicate his/her needs and feelings as part of the process of becoming responsible and self-sufficient. We do not simply accept a child at our school, we accept families. Our program promotes an atmosphere of caring and interdependence between children, parents and staff.

## **Expected School Wide Learning Results:**

The students of Armenian Sisters' Academy are expected to:

### *On a Spiritual Level:*

- Participate in the celebration of the Liturgy.
- Have knowledge and an understanding of the basic teachings and religious feasts of the Armenian Catholic Church.
- Know the basic prayers and hymns of the Armenian Church.
- Know all of God's Commandments.

### *On an Intellectual Level:*

- Have a solid foundation in all basic concepts of the core curriculum.
- Apply critical thinking and problem solving skills to everyday life.
- Be able to work cooperatively in a group setting.
- Be literate in basic computer skills and applications.
- Have appropriate writing skills for each grade level.
- Have a strong foundation in language and math skills.
- Be able to read and comprehend at appropriate skill level.
- Have creative expression through the use of imagination.
- Have a clear understanding of scientific processes.

### *On an Artistic & Cultural Level:*

- Read and follow musical notes.
- Participate in choir singing and playing music.
- Perform on stage (e.g. poetry recitals, choir, plays, dancing, etc.).
- Be exposed to different artistic genres.
- Paint, draw, and express themselves artistically.
- Know the basics of the Spanish language,
- Know the diverse cultures and traditions of the Spanish speaking countries.

### *On a Social Level:*

- Be disciplined and have an understanding and respect for social justice.
- Respect the environment.
- Respect different cultures within the community.

- Have an understanding of current events and world affairs and their effects on lives.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship through participation in competitive activities.

*On a Physical Level:*

- Have an understanding of the function of the human body.
- Understand basic health, fitness, nutrition and hygiene.
- Show developmental progression of basic motor skills.
- Have experience and knowledge of basic American games and the skills needed to participate in them.

*On Bi-Cultural Level:*

- Be able to speak, write and read Armenian at appropriate grade level.
- Show an understanding of Armenian history.
- Practice and preserve the Armenian culture and heritage.

The preschool students of the Armenian Sisters' Academy are expected to:

*Language:* have pre-reading and pre-writing skills in English and Armenian.

*Mathematics:* know numbers and shapes, be able to count by rote, match numbers and shapes to sets of objects.

*Science:* use their senses to observe, describe and compare objects.

*Creative Arts:* express themselves creatively through the arts and music.

*Social/Emotional:* to develop healthy emotional skills by cooperating, helping, problem solving and following rules.

*Physical/Health:* use large muscles by running, jumping and balancing; develop small muscles by using scissors, building blocks and holding a writing instrument; wash their hands properly throughout the day.

## **Daily Schedule (Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup>):**

Students are to arrive at school between 7:45 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.. The first bell rings at 8:05 a.m.. Students in 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades are to report to the school auditorium/cafeteria for morning prayers and general announcements. Kindergarteners are to arrive at 8:00 a.m. for morning prayers in their classrooms. The first period begins at 8:30 a.m.. Recess is from 10:00 to 10:15 a.m. Lunch and afternoon recess are from 12:35 to 1:15 p.m.. Clean-up and dismissal are between 2:50 and 3:00 p.m. Students may enroll in after-school care, from 3:15 to 5:30 p.m. for an additional fee.

## **School Office Hours**

School office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. All calls regarding school matters should be made during these hours. Telephonic messages on school's voicemail are checked every morning.

## **Attendance**

In order to comply with the provisions of California law regarding compulsory attendance, a child must attend each day unless excused for a legitimate reason. Each child is expected to be at school between 7:45 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. and remain in school until dismissal time. Absences are recorded on the permanent record and may affect acceptance or entrance into high school.

1. Attendance each day is essential for satisfactory school work. Students who are not present by 8:05 a.m. for morning exercises will be marked tardy.
2. Parents are to call the school no later than 9:00 a.m. when a child is unable to attend, to state the reason and the expected length of absence.
3. In case of a serious illness or infectious disease, a physician's certificate of good health should be submitted to the office before readmission to class.
4. Students are required to attend recess and all physical education classes. A parent's or physician's note describing the reason for excusing the child from such activities will be honored.
5. Parents are discouraged from scheduling doctor's appointments during school hours. In case of an emergency, however, a parent/guardian must first report to the office and sign a release form before taking out a student.
6. Children who are absent from school are expected to complete missed class work and homework.

## **Drop-Off and Pick-Up Regulations**

Parents should refrain from accompanying their children to the classrooms. Parents may help their children with their backpacks down the steps only. During dismissal, parents

should remain upstairs (in the upper field) and wait for their children, whose names will be announced on the public announcement (PA) system.

For student related matters, i.e. early dismissal, forgotten lunches, early pick-ups, etc., parents should see the office receptionist. Parents are not to interrupt classes.

Use of the Florencita gate for dropping-off or picking-up students is strictly forbidden. Parents may only use the Mira Vista gate, which will be open until 9:00 a.m. and after 2:30 p.m. Should parents need to visit the school, between 9:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., they may use the Florencita gate.

Students, not enrolled in After School Care, must be picked up from school, no later than 3:15 p.m. Students who are not picked up before 3:15 p.m. will be unsupervised. If parents wish to send them to After School Care, they need to call the office. A certain fee will be required. When students need to go with their relatives or friends, a written permission note must be sent from the parents to the office in the morning.

## **Dress Code**

### **A. Uniforms**

#### *Kindergarten:*

Kindergarten students are required to wear green smocks.

Boys: Navy blue pants (elastic waist band), black or white socks, and navy blue or black shoes without laces.

Girls: White or navy blue tights, and navy blue or black shoes without laces.

#### *First through Fifth Grades:*

Boys: White polo shirt, navy blue pants, black or white socks, and black shoes.

Girls: White polo shirt, school jumper, white or navy blue knee-high socks, and black shoes.

#### *Sixth through Eighth Grades:*

Boys: White polo shirt, navy blue pants, black or white socks, and black shoes.

Girls: White polo shirt, navy blue skirts, white or navy blue knee-high socks, and black shoes. Shirts should be tucked-in, at all times.

## **B. Physical Education Days**

Students may wear white or black tennis-shoes, along with their PE uniforms, on PE days. Unless wearing their grey colored sweat-shirts and sweat-pants, girls are required to keep their jumpers atop their blue shirts and navy-blue shorts at all times and remove them only during PE. On Holy Mass days, boys should wear their long navy blue pants and bring their shorts to school.

## **C. Free Dress Days**

On occasion, students will be allowed a free dress day. Each student is expected to dress appropriately. Students who choose to disregard this rule will have a parent/guardian called to bring a change of clothes. Rules regarding jewelry and grooming apply to free dress days.

- Skirts may not be shorter than three (3) inches above the bend on the back of the knee.
- Pants should not drag on the floor.
- Clothing should not bear inappropriate messages or writings.
- All pants and tops should be appropriately loose.
- Midriffs may not show.
- Make-up may not be worn.
- Hip-huggers may not be worn.

## **Grooming**

Each student is expected to come to school in complete uniform, neat, and clean. Nail polish as well as make-up is never allowed. Hair should be properly groomed. Boys' hair length should be no longer than the top of the shirt collar. Boys are not allowed to use or wear hair gel. Students must have short and clean nails.

The following are forbidden:

- Chewing gum.
- Hair coloring.
- Cell phones. For emergencies, students may use the school telephone.

## **Jewelry**

Jewelry such as rings, bracelets and necklaces is not allowed. Girls may wear small stud earrings.

## **Student Responsibilities**

### **A. Homework Policy**

Skills for development of good study habits must be taught. Homework is assigned for the purpose of fostering habits of independent study and reinforcing material taught during school hours. Homework should be supervised by a parent; parents should assign a definite time and place and see that an atmosphere conducive to study is provided.

Homework assignments should be recorded daily by students. Parents are encouraged to check these assignments. Also, parents need to consider the time given to extra curricular activities, so such activities will not interfere with studies.

Homework is an assignment made by a teacher that will positively reinforce a concept presented in class and includes both written and study assignments. Parents of elementary students are asked to check completion of the child's homework and to sign the assignment book after the homework is satisfactorily completed.

Since each child is a unique individual, the time needed on homework may vary with each student. Homework is given for the following reasons:

- 1) Drill and additional practice to strengthen new skills,
- 2) Completion of unfinished classroom assignment,
- 3) Work on projects of a short-term or long-term nature,
- 4) Participation in research activities,
- 5) Completion of work given during a period of absence.

## **B. Student Rules**

1. When going to morning prayers, a spirit of quiet and prayerfulness must pervade.
2. All students must be in complete uniform at all times. Students must take pride in their personal appearance.
3. The change of class will take place in a quiet, orderly manner.
4. Students are expected to walk, not run, in the halls.
5. Students are expected to answer politely and respectfully when addressed.
6. Each student must treat other students, and all others, with respect at all times. There is to be no fighting, hitting, kicking, yelling or name-calling. These are not acceptable forms of behavior.
7. Snacks may be eaten at recess time at the location where recess takes place.
8. No toys, games or anything not directly related to school may be brought to school.
9. The proper care of all rooms (including lavatories), equipment and materials is the responsibility of each student. The student must replace any damaged item(s).
10. In the cafeteria, quiet talking is permitted during lunch.

11. It is the responsibility of each child to clean the cafeteria table where he or she ate and to check the floor for papers.
12. Silence is to be observed during fire drills.

## **Consultation & Communication**

If problems arise, parents should feel free to approach the school to find a solution through open discussion. Parents should not resolve problems related to their children and their classmates on the school premises.

The problem should first be discussed with the teacher involved. If the parent or teacher feels the principal should be involved, either, or both, are free to take that step. That step should only be taken if discussion between the teacher and parent failed to resolve the problem. The parent should request a conference with the teacher in writing or by telephoning the office and leaving a message for a return call by the teacher. Appointments may be made by calling the office a (818)249-8783 during school hours.

The school's main means of communication is through letters, memoranda, newsletters and flyers which are sent home with students. Parents should check their children's backpacks or ask them about such items, on a daily basis. Some of these documents are time sensitive and require immediate attention.

## **Appointments**

All medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school time. If an emergency arises and an appointment is made during school time, the teacher should be notified a day in advance, if possible. Upon returning to school, the teacher should be given a certification from the doctor's office confirming the appointment time.

## **Sign In/Out**

Anytime a student must leave campus, for appointments or illness, a parent/guardian must come into the office and sign out the student. When returning to school, the student must be signed back in by a parent/guardian.

## **Emergency Cards**

To enable the administration to handle emergency situations in an efficient manner, each child must have an updated emergency card on file in the school office. It is vital that these cards be updated with current information. **Please inform the office immediately if there is a change of home or work phone numbers, employer or home addresses.** We must be able to reach you if your child becomes ill at school or if there is any type of emergency. Please list your cell phone number on emergency cards as well.

## Health

1. The regulations of the State of California require that all children entering school for the first time must be completely immunized. Children who are not immunized will not be admitted to school. Updated immunization records must be immediately submitted to the school office.
2. Please do not send any medications to school for your child. School personnel are not permitted to dispense medication.
3. In order to prevent spreading infections to other students, children with rashes, fever, pains, aches, diarrhea, vomiting, and severe coughs should be kept at home. Children coming to school with an illness create an unnecessary burden for the teacher and other students and disrupt the learning process. Students demonstrating any such serious symptoms will be sent home.

## Medication

To protect all children and to conform with the State Education Code, no student may bring any non-prescription medication to school. No medications will be furnished by the school. For prescribed medications, please see the school principal.

## Health Forms

Health forms should be given immediate attention as they are a requirement of the State of California. **Students not having the required immunizations may be required to stay home until documentation of immunization is presented to the office.**

## Report Cards

For elementary and middle schools, report cards will be sent home three times a year. Parents who wish additional information concerning their children's progress should schedule an appointment with the teacher(s). Parent-teacher conferences are held after the first report cards are sent home. All subjects are equally important, and they are all included in the Grade Point Average (GPA) at the end of the academic year.

## Progress Reports

A progress report is sent home when a student is not performing to minimum standards in a particular subject. Parents/Guardians should conference with the teacher to arrive at the best approach for helping the student. The progress report should be signed by the parents/guardians and returned to school the next day. Only with the parents/guardians

help and cooperation can the school succeed in helping the students who are having difficulty.

### **Discipline and Detention Policy**

Since children grow and change and develop, they need to be corrected and redirected in the process. Discipline is considered as an aspect of moral guidance. At our school, we wish to provide discipline and guidance in a loving, consistent manner with just consequences for inappropriate behaviors.

CONDITIONS LEADING TO DETENTION include all of the following, but are not limited to

- A. Disrespect of the principal, faculty and staff, through acts of defiance, repeated ignoring of a reasonable request, refusal to respond to required corrective measures, or arguing with authority figures.
- B. Destruction or defacement of school property.
- C. Deliberate disrespect of fellow students, through acts of violence, fighting, using obscene or profane language, disruptive talking or repeated ridicule of another, and any display of inappropriate affectionate behavior.
- D. Disrespectful or disrupting behavior during any religious service or activity.
- E. Disrespect for the school's established uniform.

These conditions are not to be taken lightly. Student cooperation and support from their families are essential to a quality education. Respect for God, others, and self must be cultivated and maintained.

Detention will begin at 3:00 p.m. and end at 3:45 p.m. Tardiness or absence will result in another detention period. Parents will be informed by written communication of said detention.

### **Detention during School Hours**

Students who miss their homework or misbehave in school will stay in detention during lunch recess, after eating lunch. If this occurs more than three times, the student will be fined and have detention for one hour, on a Friday afternoon.

### **Tardiness**

Consistent tardiness demonstrates a lack of respect for the learning process, as well as the teacher and the other students in the class. All students are expected to be punctual. The fourth tardy will result in a fine and detention, for one hour, on Friday afternoons, from 3:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.

## Procedures for Consistent Negative Behavior

1. Students who have consistent negative behavior will be given a **detention notice**, signed by teacher and parent.
2. If the negative behavior continues, the student will be **sent to the principal, given another detention notice**, signed by teacher, principal, and parent. A parent conference with teacher and principal may be necessary.
3. If there is a third negative behavior on the part of the student, this will warrant a **Suspension Notice**. Suspension will become effective within 2 days of notification of the parent/guardian. This is to give the parent/guardian an opportunity to provide supervision for the child who is on suspension. Suspension is not meant to be a day home watching T.V. or playing video/computer games. Students will be responsible for completion of missed class work and homework for the suspension day(s). The teachers will provide the student with the assignment, a day before the suspension is in effect.

Suspension will be recorded on the High School Recommendation Report. If the report has already been sent, the high school will be notified.

***Steps 1, 2 and 3 may be bypassed, if, at the discretion of the Principal, the behavior of a student is considered to warrant automatic suspension or expulsion. The Principal is the final recourse for all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at her discretion.***

## Expulsion

Reasons for expulsion are, but not limited to, the following offenses committed by pupils:

1. Action gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of the other pupils,
2. Habitual profanity and vulgarity,
3. Assault, battery, or any threat of force or violence directed toward any school personnel or pupil,
4. Open, persistent defiance of authority of the teacher,
5. Continued willful disobedience,
6. Use, sale or possession of narcotics,
7. Use, sale, distribution or possession of any alcohol for beverage purposes on or near the school premises,
8. Smoking or having tobacco,
9. Stealing,
10. Willful cutting, defacing or otherwise injuring in any way property, real or personal, belonging to the school,
11. Habitual truancy,
12. Possession of harmful weapons or materials that can be used as weapons.

If a student is accused of any felonious actions, he/she may be required to attend home schooling until the matter is resolved.

### **Internet Policy**

We make every effort to monitor the students and the sites they access. To help us with monitoring, software has been installed in each computer to prevent students from accessing sites that would be inappropriate by our standards.

### **The Non-Traditional Family**

Divorced or separated parents must file a court-certified copy of the custody section of the divorce or separation decree with the principal's office. The school will not honor arrangements that have not been made known in writing.

### **Sports**

Student participation in school sports is encouraged. Participation in the various sports, basketball and track is voluntary on the part of the students but does require written consent of the parent/guardian. The support and cooperation of the parent/guardian helps us to conduct these activities in a safe and efficient manner. Students participating in after school sports should be picked up on time. All notes, permission slips and fees should be turned into the coach in a timely manner. Uniforms should be returned to the coach immediately upon completion of each sport. They should be washed and folded. If uniforms are not returned, the student will forfeit the security deposit.

### **After-School Care**

The After-School Care Program is open to all children attending our school. The after-school program begins at dismissal and extends until 5:30 p.m. every day that school is in session, except Noon Dismissal days. The program provides a safe and caring environment where children are encouraged to do their homework, have play time, craft, activities, and snacks.

Registration for the After School Care Program will take place the first week of school, in the school office. After School Care is offered from 3:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., for an additional fee.

### **Rainy Days**

Remember to drive carefully, cautiously and courteously. Your child's safety is our first priority!

## **Field Trips**

During the school year, provision will be made for field trips of educational value. A permission slip must be signed by the parent/guardian for the student to participate in the activity. Communication with the teacher will indicate the fee, lunch plans and appropriate dress. When possible, transportation will be provided by bus. Parents serving as chaperons are there for the intent of supervising the students and, therefore, may not bring any siblings along on the trip. Permission forms, for participating in field trips, have set deadlines which are strictly enforced.

## **Supplies and Books**

Students are required to keep all books covered, clean and in good condition. They should be carried in a book bag. Students who destroy books in any way will be responsible for the cost of a new replacement.

Paper, pencils, markers, crayons, scissors, and glue are the responsibility of each student. Students are expected to have these necessary supplies every day.

## **Care of Property**

Any student who damages any school property will be charged a fine in accordance with the damage done.

## **Lunch**

1. Students in 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades should bring snack and lunch to school or purchase hot lunch at school. Tickets for hot lunch are sold either individually or in a booklet at school. Students who wish to purchase hot lunch at school should notify their homeroom teachers at the time of attendance roll.
2. Lunch boxes must be clearly marked with the student's name. When using paper bags, the child's name must be written in large letters on the bag.
3. Please include two napkins with your child's lunch each day.
4. For snack and lunch, we encourage parents to use their best judgment in packing healthy and nutritional meals, and to include fruits and vegetables. We discourage highly processed and chemically laden foods. Chips, soda, pop corn, gold fish snacks, and other messy foods are not allowed.

## **Identification**

Please mark clearly and indelibly all sweatshirts, polo shirts, skirts, jumpers, shorts, and P.E. clothes with your child's name. Also, mark lunch boxes, backpacks and pencil boxes. In short, anything your child brings to school should have his/her name on it. This helps

get misplaced items back to the correct person. Names will be checked the first week of school.

Sweatshirts, uniforms, lunch boxes, in short everything that is unclaimed in the Lost and Found for more than two weeks will be given to a charity.

## **Tuition**

Tuition will be paid in the school office or mailed directly to the school. Tuition is due on the first of each month and is considered late if not paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. A \$10.00 fee will be applied to all late payments beginning with the 11<sup>th</sup> of each month. There will be a \$20.00 fee for all returned checks.

When making payments to the school, please indicate on your check or on the envelope, the purpose of each payment (e.g. tuition, field trip, lunch, uniforms, etc.), the child's name, and grade.

## **Earthquake/Disaster Preparedness Plan**

During an earthquake the following procedures will be followed:

1. Maximum supervision for the safety of the students is a top priority.
2. During an earthquake (shaking), children will stay indoors. Teachers will announce the drop drill procedures.
3. Buildings will be evacuated when the trembling stops. Fire drill procedures will be used.
4. Children will be assembled in the parking lot.
5. Every effort will be made to secure help, if necessary.
6. All school entrances and exits of campus will be controlled.
7. Buildings will be checked for any utility disruption (gas, water, electricity) and appropriate action will be taken.
8. Personnel will be assigned to monitor radio communications. Other personnel will get emergency supplies and set up waiting areas.
9. **Students will be released to the parent/guardian or authorized persons only.**

## **Disaster Plan**

### **Pupils**

1. DROP
2. LISTEN
3. EVACUATE
4. GO TO PARKING LOT
5. TRY TO REMAIN CALM
6. FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

### **Parents:**

1. DO NOT PHONE
2. LISTEN TO RADIO
3. REPORT TO PERSON WHO HAS THE MASTER PUPIL LIST WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT SCHOOL
4. VOLUNTEER YOUR SERVICES (IF NURSE, ETC.) TO HELP AT SCHOOL IF NECESSARY.
5. SIGN-OUT CHILD WITH THE RESPONSIBLE TEACHER
6. TRY TO REMAIN CALM
7. REMEMBER, CHILD WILL BE RELEASED ONLY TO DESIGNATED PERSON(S) ON EMERGENCY CARD

## **Amendments and Changes**

The Academy reserves the right to amend and change these Rules and Regulations from time to time. Parents and children will be required to comply with any amendments and changes.