

# Parent Handbook

## Vision

Inspiring global minds and hearts for a compassionate and sustainable world.

## Mission

We are committed to growing global learners with social, emotional, ethical and critical thinking skills that guide them towards meaningful lives.

## Preamble

Verita International School is an institution which aligns with the Council of International Schools (CIS) Code of Ethics and the UN Conventions of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The CIS Code of Ethics highlights that we, as a school, are expected to:

- Fulfil the promises stated in their guiding statements, policies, contracts and promotional materials.
- Strive for excellence.
- Nurture a culture of care in which the education, safety and well-being of students and others are paramount.
- Comply with applicable laws and regulations.
- Respect the dignity and equality of all individuals, groups and cultures.
- Promote global citizenship.

As a school which aligns with the UNCRC, we make an effort on upholding the 45 articles of the convention in our school; please refer to the UNCRC articles [here](#).

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# 1. Introduction and School Mission

Welcome to Verita International School!

We are honored to have you part of our community!

This Parent Handbook is designed to inform parents and students of our school's procedures, expectations, and objectives as a community of learners. We believe that education is a partnership between the school and families, and we invite parents to collaborate with us in providing the best possible learning experience for every child.

In today's interconnected world, the challenges that children will face require cooperation, compassion, grit, and creativity.

At Verita, we want our students to achieve academically and grow into kind, responsible human beings who make positive decisions and build healthy relationships.

Our intention is to "look at the whole learner" – balancing academic excellence with social-emotional growth and life skills that will best serve them in this ever changing world.

Thank you for trusting us with your children!

*Lila Vasilescu - Head of School*

## **Message from School Leadership:**

At Verita we want our students to learn and have great academic results, to go out in the world and create magnificent things.

We also want them to be compassionate human beings who make responsible decisions and build healthy relationships.

Balanced adults should have resilience, motivation, and mindfulness to navigate life's challenges.

We invite parents to partner with us in this meaningful and important mission.

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### *Senior Leadership Team*

Verita International School (further referred to as Verita/School/Verita School) is a not-for-profit, independent Foundation functioning under Romanian law, offering an accessible first-class international education to the local and expatriate communities of Bucharest, Romania.

Verita International School was founded in 2013 to provide a kind, caring, inquiry-based education in Bucharest that values academics and social-emotional learning equally. The school grew out of Gabriela Simionescu's Kindergarten, which was established in 1982 to provide an inspiring, alternative approach to early childhood education.

Verita International School is registered in the Special Registry of ARACIP<sup>1</sup> as an educational provider, carrying out on the territory of Romania educational activities corresponding to the educational system of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland *for the educational levels early years, primary, lower secondary and upper secondary (high school)*.

### **Partnership with Dukes Education Group**

As of August 2024, Verita is part of the Dukes Education Group

Dukes Education is a family of schools and educators, brought together by a common purpose: to give children the foundations for an extraordinary life, through education.

Dukes Education is the largest premium education group in the UK and one of the fastest-growing families of schools in Europe. Dukes Education was founded by Aatif Hassan in 2015 to give young people an outstanding start in life.

The Group now has 54 education brands and over 80 settings, across seven countries, supporting more than 20,000 pupils and 5,000 staff. Dukes also operates a number of leading summer short courses, university and medical school consultancies, immersive career experience providers, and one-to-one student support offerings, creating a cradle-to-career suite of services.

*"Our schools are all different, yet they're united in offering outstanding teaching and learning, providing the strongest foundations for young people to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives. A strong team of educationalists and support staff help me in governing the schools. We have experts in governance, finance, compliance, marketing, human resources, property, legal, and, most importantly, in education."* says Aatif Hassan

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<sup>1</sup> ARACIP is the Romanian acronym for the **ROMANIAN AGENCY FOR ENSURING QUALITY IN PREUNIVERSITARY EDUCATION (Romanian language AGENȚIA ROMÂNĂ DE ASIGURARE A CALITĂȚII ÎN ÎNVĂȚĂMÂNTUL PREUNIVERSITAR** with the registered office in Bucharest, 12 Spiru Haret Street, district 1, Tax Identification Number 18126924

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## Why Dukes?

- We believe in developing young people, empowering them to be the best they can be. We get them involved and learn from what they say to help us define how to continue to innovate.
- We think long term. Our decision making is shaped by a goal to build schools that are not just excelling now, but are set up for an extraordinary future.
- We operate a decentralised structure, enabling our teams to be autonomous, which hugely empowers the Head and staff. Our schools are diverse, but all are outstanding examples of teaching and learning. We pride ourselves on retaining the distinctive culture of each school whilst providing the support of a small boutique-sized group.
- We invest heavily in staff training and development through programmes created by our own Dukes team – probably more than any group I know. In addition, we provide plenty of opportunities for peer group support.

The partnership with Dukes Education opens up an array of benefits for Verita's community that includes access to a global talent pool of exceptional educators, opportunities for student and teacher exchanges, and a platform for sharing best practice on an international scale. The collaboration offers Verita students and staff unprecedented learning and development opportunities.

Verita's leadership and operational frameworks remain unchanged and founder, Richard Joannides with Verita Senior Leadership team, will continue as a pivotal figure in the organisation ensuring Verita's values and vision are preserved and enhanced in the coming years.

## Handbook as Contract:

By signing the Educational Contract Package each parent/guardian and student acknowledge the content of this handbook and agree to honor all the policies and regulations set forth herein and to comply with all school rules.

*Please note: The school reserves the right to amend the Handbook at any time if needed.*

*Any new policies introduced during the school year will be considered an addendum to this Handbook.*

## Vision, Mission, and School Commitment

**Vision:** Inspiring global minds and hearts for a compassionate and sustainable world.

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**Mission:** We are committed to growing global learners with social, emotional, ethical, and critical thinking skills that guide them towards meaningful lives.

**Learning Environment:** At Verita, the learning environment is characterised by purposeful, focussed activity in a kind and caring, yet challenging, environment.

### **High-Quality Teaching and Learning at Verita**

High-quality learning is an engaging and challenging process stemming from our natural curiosity. It builds on the learners' prior knowledge and experiences in order to transport them from the known to the new. It occurs in a safe and supportive environment that facilitates academic, social and emotional growth, stimulating and empowering learners to become active participants in their own learning. It is a transdisciplinary journey that requires differentiation and ownership while allowing all stakeholders to develop a greater level of skill, knowledge and understanding.

### **Global Citizenship - Our definition**

Global citizenship at Verita means nurturing a sense of curiosity and an understanding of what makes a sustainable wider world in which diversity and respect is key for all people. It stems from building our community on values of kindness, acceptance, empathy and inclusion. It requires each one of us to take a stance against social injustice and work for an equitable, peaceful interconnected world in which everyone feels truly responsible and empowered to make a difference.

### **Our Promise:**

- We will nurture the imagination in the early years in order to build a foundation for abstract thinking.
- We awaken a student's genuine enthusiasm, an interest in the WORLD, (a love of learning) and a sense of purpose in life.
- We use an educational approach that encourages balance.
- We commit to nurturing creativity, happiness, critical-thinking and self-reliance.
- We strive to help students make the transition from external motivation to self-motivation.
- We will put a strong focus on respect, responsibility and compassion.
- We foster each child's full potential.
- We emphasize the child's relationship to the natural world.
- We are guided by a curriculum not driven by standardized testing it.

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- We promise to promote cooperation over competition; and imaginative play over media exposure.
- We integrate the arts, music and movement into the entire curriculum.
- We commit to providing an appropriate structure to meet each student's needs, at each phase of her or his growth, with the objective of self-discipline.
- We teach decision making and problem-solving.
- We will assist each student's acquisition of a sense of personal responsibility.
- We strengthen leadership potential and effectiveness.
- We devote ourselves to growing a community of many nationalities, races, religions, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds.

**Verita International School aligns with the Council of International Schools (CIS) Code of Ethics and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).**

**Our school is expected to:**

- Fulfill the promises stated in our guiding statements, policies, contracts, and promotional materials.
- Strive for excellence in all areas.
- Nurture a culture of care in which the education, safety, and well-being of students are paramount.
- Comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Respect the dignity and equality of all individuals, groups, and cultures.
- Promote global citizenship and environmental sustainability.

**Educational Objectives and Learner Profile**

At Verita, our aim is to develop independent, well-rounded learners who can succeed in life's complexities with adaptability, creativity, emotional balance, and critical thinking. We value intellectual growth equally with social and emotional growth. Each child is seen as a unique individual to be respected for their uniqueness. Through a carefully prepared environment and an inquiry-based curriculum, we foster each child's natural love of learning and build a foundation for lifelong growth. Emotional and social intelligence are regarded as equally important as academic achievement.

**Verita Learner Profile:**

We aspire to cultivate the following characteristics in our students:

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- **Inquirers:** Curious, independent learners who develop the skills to conduct inquiry and research. They enjoy learning and show independence in pursuing knowledge.
- **Knowledgeable:** Acquire in-depth understanding across a broad range of disciplines (e.g. science, mathematics, technology) and are well-prepared to meet their next academic challenges.
- **Balanced:** Understand the importance of intellectual, physical, and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being. They manage their emotions in positive, productive ways.
- **Adaptable:** Adjust their thinking, behavior, and emotions in response to new or uncertain situations and challenges
- **Communicators:** Express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in multiple modes. They are proficient in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English and at least one other language
- **Collaborators:** Work effectively and respectfully with others. They are flexible, work toward common goals, accept shared responsibility, and value each team member's contribution
- **Kind and Compassionate:** Show empathy, kindness, and compassion towards others
- **Resilient:** Bounce back from adversity and manage emotions when facing challenges
- **Respectful:** Respect themselves, others, and the dignity of all people. They appreciate cultural diversity and the environment.
- **Thoughtful:** Are mindful of others' needs and the world around them. They act to make a positive difference in their school, community, and environment
- **Principled (Ethical):** Act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice. They respect the rights and dignity of individuals and communities, take responsibility for their actions, and understand the consequences of those actions

This learner profile guides our educational approach and our definition of success for students.

## 2. Admissions Policy

Admission is non-discriminatory and open to students without regard to race, sex, religion, physical ability, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin. We invite applications from students who can benefit from a creative, inquiry-based international English language education. While Verita will at all times try to accommodate students with needs or disabilities, the school may not be able to adequately support students with severe challenges and will therefore advise parents of alternative services / schools if the need arises.

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Admission and continued enrolment in Verita are determined by the Divisional School Head/Deputy Head and the Student Support Team (SST) based on the following criteria:

- The potential of the applicant to access and benefit from Verita's educational program;
- The ability of the school to meet the educational needs of the applicant;
- The ability of the applicant to meet the attendance and behavioural expectations of the school;
- Fulfilment of the school's financial and medical requirements;
- The suitability of the applicant within the classroom environment.

### **Admissions Procedure**

Admission to Verita will be guided primarily by whether the school can meet the child's educational needs. Depending on the age/year level, an assessment and/or trial day may be required for student applications to Verita including internal/external assessment.

Year 2 - Year 13 Applications: Student applications will only be considered if all relevant former report card(s) from previous schools are submitted in addition to the application form. **The Application forms will be considered incomplete and will not move forward in the admission process if the required documents are not provided.**

\*At the time of admission, to any year group full disclosure of an applicant's academic and conduct record as well as medical history and family circumstances is required. If at a later date it is revealed that inaccurate or incomplete information has been provided; Verita reserves the right to review applicants' access to the school and its programmes.

Students will ordinarily be admitted to the class/year group in the same age-group as they are at the time of admission.

\*In exceptional circumstances, including where students are seeking admission to the school from an educational system where children ordinarily start school at an older / younger age than at Verita School, the Divisional Head may admit at their discretion a student to a class/year group where the age-group is younger or older than the student. This will always be done to better match the prior educational experience, and/or standard achieved by the student, with that of the class/year group in which s/he is being placed.

Students will be admitted mid-year where there are places available and subject to satisfactory performance on the Admissions Assessment.

**Early Years and Y1 Applications:** assessment of basic literacy and numeracy knowledge, corresponding to the age, as well as school readiness (e.g motor skills related to pencil grip,

using a scissors). Students may have a 60 to 90 minute playdate session in school, as part of the assessment process.

**Year 2 Applications:** an age-appropriate school readiness assessment and a ½ day trial which will include classroom assessment (30 minutes) covering English (reading, writing, speaking) and Mathematics.

**Year 3 – Year 6 Applications:** Applicants will be invited for a full trial day which will include GL Assessment – Standardized test evaluating English and Mathematics knowledge, An additional CAT4 Cognitive Abilities Test (1 hour) to measure reasoning skills essential for academic growth may be required in certain circumstances.

**Year 7 – Year 10 Applications:** We require recent report cards from previous schools; the application will not proceed until these are provided. Applicants will be invited for 2 full consecutive trial days which will include GL Assessment - Standardized test evaluating English, Science, and Math knowledge and CAT4 Cognitive Test - Measures reasoning abilities essential for educational development.

**Year 11:** Admission into Year 11, the second year of the two-year Edexcel International GCSE programme, will only be considered if the following conditions are met:

- The student is already studying the Edexcel International GCSE programme, or an equivalent IGCSE programme, at their current school.
- The majority of International GCSE subjects taken by the student at their current school are offered at Verita.
- The student has achieved a minimum of a 4/ C on the Edexcel International GCSE 9-1 scale at their current school for all subjects.
- The student is in good standing behaviourally at their current school.

**Year 12 (IB DP):** Admission into the first year (DP1) of the IB DP will only be considered if the following conditions are met:

- The student has studied a curriculum in Year 11 that is or similar to the IB MYP, or IGCSE/ GCSE, or AP.
- The student's IB DP course selections are offered for their cohort at Verita.
- The student has achieved a minimum of a 4 or C (IGCSE scale) or 3 (IB Scale) or in Year 11 for the subjects they are planning to take at Standard Level (SL) in Year 12.
- The student has achieved a minimum of a 6 or B (IGCSE scale) or 5 (IB Scale) for the IB or Edexcel IGCSE scale in Year 11 for the subjects they are planning to take at Higher Level (HL) in Year 12.
- The student is in good academic and behavioural standing at their current school.

**Year 13 (IB DP):** Admission into the second year (DP2) of the IB DP will only be considered if the following conditions are met:

- The student is already studying the IB DP programme at their current school.
- The majority of the student's IB DP courses are offered at Verita and or/ can be taken on Pamoja
- The student has a predicted grade (PG) of 3 for their SL subjects and 4 for their HL subjects.
- The student is in good academic and behavioural standing at their current school.
- A reference or contact from the IB DP Coordinator at their current school will be required.

**Year 12-13 (Verita High School Diploma):** Admission into the last two years of high school for the Verita High School diploma programme will be considered if the following conditions are met:

- The student has a foundational knowledge at the Year 11 level for Maths, English, one Science subject of their choice, and one language subject of their choice.
- The student is in good academic and behavioural standing at their current school.
- The student will need to pass a preliminary entrance examination on the Year 11 curriculum for Maths, English, their chosen subject for Science and Languages.

## Application Process

**1. Initial Inquiry and Application:** Parents/guardians wishing to enroll their child should contact our Admissions Office (by email at [admissions@verita.ro](mailto:admissions@verita.ro) or phone at 021 311 88 11) or complete the Application Form on our website. We encourage all prospective families to visit the school (in person or virtually) prior to applying, to ensure our philosophy and program are the right fit for their child. An official Application Form must be submitted for each child.

**2. Application Fee:** A non-refundable Application Fee is required when starting the admissions process for each student. Each year the group has a tailored assessment process which ensures an appropriate and welcoming evaluation experience. This fee must be paid in full; applications will not proceed with late or partial payment.

**3. Documentation:** The following documents are required (in English or with certified English translation) for each new applicant:

- **Proof of Age/Identity of the Child:** For Romanian citizens, a copy of the birth certificate (and the child's ID card for ages 14+). For non-Romanian citizens, a birth certificate (translated) and copies of passport and residence permit.
- **Parent/Guardian Identification:** For Romanian citizens, copies of the parents' ID cards (and a utility bill if the current address differs from the ID). For foreign citizens, copies of passports and residence permits. *Note: In cases of divorced or single parents, a copy of the legal decision regarding parental authority/custody is required.*
- **Medical Records:** The child's medical record from the family doctor, including vaccination records.
- **Academic Records:** Transcripts or report cards from all previously attended schools/grades (if applicable) and any relevant evaluations.
- **School Recommendation:** A reference letter or report from the previous school, including information on the student's academic progress and behavior (if available).
- **Special Needs Documentation:** If the child has identified special educational needs, any relevant assessments or documentation should be provided.

All information provided must be accurate and complete. Misrepresentation or omission of relevant information may result in denial of admission or, if discovered later, revocation of the student's enrollment.

Expected ages of children in each year group:

Year level	EYFS	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Age Before Sep 1 <sup>st</sup>	2.8 - 4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17

*\*Note: see exceptional circumstances above*

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

Verita admits students with a broad range of educational, social, and emotional needs provided that the school has the resources to meet those needs, and where necessary, parents pay for additional 1-1 shadow teacher support. Some students may need additional services or therapies outside of the normal school day, which parents must pay for and show proof of for the educational contract to continue.

Normally:

1. The school will accept students with mild to moderate special educational and/or social-emotional needs.

2. Students with special educational needs should not exceed 10% of students in the school or 15% of children in any particular year group.
3. Verita will only admit children for whom appropriate support—including that of specialist teachers if needed, is available.

At Verita we have a multi-tiered support system. Tier 1 interventions - support for all - are offered by the classroom teaching teams, at every stage of the school (early years, primary and secondary). Tier 1 interventions will be supported by the Student Support Team (SST) with ongoing classroom observations and team meetings, when appropriate. Tier 2 interventions - support for some - are offered by our student support team specialists (counsellors, learning support specialists, English as an Additional Language specialists) and can be accompanied by external support already provided or recommended by the SST to the family. For all tier 2 interventions, parents will be contacted and informed. Tier 3 interventions - support for few - are not currently supported by Verita staff, but can be accessed within the community at an extra cost for parents. Tier 3 interventions can include: shadow teacher support, extra learning support, outside therapy sessions, further testing, other external agencies recommendations.

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER PROFICIENCY AND ADMISSIONS**

At Verita International School, we believe that, as a school serving both a local and an international community, it is our duty to support our English language learners to enable them to have full access to our rich curriculum.

Since most English language learners take between five and seven years to develop native or near-native proficiency in English, it is important that our school determines which students we can serve and at which levels.

### **Primary School Assessment (EYFS to Year 6)**

Primary-aged children will be assessed using a variety of age-appropriate tools including trial days in class, oral interviews and oral reading as well as reading comprehension tests, writing samples and mathematics assessments where appropriate. The purpose of this testing is to help determine the nature of the support needed rather than entry to the school.

According to the Admissions Assessment and trial days, where applicable, parents will be informed of the outcome:

1. Successfully admitted.
2. Admitted with conditions (they will be communicated to the parents after the assessment and the trial day and admission will depend on the successful completion of the conditions).
3. No admission.

## **SUPPORT**

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In the Primary School, pull-out (and push in where necessary) ELL support will be provided for beginning level English language learners (A1 and A2) from Year 2 and beyond to help them learn the basics of English. Support at the Year 1 level will be decided on a case-by-case basis for absolute beginners only (Level A1).

Intermediate and Advanced level learners (Levels B1 to C1) will receive support in the form of differentiated instruction from their classroom teachers.

### **Secondary School Assessment (Years 7 to 13)**

In Secondary School children must have an increasing level of English proficiency to access the curriculum and to graduate successfully. Therefore, Verita has increasing expectations for English proficiency with each year of Secondary School.

Clearly with each year that goes by, learners have less time to acquire a sufficient level of English to graduate in a university-preparatory program. Therefore, Verita has established minimum English levels of increasing rigour for entry into the Secondary School.

### **Secondary English Language Proficiency**

IMYC (Years 7-9): Students must be no more than one year below expected grade level in English, as measured by Verita's entrance testing requirements.

IGCSE and IBDP: Students must be at expected grade level in English, as measured by Verita's entrance testing.

Students must score a Standard Age Score (SAS) of 89 or above for the GL assessment that they take as part of the trial days. In exceptional cases, if the student has very high Maths results, the Student Support Team can consider admission even with a lower English proficiency.

NB: Careful consideration will be given when accepting students still acquiring in English from Key Stage One on. Normally, no more than 20% of students in any class should require intensive ELL support.

### **Placement, promotion, retention, readmission, non-readmission**

**Placement:** the school reserves the right to place children at a grade level, or within a specially designed programme, deemed appropriate by the Divisional School Head/Deputy Head and the Student Support Team (SST) provided this placement is within the guidelines established in the Admissions Policy.

**Promotion and Retention/Readmission and Non-Readmission:** the Divisional School Head/Deputy Head and the Student Support Team (SST), working with the professional

teaching staff, shall make promotion, retention and non-readmission (for the following school year) decisions, based on children's academic ability, social maturity, the ability and willingness of the student to benefit from the school programme and, in the event that the student has missed 20 days or more for non-medical reasons.

The Divisional School Head/Deputy Head and the Student Support Team (SST) is responsible for ensuring that policies concerning retention are clearly outlined in the school's parent-student handbook.

In line with Romanian regulations, children can begin school (Year 1) if they turn 6 by the start of the school year. The school may delay entrance for up to 2 years for a child with special developmental considerations, if recommended by evaluators, so that the child is placed with an appropriate age group for their needs.

### **Class Size and Admission Priority**

Verita values small class sizes to enhance learning.  
The standard class size is 19 students per class.

In Early Years and Primary, teaching assistants are present to support class teachers. In some cases, at the Divisional School Head's discretion, a class size may be increased up to a maximum of 21 students (by adding 1–2 students) provided the classroom space allows and appropriate support is available. If a class is fully subscribed, qualified applicants may be placed in a waiting pool.

When a space opens, the following admission priorities apply for selection:

1. Siblings of currently enrolled students (we strive to keep families together).
2. Former Verita students returning to the school.
3. Applicants who best fit the class composition and whose educational needs can be met by the school (as determined by the Admissions Team).

During our re-enrollment period (usually January–February for the next school year), current Verita students and their siblings are given the first opportunity to enroll for the upcoming year. After that period, starting March 1, remaining places are offered to new applicants in the general pool. New families who apply early may be placed on a waiting list until open enrollment begins.

Verita may accept new students at any time of the year if space is available, keeping in mind the class size limits and the student's ability to transition mid-year.

**Note:** Admission to Verita implies agreement to our financial policies (payment of all fees on time) and medical policies (submission of health records and adherence to health requirements). Continued enrollment is contingent on upholding school policies and meeting academic and behavior expectations.

## 3. Curriculum and Accreditation

### Educational Programs and Accreditation

Verita International School provides a rich international curriculum grounded in respected educational frameworks. Our core academic program is based on the National Curriculum of England and Wales, which is internationally recognized for its rigor and high academic standards. We complement this with world-class inquiry-based programs:

- **Early Years:** We use the International Early Years Curriculum (IEYC) for Nursery and Reception, integrated with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) standards from England. Our early childhood curriculum emphasizes play-based inquiry and developmental milestones, guided by the UK's Development Matters framework. Social-emotional learning is introduced through the Social, Emotional and Ethical (SEE) Learning program from Emory University, to nurture empathy and self-regulation in our youngest learners.
- **Primary Years (Year 1–6):** We follow the National Curriculum for core subjects (English, Maths, Science, etc.) and the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) for an interdisciplinary, thematic approach to subjects like Science, History, Geography, and Art. This allows students to engage in project-based learning, research, and critical thinking tasks across subject areas. All primary classes have weekly specialist lessons in areas such as Music, Physical Education, Computing (ICT), and modern languages. Social-Emotional Learning is explicitly taught each week (using the SEE curriculum) and reinforced throughout the day by teachers.
- **Secondary School (Year 7–13):** Verita offers the full secondary program. Years 7–9 use the International Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC) integrated with Key Stage 3 of the English National Curriculum. This continues the thematic, inquiry-based approach appropriate for early adolescents. Years 10–11 undertake the two-year International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) program (Edexcel exams), which is a content-rich, exam-oriented curriculum building a strong foundation for further study. Years 12–13 (ages 16–18) follow the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP), a rigorous pre-university curriculum that requires students to study languages, social sciences, experimental sciences, mathematics, and the arts, as well as complete the IB Core (Theory of Knowledge, Extended Essay, CAS). Verita is an authorized IB World School offering the IBDP

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since September 2021. Students may alternatively earn the Verita High School Diploma with a selection of appropriate courses, if they choose not to pursue the full IB Diploma.

**Verita International School is accredited and authorized by several bodies:** In Jan 2025 we achieved re-accreditation from COBIS, the leading global association for British International Schools, with the Accredited Member (CIS) status. This means we continue to meet the highest standards for a British international school. Our renewed accreditation is a testament to the hard work of our entire school community, and reaffirms our commitment to providing an exceptional learning environment to our students.

We have been an accredited school with the Council of International Schools (CIS) since July 2023, which reflects our commitment to meeting high standards of professional performance in international education and has a commitment to continuous improvement. Verita is registered with the Romanian Ministry of Education (ARACIP) as an international school authorized to teach the British curriculum in Romania.

Verita International School is an authorized IB World School for the Diploma Programme. We are also an approved Edexcel examination centre for IGCSE and A-Level exams.

These accreditations and authorizations ensure that a Verita education is recognized world-wide and that our graduates can transition to universities and schools globally with a well-respected diploma.

### **Curriculum Highlights**

- **Inquiry-Based Learning:** Across all year groups, Verita emphasizes inquiry and student-centered learning. Units of study often integrate multiple subjects around a theme or real-world problem. For example, through IPC and IMYC, students engage in projects that develop research skills, critical thinking, and creativity. This approach enables students to see connections between subjects and apply their knowledge in practical ways. Classrooms are dynamic environments where questioning and exploration are encouraged.
- **Social-Emotional Learning (SEL):** We have a strong focus on SEL from early years through secondary. Using the SEE Learning curriculum, we explicitly teach skills like self-awareness, emotion management, empathy, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. In Primary, SEL is taught in weekly lessons and integrated into daily class life. In Secondary, regular advisory periods or workshops address students' social and emotional development, including a special SEE Learning workshop offered to our Diploma Programme students for

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certification from Emory University. We believe educating the heart is as important as educating the mind.

- **Language Learning:** English is the language of instruction for all core subjects. Students whose first language is not English receive support to become proficient (see Admissions section for EAL support details). In addition to English, we value mother-tongue and foreign language development. In the Early Years the language of instruction is English. Of course, according to our pupils' emotional needs, simple words and phrases in the mother tongue could be used to facilitate the adjustment to the school environment. In years 1 and 2, the school offers 2 weekly Romanian language classes for all the students. In spring (April-May), all the students enrolled in year 2 have to choose between Romanian and French for the next academic year.

Starting with year 3, during the Languages classes, the students will be divided into distinct groups: Romanian and French, which will be offered simultaneously during the Languages slots. Therefore, the year 3 to 6 students will study French OR Romanian in three weekly sessions. If your child chooses French, there will be no Romanian classes during Curriculum time and vice versa, if the additional language is Romanian, a third language can be studied under the extracurricular program. Upon request and availability, we provide Romanian Language after school workshops, as well as Modern Foreign Language classes (Spanish, German, French etc)

We strongly recommend not switching languages. It is essential for the students to have continuity because at the end of High School they will have to be confident in their additional language skills for the IBDP exams. However, only for Primary up to Year 5, in extraordinary circumstances, at the end of the school year, we can analyse potential migration requests from one language to the other. In **Middle Years**, the students have 5 weekly sessions of Romanian OR French, upon their previous choice in Primary. In addition, all the students will take Spanish as the third language in 3 weekly sessions. The students in **Years 10-11** continue to study French or Romanian (5 sessions). At the end of Year 11, the students enrolled in French can take the IGCSE exam. For Romanian, the assessments are only internal and there is no IGCSE exam. In addition, they can choose between Spanish and Art (3 weekly sessions). If they choose Spanish, they can also take the IGCSE exam in Spanish. The curriculum focuses on acquiring the language skills acquired for the iGCSE exam. For our IBDP program, we offer the following options: Romanian Literature (native speakers), Standard Level and High Level; French B – Standard Level and High Level; French Ab-Initio -, Standard Level; Spanish Ab-Initio – Standard Level; Spanish B – Standard Level.

- **Specialist Subjects:** All students benefit from specialist teachers in areas such as Physical Education, Information & Communication Technology (ICT), Music and Visual Arts. For

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instance, starting in Year 1, students have dedicated ICT lessons to build digital skills. Creative arts are strongly supported: every week, primary students have art and music classes to foster creativity. In secondary, students can choose arts subjects (Visual Arts, etc.) for IGCSE and IB, and all students participate in physical education for fitness and well-being.

- **Assessment:** We use a mix of formative assessments (ongoing evaluations to guide learning) and summative assessments (end-of-unit tests, projects, or external exams) to monitor student progress. Students from Years 4 to 9 undertake twice a year GL assessments in key areas: Maths and English for Years 4-9, and Science for Years 7-9. These standardised tests align with the UK national curriculum, enabling us to measure our students' performance against both UK and international standards. We are pleased to report that Verita students have consistently surpassed these benchmarks, reflecting the strength of our educational approach and the dedication of our staff. These results help teachers tailor instruction and are shared with parents. In secondary, students have internal exams and mock exams to prepare for IGCSE and IB Diploma exams, which are externally graded. (See Academic Policies section for more on assessment and reporting.)

Through these programs and approaches, Verita ensures that students receive a broad and balanced education that not only meets rigorous academic standards but also develops their personal skills and global awareness.

## 4. Daily School Life

This section provides information on the day-to-day routines, expectations, and opportunities that shape students' lives at Verita. Consistency between home and school in understanding these routines helps children thrive.

### School Schedule and Attendance

#### School Year and Calendar:

The academic year at Verita runs from late August/early September until mid or late June, followed by a summer break. The year may be divided into two semesters or three terms, as determined by the school.

There are 5 school days (Monday–Friday) each week.

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The school publishes the annual calendar by Jan 1 each year on our website, including the start/end dates of terms and all holidays.

We observe Romanian public holidays (many of which are religious Orthodox holidays) as school holidays. Notable mandatory holidays include: all Saturdays/Sundays, Orthodox Good Friday and Easter Monday, May 1 (Labour Day), June 1 (Children's Day), and Whit Monday (Orthodox Pentecost), November 30th - St. Andrews Day, December 1st - Romanian National Day

Other breaks (Winter holiday, Spring break, etc.) are set in our calendar. During inclement weather or other emergencies, the school may close – parents will be notified via email, SMS, or phone in such cases, and students will remain supervised at school until they can be picked up safely.

**Daily Schedule:** The general school day timetable is as follows:

- **08:15 – 08:45: Drop-off window.** School gates open at 8:15 AM. Students should arrive between 8:15 and 8:45.

*Note: There is **no staff supervision before 8:15**, so students should not arrive earlier than 8.15. A staff member is on morning duty from 8:15 to 9:00 to supervise early arrivals.*

Parents who accompany children should plan to depart by 8:45 so that lessons can begin promptly.

- **08:45: School day starts.** Students should be in class by 8:45 AM; the official start-of-day bell is at 9:00 AM

After 9:00, any arrivals are marked as late (tardy) by the front office and such students are given a Late Slip to prove they are recorded as present in school. Being in class on time ensures a smooth, uninterrupted start for everyone.

- **Mid-Morning:** A short snack/recess break is scheduled (times vary by section).
- **Lunch Break:** All students have a lunch period (and play break) midday. Lunch timings are staggered by age group.
- **15:45 (3:45 PM): Classes end.** This is the official end of the academic day for all year groups.
- **15:45 – 15:50: Pick-up time.** Parents or authorized guardians should arrive for pick-up at this time. Classroom teachers escort or release students to the designated pick-up area (usually the school field or gate). We ask that parents be prompt. A short grace period (until about 3:55) is allowed, but by 3:50 most children should be picked up. Teachers will supervise dismissal to ensure each child is met by the correct parent/caregiver.
- **16:00 – 17:00: After-school activities** (optional, for those enrolled) or study hall. These begin at 4:00 PM. Students staying for clubs or extra help remain with staff supervision between 3:45 and 4:00.

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- **17:00 (5:00 PM): After-school activities end.** Parents must pick up children by 5:15 PM at the latest if they attend an activity. It is important to respect this pick-up time. Repeated late pick-ups after activities (more than 3 instances without notice) may result in a child being withdrawn from after-school programs and requiring 3:45 pick-up going forward.
- **17:30: School gates close for the day.** All students should have departed by this time unless involved in a supervised evening event.

Being on time in the morning is very important. Punctuality shows respect for everyone's time and avoids disrupting the class. A student who arrives late misses important start-of-day activities and may feel embarrassed walking in late. We ask parents to help children develop good routines so they can arrive by 8:45. Chronic lateness will be noted on the report card and can lead to follow-up with families or even disciplinary action if it continues.

**Attendance Expectations:** Regular attendance is critical for academic success. Students are expected to attend school every day unless there is an important reason for absence (such as illness or family emergency). If your child will be absent, please notify the School Office as soon as possible – no later than 9:00 AM on the day of absence (a phone call or email to the office is fine). Upon returning, a written note or email explaining the reason and dates of absence should be provided.

We differentiate Excused vs. Unexcused absences:

- **Excused Absences** are those due to illness or injury, medical appointments, a family emergency or bereavement, religious holidays, or other valid reasons communicated to the school. Whenever possible, please inform the teacher and office in advance of planned absences (e.g. scheduled surgery, important religious observance). Students should arrange to make up any major work they will miss. Teachers will allow students to complete make-up work or assignments after an excused absence within a reasonable timeframe.
- **Unexcused Absences** are absences for reasons not accepted by the school (e.g. extending vacations, truancy, oversleeping). Family trips during school days, for instance, are not considered excused. Students with unexcused absences may not be given special make-up privileges; it is the student's responsibility to catch up on missed work, and assignments missed due to unexcused absence might receive partial or no credit. Parents should avoid taking children out of school for avoidable reasons.

Excessive absences can seriously affect a student's learning.

If a student accumulates more than 10 unexcused absences or more than 20 total absences (excused or unexcused) in a school year, the school will review the case. The student may be considered for retention (repeating the year) or other intervention. Any student with 20 or

more unexcused absences will be at risk of not being promoted to the next grade, and the school reserves the right to refuse re-enrollment in the following year.

In the Upper Secondary (Years 11–13), students must attend at least 90% of school days each year. This equates to a maximum of 18 absences in a year; exceeding this can jeopardize course credit and the ability to graduate or enter exams.

#### **Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:**

For safety, parents of Early Years and Year 1 students should escort their child to the Reception area each morning, where a staff member will then take the child to their classroom. Older students (Year 2 and up) can walk to their classrooms or lineup areas on their own after entering the gate (staff are on duty to supervise hallways and entryways). At dismissal, Early Years and lower primary students will only be released to a parent or authorized caregiver. If someone unfamiliar to the staff is picking up, parents must inform the school in writing in advance, and that person should be prepared to show ID at the gate. No student may leave campus during the school day without permission.

If a student needs to leave early for an appointment, the parent must notify the office (by phone or email) at least one hour in advance and sign the student out from Reception. We will not release a student to any person who is not the parent or legal guardian unless we have prior written authorization. We also ask parents to let us know if both legal guardians will be out of Bucharest at the same time during the school term – in such cases, provide the school with the contact information of the temporary caregiver and an emergency contact in case of need.

#### **School Uniform Policy**

Students are expected to adhere to the school's Uniform Policy to maintain a focused learning environment and a sense of community.

All students should come to school in the approved school uniform (details on specific uniform items and purchasing information are provided separately). In general, the uniform includes a Verita-branded top (polo or shirt) and appropriate pants/skirt, or Verita dress, depending on the division. On scheduled Physical Education (PE) days, students should wear the designated PE kit (sports t-shirt, shorts or tracksuit, and proper sports shoes). We ask that students wear closed-toe shoes for safety (no flip-flops). Hats may be worn outside for sun protection, but not indoors.

**Appropriate Dress for Activities:** On days when students have PE or sports, they should either wear their PE uniform to school or bring appropriate athletic clothing and footwear to change into. All children should have comfortable running shoes for outdoor play and sports.

If a student wears boots or formal shoes to school, they may bring a pair of sneakers in their bag to change into for PE. For certain activities, specific attire will be requested in advance.

**Cold/Hot Weather:** In winter, please ensure your child has warm clothing (coat, hat, gloves) for outdoor play, as we go outside in most weather conditions. In summer, lighter uniform options and a sunhat are recommended, along with sunscreen applied in the morning.

The uniform policy is designed to be practical and to promote equality. Students should be neat and tidy; however, hair styles and other personal expressions are generally allowed as long as they are not extreme or distracting. The school reserves the right to ask a student to modify attire or appearance if it is deemed inappropriate for school. (For more on uniform expectations and consequences for uniform infractions, see the Code of Conduct section.)

### **Materials and Supplies**

Verita provides the majority of educational materials that students will need, as part of the tuition fees. This includes textbooks, workbooks, notebooks, standard paper and art supplies, library books, access to online learning platforms and research databases, science laboratory equipment and consumables, etc. In Early Years and Primary, all basic stationery (pencils, crayons, scissors, etc.) is supplied in class. Starting from Secondary (Year 7), students are expected to bring some personal stationery: e.g. pens, pencils, erasers, rulers, a geometry set for math, a calculator. A supply list or recommendations will be provided for secondary students at the start of the year.

Occasionally, teachers may request specific additional items for projects (for example, an art project might ask each student to bring a shoebox, or a science project might need recyclable bottles). These requests will be communicated in advance, and they are typically inexpensive or optional contributions. If any significant supply were needed, the school would provide it or discuss it with parents beforehand. Our policy is that no student should be unable to participate due to lack of materials.

Students are assigned textbooks for many classes; these remain school property and are loaned to students. Textbooks must be handled with care and returned at the end of the year (or upon withdrawal) in good condition. We ask students not to write in textbooks (aside from workbooks meant to be written in). If a textbook or other school property is lost or significantly damaged by a student, parents may be billed for the replacement cost. We encourage labeling of personal items (e.g. put your child's name on their notebooks, pencil case, uniform sweater, etc.) to prevent mix-ups.

There is a Lost and Found area near the main entrance – lost items that are labeled can be easily returned, and unlabeled items will be stored in Lost and Found. Unclaimed items are periodically donated to charity.

## Homework

At Verita, we believe that meaningful homework can reinforce learning, help develop independent study habits, and involve families in the educational process. However, we also value balance and personal time, so we aim to give homework that is purposeful and not overwhelming.

**Purpose of Homework:** Homework may be assigned for several reasons:

- To preview or prepare for upcoming lessons (“pre-learning” tasks).
- To check for understanding of material taught (through practice problems or reflection).
- To practice and reinforce important skills for long-term retention (e.g. reading, math facts).
- To process or elaborate on concepts learned in class (such as a short writing assignment).
- To extend learning beyond the classroom (projects, research, creative work).
- To cultivate independent work habits and responsibility.

Teachers design homework that is appropriate to the age and needs of the students. Homework will not be busy-work; it will connect to class learning objectives. When appropriate, teachers differentiate homework (for example, offering more challenging tasks to students who are ready, or providing scaffolding for those who need it). The quantity of homework will gradually increase as students progress through the school, but we are mindful of not overloading students, as each child works at a different pace.

### Guidelines by Year Level:

- **Early Years (Nursery & Reception):** No regular homework. Families are encouraged to read to their children daily, and optional activities may be suggested (like sharing a favorite toy for Show & Tell).
- **Years 1–2:** Minimal homework. Approximately 30 minutes per week might be given, often focusing on reading practice (reading with or to parents) and an occasional small task (like a simple worksheet or bringing an item to class). The goal is to begin building responsibility gently.

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- **Years 3–6:** Regular homework Monday–Thursday, gradually increasing through the years. This may be about 15–30 minutes per day on average by Year 6. Homework could include reading, spelling practice, math exercises, and occasional project work or research for inquiry units. Students should also practice their musical instrument (if applicable) and multiplication facts or other skills as needed.
- **Secondary (Years 7–9):** Students should expect roughly 1 to 1.5 hours of homework five days a week in Key Stage 3 (approx. 1 hour in Y7 building up to 1.5 hours in Y9). Homework will come from a variety of subjects. Students will often have long-term assignments (like book reports or science projects) in addition to short nightly tasks. Time management becomes important.
- **IGCSE and IBDP (Years 10–13):** Homework is an essential component of these programs. Work may include daily assignments, extended essays, IB internal assessments, exam revision, etc. Students should expect around 1.5–2 hours per day on average, and more when large projects are due or during exam preparation. (In IB Diploma years, some weekend study and holiday homework is to be expected given the rigorous curriculum.)

These are general guidelines – actual homework time can vary based on the child's work habits and the week's activities. If a student regularly spends far longer on homework than these guidelines, parents should discuss this with the teacher to ensure the workload is appropriate. We do not usually assign homework over major holiday breaks (Winter and Spring break), apart from reading or long-term project work already known in advance.

**Parental Support:** Parents can help by providing a quiet, well-lit space and a regular time for homework. Encourage and guide your child, but do not do the work for them. If a child is confused about an assignment, it's better they attempt what they can and the parent notes the difficulty to the teacher rather than experiencing undue stress at home. Open communication with teachers about homework load or difficulty is encouraged.

We also ask parents to ensure children do not bring toys or distractions that are not needed for school. Personal toys, gaming devices, etc., should stay at home to keep the focus on learning (exceptions can be made for special "toy day" events or similar, as coordinated by teachers). In general, sweets/candy and large amounts of extra money should not be brought to school either, to avoid issues among students. (A child may bring a small birthday treat for all classmates on their birthday – please coordinate with the teacher and make sure any edible treats are individually wrapped and allergy-aware.

### **Lunch, Snacks, and Hydration**

**Lunch Program:** Students eat lunch together at school each day.

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Parents have two options: **(1)** provide a packed lunch from home, or **(2)** subscribe to the school's hot lunch program for an additional fee. We strive to offer healthy, balanced meals in our lunch program, and menus are shared with parents. If sending a packed lunch, please pack nutritious items that your child enjoys. We encourage reusable containers to reduce waste.

**Lunch** is a time for refueling and socializing, but we also expect good manners: students should wash their hands before eating, use indoor voices at the table, and clean up their area after finishing.

We discourage food waste – children are encouraged to at least try all components of their meal. If a child needs seconds and food is available, they may politely ask. No child will be forced to eat, but we will communicate with parents if a child is consistently not eating well at school.

**Snacks:** Early Years and Primary students typically have a morning snack time. Parents should send a healthy snack (e.g. fruit, yogurt, crackers) if the child is not on the school snack program. Please avoid sending sugary treats for snacks. The school can provide guidance on healthy snack choices.

**Water:** Hydration is important. Students are encouraged to bring a reusable water bottle from home each day. We have water fountains and coolers around the school for refilling bottles with clean drinking water. Teachers will allow water breaks as needed. Especially in hot weather, we remind students to drink water regularly. (Please label your child's water bottle with their name.)

**Food Restrictions and Allergies:** We are a nut-aware campus – we request that no snacks or lunches contain peanuts or tree nuts, as we have some students with severe nut allergies. If your child has any food allergy or dietary restriction, be sure this is noted on their medical form and inform the teacher and nurse. We will take necessary precautions (for example, peanut-free tables or notifying class parents not to include certain items in shared snacks). Our menu can accommodate common dietary needs (vegetarian, etc.) if notified. See the Health section for more on our Allergy Policy.

**Food Outside School:** Students should not consume food or drinks (other than water) outside of designated areas and times (to avoid spills and pest issues). After school, if students buy a snack on the way home, we ask them not to litter and to finish it before any after-school activities start (unless it's a scheduled snack time).

## After-School Programs and Clubs

Verita offers a variety of after-school activities to enrich our students' interests and skills. These After-School Programs run from 16:00 to 17:00 (4–5 PM) on scheduled days. Activities may include sports (football, basketball, etc.), arts and crafts, music, drama, coding, foreign languages, homework club, and more. A catalogue of activities is published at the start of the school year. Activities are organized from September to June and each activity has a limited number of slots.

Participation in clubs is optional and involves an additional fee (fees vary by activity to cover instructors and materials). Once enrolled, students are expected to attend regularly and demonstrate the same good behavior as during the school day. Because we hire instructors based on enrollment, we generally cannot allow switching or refunds after the first week of clubs. Late payment of club fees may result in the child being removed from the activity.

**Pick-up After Activities:** As noted, children must be picked up by 5:15 PM after clubs. Repeated late pickups may lead to the child being withdrawn from the club program. If you know you will be late due to an emergency, please inform the school immediately. Students not picked up on time will wait with the supervising staff at Reception.

## Field Trips and Events

**Field Trips:** Verita believes in learning outside the classroom to take advantage of our location and enrich the curriculum. Educational field trips are scheduled throughout the year to places such as museums, theaters, farms, historical sites, businesses, or nature areas. Parents will be informed in advance of any trip.

A permission slip must be signed by a parent/guardian for any trip off-campus. (The enrollment agreement includes a general permission for neighborhood walks or park visits during school, but for trips involving transportation we seek explicit permission each time.) The school takes careful measures to ensure student safety on trips: appropriate transportation (buses with seat-belts), proper chaperone ratios, and risk assessments are done. Teachers and staff supervise all field trip activities and carry mobile phones and emergency contacts.

Usually, parents cover the cost of field trips (entry fees, transportation). We strive to keep costs minimal and will communicate the amount in advance. Payment may be collected via the class teacher. If any family has financial difficulty affording a particular trip, please speak to the school – we do not want a child to miss out for financial reasons.

We welcome parent volunteers on field trips (especially for younger classes) – if you're interested and available, let the teacher know. Volunteers might help supervise a small group of children under the teacher's direction. All volunteers are expected to follow the school's guidelines for student safety and confidentiality.

**School Events:** The school holds various events and celebrations (e.g. Winter concert, International Day, Sports Day, Science Fair, art exhibitions, etc.). Parents are usually invited to attend these events. We encourage families to participate as it strengthens our community. Notices of events will be sent via email/newsletter. Some events may be during the day, others in the evening or on weekends.

For any event or trip, if you have questions or concerns (for example, regarding transportation, activity level for your child, etc.), please contact your child's teacher or the event organizer.

## 5. Academic Policies

This section covers how learning is assessed and supported at Verita, as well as policies on academic integrity, promotion, and other academic procedures.

### Assessment and Reporting

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process at Verita. We use a combination of formative assessments (to monitor progress and inform teaching) and summative assessments (to evaluate what students have learned at the end of a unit or term). Our goal is to provide constructive feedback to students and parents and to guide continuous improvement.

Students from Years 4 to 9 undertake twice a year GL assessments in key areas: Maths and English for Years 4-9, and Science for Years 7-9. These standardised tests align with the UK national curriculum, enabling us to measure our students' performance against both UK and international standards. We are pleased to report that Verita students have consistently surpassed these benchmarks, reflecting the strength of our educational approach and the dedication of our staff. These results help teachers tailor instruction and are shared with parents. In secondary, students have internal exams and mock exams to prepare for IGCSE and IB Diploma exams, which are externally graded.

**Classroom Assessments:** Teachers in each subject and year group use a variety of assessments, such as quizzes, tests, projects, presentations, writing assignments, and

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observations. Rubrics and clear criteria are often used, especially for open-ended tasks, so students know what is expected. For example, writing assignments might be assessed using the 6 Traits Writing Rubric, or IB internal assessments will follow IB rubrics. Students receive feedback on their work regularly.

#### **Reporting to Parents:**

Formal Report Cards are issued 3 times/year – at the end of each term. The report card includes grades or achievement levels for each subject and often sub-categories (for example, an English grade might be broken into Reading, Writing, Speaking/Listening). We also provide a Progress Report before the October Break.

In Primary, we report progress against curriculum objectives (e.g., Working Towards, Meeting, or Exceeding expectations for each skill area) along with narrative comments from teachers.

In Secondary, we use numerical grades aligned with curriculum standards (and IB/IGCSE grading scales as applicable). We also report on student learning habits and dispositions (effort, participation, behavior) separately from academic achievement. Teacher comments highlight strengths, progress, and recommendations for improvement.

#### **Parent-Teacher Conferences:**

We schedule formal parent-teacher meetings at least twice a year – typically one in the first term (fall) and one in the second term (spring).

During conferences, parents can discuss their child's progress with teachers and review samples of the student's work.

Students may be involved in conferences (student-led conferences) in some year groups, sharing their own reflections. In addition to scheduled conferences, parents or teachers may request a meeting at any time if there are concerns or updates to discuss.

We encourage parents to reach out whenever they feel the need for more information about their child's progress.

Teachers can also arrange phone or video conferences if in-person meetings are not convenient.

#### **Homework Review and Feedback:**

Homework is checked regularly. Not all homework will receive a formal grade, but teachers will review it either by marking it, discussing it in class, or using it in subsequent activities. If a student consistently fails to complete homework, teachers will communicate with parents to find solutions.

**Academic Support:** If a student is struggling academically, Verita employs a Student Support Team approach. This might include additional help sessions with the teacher, peer tutoring, or referral to our Learning Support staff for evaluation. We believe in early intervention to get students back on track. (See Student Wellbeing for more on learning support.)

### **Academic Honesty**

Verita International School expects all students to uphold principles of honesty and integrity in their academic work. Academic honesty means that all work a student submits is their own and that they give proper credit when referencing others' ideas (no plagiarism). We teach students from primary up how to be principled and why cheating or copying is harmful to learning.

#### **Guidelines and Principles:**

Students should produce their own work and respect the intellectual property of others. This includes:

- Not copying another student's homework, test, or project.
- Not plagiarizing text from books or the internet (i.e. copying information word-for-word without quotation or citation). In upper primary and secondary, teachers will show students how to paraphrase and cite sources appropriately.
- Not using unauthorized notes or devices during tests (cheating).
- Not presenting work done substantially by a parent, tutor, or AI tool as the student's own. For example, if using tools like spell-checkers or calculators is permitted, that's fine, but using an essay written by someone else is not.

We encourage collaboration in learning, but there is a difference between collaboration and collusion. Collaboration (working together on an assignment with permission) is supported, but collusion (one student doing work for another, or students sharing answers on an individual task) is not allowed.

#### **Use of AI Tools (e.g. ChatGPT):**

The school recognizes that emerging tools like ChatGPT can be useful for learning if used correctly. However, students must not use AI or any sources to generate entire assignments or bypass the learning process. If a teacher allows an AI tool for a specific task, they will give guidelines (for instance, using it to brainstorm ideas might be allowed, but the final writing must be the student's own words). Using AI to cheat (e.g. inputting an essay prompt and copying the AI's response as your submission) is treated as plagiarism.

### Consequences of Academic Misconduct:

If a student is found to have cheated or plagiarized, the incident will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, considering age and intent. In general:

- The work in question will not be credited. The student may be required to redo the assignment honestly.
- The teacher will discuss the issue with the student to ensure understanding of the problem.
- Parents will be notified of the incident.
- Repeated or serious instances of academic dishonesty (especially in secondary school) will result in disciplinary action as per the Code of Conduct. For example, a second offense might lead to detentions or suspension. In the IB Diploma Programme, plagiarism on major assessments can have severe consequences including failure of the component or disqualification by the IB.

Verita's goal is to instill the value of integrity. We would rather a student try their best and make mistakes than cheat to get a perfect score. We ask parents to support this by emphasizing effort and learning over grades, and by never doing your child's work for them. When teachers, parents, and students all commit to honesty, we create a trustful and fair academic environment.

### Promotion, Retention, and Graduation

Each student's academic progress is carefully monitored to ensure they are in the appropriate grade level. In most cases, students advance to the next year level each year. However, if a student is struggling significantly, the school has policies on retention (repeating a grade) to ensure the student can master the material.

**Promotion:** A student who successfully meets the academic requirements of the year and has attended sufficiently (see Attendance Policy) will be promoted to the next grade at the end of the year. "Successful completion" in Primary means the student has made adequate progress in core subjects to tackle the next year's curriculum. In Secondary, it generally means achieving passing grades in core subjects.

### Mid-Year Promotion:

Verita does not commonly promote students mid-year or skip grades. Exceptionally, if a student is clearly working well above grade level in all areas and is socially ready, the school might consider acceleration. This would involve assessments and a multi-party agreement

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(parents, receiving teacher, leadership). But generally, enrichment within the grade is preferred over skipping grades.

**Retention Criteria:** Retaining a student (having them repeat the year) is rare and considered only in extraordinary circumstances and always in consultation with parents. Research shows retention often does not improve outcomes, so Verita uses it as a last resort.

**Across all ages,** if a student misses an extremely large portion of the year (due to illness or other reasons) and cannot reasonably catch up, or if their social-emotional maturity is significantly behind peers in a way that another year in the same class would be beneficial, the team may consider retention.

If retention is being considered, the school will inform parents no later than April 1 of that academic year (or by mid-May if the student enrolled after January). A meeting will be held with the Head of School, Divisional School Head, class teacher, and School Counselor to discuss the child's case and make a recommendation. The final decision rests with the Head of School in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team. Any decision is made with the child's long-term interest in mind. If a child is retained, an action plan will be developed to support the student's progress in the repeated year.

Possible grounds for considering retention include:

#### Primary

**In Primary (Years 1–6):** If a student is performing extremely below age expectations across the board. For example, standardized measures from GL Progress tests and CAT4s place the student at an academic performance level of 2 years below in 2 or more areas for their age; the student's report shows very low levels of independent learning skills; the homeroom teacher and student support team have serious concerns about the child's emotional development and readiness for the next grade. Excessive absences (over 20 days in a year) can also contribute to a child falling behind to a degree retention is considered.

#### Secondary

**Promotion and Retention/Readmission and Non-Readmission:** the Head/Deputy Head and the Student Support Team (SST), working with the professional teaching staff, shall make promotion, retention and non-readmission (for the following school year) decisions based on children's academic ability, social maturity, the ability and willingness of the student to benefit from the school programme and in the event that the student has missed 20 days or more for non-medical reasons.



The Head/Deputy Head and the Student Support Team (SST) are responsible for ensuring that policies concerning retention are clearly outlined in the school's parent-student handbook.

*IMYC requirements for automatic grade level promotion:*

- Grades of 4 or higher in the following subject areas:
  - English, Mathematics, Science, and Humanities
- No more than one grade of 3 or less in any other subject area
- Students who do not meet these requirements will have their academic performance reviewed by the Secondary SLT in consultation with teaching staff and parents to decide whether they will be promoted to the next grade level or retained at the current grade level
  - The school reserves the right to make the final decision regarding whether students under review will be promoted or retained.
- Student has not been placed on a behaviour plan during the previous school year
  - Students who have been placed on a behaviour plan may be selected for retention or non-readmission as the discretion of the school

*IGCSE and IBDP grade level promotion:*

- The IGCSE and IBDP are two-year programs, and once accepted students receive automatic year level promotion within the program
- Promotion from IGCSE to IBDP is subject to the same program entrance requirements as the requirements for new students to Verita, as copied below

**Year 12 (IB DP):** Admission into the first year (DP1) of the IB DP will only be considered if the following conditions are met:

IBDP entrance requirements for students coming from GCSE/IGCSE school (including Verita):

- A predicted GCSE/IGCSE grade of four or better for each subject they wish to study in the IBDP
  - For example, in order to study Art in the IBDP, a student must have a predicted grade of 4 or better in Art for their GCSE/IGCSE
- An overall average predicted score above 5 for all of their GCSE/IGCSE subjects
- In the case a student wishes to take an IBDP class that does not correspond to a GCSE/IGCSE subject in which they were tested, decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis based upon:
  - Overall academic record
  - Results in similar subjects

- For example, if a student wanted to take Spanish Ab Initio, IGCSE results from another language acquisition class (French, Italian, etc.) could be considered.
  - Recommendations from teachers, if available
- Students who do not meet the requirements to join the full IBDP program may still be enrolled in Verita to take Courses in the IBDP (See Verita High School Diploma Below)

**Year 12 (Verita High School Diploma):** Admission into the last two years of high school for the Verita High School diploma programme will be considered if the following conditions are met:

- The student has a foundational knowledge at the Year 11 level for Maths, English, one Science subject of their choice, and one language subject of their choice.
- The student is in good academic and behavioural standing at their current school.
- The student will need to pass a preliminary entrance examination on the Year 11 curriculum for Maths, English, their chosen subject for Science and Languages.

### **Academic Support and Special Educational Needs**

Verita is committed to supporting the diverse learning needs of our students. Our Student Support Team (SST) includes learning support specialists, counselors, and EAL (English as an Additional Language) teachers who work with classroom teachers to ensure each child can succeed.

**Learning Support (SEN Policy):** Verita admits students with mild to moderate special educational needs (learning differences, ADHD, mild autism spectrum, etc.) provided we have resources to support them and the overall percentage of such students remains appropriate for an inclusive classroom environment. We aim to keep the proportion of students with significant learning support to no more than 10% of the total student body, and ideally not more than 15% in any given class, so that we can give proper attention.

If a student has identified special needs, a meeting with the SST and parents will be held to create an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or support plan. The school may recommend or require additional services (like speech therapy, occupational therapy, etc.) which would be at the parents' expense outside of school hours. In some cases, a 1:1 shadow teacher or aide (provided by the parents) may be required for the child to attend – this is typically for moderate needs and is discussed during admissions.

During the school year, if a teacher observes that a student is struggling significantly, they will refer the student to the SST. With parental consent, we may conduct educational screenings or assessments to better understand the child's needs. The SST will then suggest

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interventions (in-class strategies, pull-out support sessions, or external evaluation if necessary). We strive to intervene early and work collaboratively with parents.

### **Counseling and Pastoral Care:**

The Head of School and the School Counselors oversee pastoral care. Each teacher also takes responsibility for the well-being of students in their class and will alert the counselor or leadership if a child is facing emotional or social difficulties. The School Counselor is available to meet with students individually or in small groups to address personal issues, social skills, or any emotional concerns. Students can request to see the counselor at any time, and teachers or parents can also refer a student. Conversations with the counselor are kept confidential unless there is a safety concern. The counselor also leads classroom lessons or assemblies on topics like friendship, conflict resolution, bullying prevention, and stress management.

### **Bullying Prevention:**

Verita has zero tolerance for bullying. We define bullying as repeated or severe verbal or physical harassment, intimidation, or aggression directed by one or more students toward another. Our small, close-knit community fosters a culture of kindness, and incidents of bullying are infrequent. However, we remain vigilant. The School Counselor and Senior Leadership Team lead school-wide bullying prevention efforts – including educating students about empathy and what to do if they see bullying. Students are encouraged to “stand up, not stand by” and to inform a teacher or adult if they or someone else is being mistreated. All reports of bullying are investigated and addressed immediately. Consequences for confirmed bullying behavior are handled per our behavior policy (they may include parent conferences, counseling, behavior contracts, and in serious cases suspension or expulsion). Our goal is to ensure every student feels safe and supported at school.

### **Confidentiality:**

We respect students' and families' privacy. Any learning support plans or counseling records are kept confidential and shared only with the professionals working with the student (and the parents). If external specialists are involved, we coordinate with parental permission.

### **Responsibilities and Rights:**

In alignment with our philosophy, students who receive additional support are full members of our community with the same rights to a quality education and the same responsibility to adhere to school rules. Teachers differentiate instruction as needed so that all students can access the curriculum. In turn, we expect students (with guidance appropriate to their needs) to put forth their best effort. Parents of students with support plans are expected to remain in communication with the school and reinforce strategies at home as needed.

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By working as a team – student, parents, teachers, and support staff – we aim to help each Verita student reach their potential academically, socially, and emotionally.

## 6. Student Wellbeing and Code of Conduct

Verita International School prides itself on a caring, respectful community. We have high expectations for student behavior, grounded in our values of kindness, respect, and responsibility. This section outlines student rights and responsibilities, our behavior expectations, and how we handle discipline and wellbeing.

### Student Rights and Responsibilities

All students at Verita have fundamental rights, and with those rights come corresponding responsibilities. We teach even our youngest learners that being part of a community means respecting others and oneself.

Students have the **RIGHT** to:

- Learn in a safe and secure environment, free from bullying, harassment, or discrimination. Every student should feel emotionally and physically safe at school.
- Be treated with kindness and respect by teachers, staff, and peers. No one should demean or belittle another.
- Express their opinions and feelings in an appropriate manner and forum, especially on matters that affect them. Student voice is valued (e.g. through Student Council, class meetings, surveys).
- Participate in all school activities and programs for which they are eligible. This includes academic classes, sports, clubs, and events, without unfair exclusion.
- Fair and impartial treatment in the enforcement of rules. If a rule is broken, students can expect due process (an opportunity to explain their side) and consistent application of consequences.
- Be taught by qualified and prepared teachers, who deliver engaging lessons and assess students fairly.
- Receive feedback and have work returned in a reasonable time, so they can learn from it.

Students have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to:

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- Contribute to a safe, positive environment. This means no actions that harm or threaten others, and following safety rules (no running in halls, no dangerous objects, etc.).
- Treat others with kindness and respect. This includes using polite language (no insults or profanity), respecting others' personal space and property, and including others in activities.
- Follow school rules and adult directions. Students must adhere to the behavior guidelines set by the school and listen to teachers, administrators, and staff. (If a student disagrees with a directive, they should still follow it at the time and later may discuss it politely with the teacher or Divisional School Head.)
- Attend school regularly and on time. Consistent attendance and punctuality are their responsibility (with support from parents).
- Be prepared and do their best in class. This means bringing required materials, completing homework, and putting effort into learning. Students should let teachers or parents know if they are struggling.
- Take care of school property. Use books, equipment, and facilities appropriately. Keep the campus clean. They should also respect classmates' belongings.
- Uphold academic integrity. Do their own work and be honest. (See Academic Honesty section above.)
- Seek help when needed. If students feel unsafe, bullied, or have a personal issue, we expect them to reach out to a teacher, counselor, or trusted adult. We are here to help.

By understanding their rights and responsibilities, students help make our school a happy and safe place for everyone. These principles are frequently discussed in class and assemblies so that they are clear.

### **Behavioral Expectations and School Agreements**

We believe that teachers have a right to teach and students have a right to learn in an environment free of disruption. Everyone at Verita is expected to act with courtesy and consideration for others at all times. To make our expectations concrete, we have a simple Code of Conduct that is taught to all students:

**As a member of Verita School:**

- We are good learners and always do our best, so we can be proud of ourselves and our work. (This means staying on task, trying even if something is difficult, and persevering.)
- We listen carefully to others, so we can learn from each other. (No interrupting when someone else is speaking; value others' contributions.)
- We are caring, kind, cooperative, and helpful, to make our school a safe and happy place.

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- We move quietly and calmly around the school, so that we do not disturb others at work and to prevent accidents. (Walk, don't run, in the hallways; keep voices down in the building.)
- We settle disagreements peacefully by talking them out, so that we do not hurt each other. (No fighting – use words or seek an adult's help to resolve conflicts.)
- We take care of our school and equipment, so that we have what we need to learn and can work in a pleasant environment. (No littering, no defacing desks or books, etc.)
- We respect other people's property, so that everyone's belongings are safe. (Do not take or use someone else's items without permission.)

These general rules are discussed and agreed upon as a community. Each class may also create its own classroom rules at the start of the year, phrased in a positive way, in line with the school's code. Teachers post these in the classroom and communicate them to parents. By involving students in rule-making, we foster a sense of ownership and responsibility.

**In Specific Areas:** We have a few additional guidelines for common situations:

- **Hallways:** Walk in an orderly way, keep to the right side, and speak quietly. This ensures we don't disturb classes in session.
- **Lunch Time (Cafeteria or Classroom):** Wash hands before eating. Use indoor voices and remain seated while eating. Be polite to staff and peers; say "please" and "thank you" when receiving food. Eat your own food (don't trade food due to allergy safety). Finish eating before going to play; do not run with food. Clean up your area and throw away trash when finished. If you need to leave the eating area (bathroom, etc.), ask permission so an adult knows where you are.
- **Playground/Park:** Stay in the areas designated by the teacher on duty. Ask an adult if you need to go retrieve a ball outside the area or use the bathroom. Use play equipment properly (go down slides, not up; swing sitting down; etc.) and include others in play. Play fair and be a good sport – games should be fun for everyone. No rough play that could injure (no tackling, no throwing dangerous objects like rocks).
- **General Behavior:** Violence or physical aggression is never allowed. Keep hands and feet to yourself – no hitting, kicking, pushing, or fighting. Use positive language; name-calling, teasing, or bad language is prohibited. Listen to all staff members – not just your teacher; for example, students must obey instructions from playground supervisors, bus drivers, substitute teachers, etc. (they all have the same authority). Show respect for all members of the community – this includes being polite to support staff, office staff, cleaners, canteen workers, and visitors.

We emphasize positive behavior. Students demonstrating excellent conduct, effort, or kindness are often recognized with praise, house points, or certificates at assemblies. We want to “catch students being good” and reinforce those behaviors.

### **Use of Technology**

Technology is a valuable learning tool but must be used responsibly. Our **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)** for IT is signed by all students and parents at the start of the year. Key points include:

- **Personal Devices/Phones:** In Primary School and Years 7-9, students are not allowed to use mobile phones during school hours. If a student carries a phone for after-school contact, it must remain off and in their bag/locker throughout the day. They may only use it after dismissal to call a parent, or in an emergency with a teacher's permission. In Years 10 and above, students are permitted to use phones only during break times and only in appropriate ways. They should never use phones in class unless a teacher has given explicit permission for a learning activity. If these rules are violated, the phone may be confiscated for the day and parents informed.
- **School Devices:** The school provides computers, iPads or other devices for student use in class. These are to be used for educational purposes only. Students should not attempt to access inappropriate websites; all internet use on campus is filtered and monitored by our IT team. Students must not change settings or install software on school devices without permission.
- **Internet Safety:** Students are taught about internet safety and digital citizenship as part of the curriculum. They should never share personal information (address, phone number) online, and should report to a teacher if they encounter something online that makes them uncomfortable. At school, all internet activity is logged – there is no expectation of privacy when using school networks. This is to protect students.
- **Cyberbullying:** Any form of bullying or harassment using technology (social media, messaging, etc.) – whether during school or outside – that affects our students will be taken seriously. Students must refrain from sending mean or inappropriate messages to or about others. Engaging in cyberbullying can lead to the same disciplinary consequences as in-person bullying.
- **ChatGPT and AI:** As mentioned, using AI tools during school assignments is only allowed when a teacher permits it for specific tasks. Students should not use such tools to cheat or plagiarize. Teachers may require students to submit rough drafts or explain their work process to ensure authenticity, especially for older students.
- **Photographs and Recording:** Students should not take photos or videos of others at school without permission. It is against school rules to photograph or record someone

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(student or teacher) in school and especially to post any such content online without explicit consent from the individuals and the school. (This is to protect privacy. The school itself will take photos during events for official use, with respect to those who opt out.) Students are also not allowed to upload images or videos of other students to the internet/social media without parental permission for those students.

Our IT team monitors all school accounts and internet traffic for safety. If a student misuses technology or violates the AUP, consequences range from loss of device privileges to further disciplinary action depending on severity.

**Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Program:** In Y6 and secondary school, we operate a BYOD program where students bring a personal laptop or tablet for learning. If so, guidelines will be given (e.g. required specifications, when devices may be used). BYOD devices are only to be used under teacher direction in class – at other times they should be closed. All the same rules about internet use and software apply to personal devices on campus. The school provides secure WiFi; students may not use personal hotspots or circumvent the school network.

By following these technology rules, we ensure a digitally safe environment for everyone.

## **Health and Safety Policies**

We treat student health and safety with the utmost importance. Below are key policies related to health services, illness, medication, and overall campus safety.

### **Health Services and Medical Policy**

**On-Site Nurse:** Verita has a qualified school nurse on staff (or on call) to handle illnesses or injuries that occur during the school day. Parents must complete a Health Form for each child at enrollment, detailing medical history, allergies, and emergency contact numbers. Please update the school if there are changes to your child's health or new allergies/conditions develop. The nurse maintains health records and may request updated immunization records or medical check-ups as needed.

If a student feels unwell or is injured at school, they will be sent to the nurse. The nurse will evaluate and provide first aid or care as appropriate. Minor issues (small cuts, mild headaches) will be treated and the child can return to class. For anything significant, the nurse will document the incident and inform parents. If a child must go home due to illness, the nurse or office will contact the parent/guardian to pick the child up early. If a child has a fever,

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severe pain, or possibly contagious condition, they will be kept comfortable in the infirmary room until a parent arrives.

**Illness Policy – When to Stay Home:** To prevent spread of illness, please keep your child at home if they are sick. Here are general guidelines on common illnesses (follow these minimum exclusion periods before returning to school):

- **Fever:** Must be fever-free (below 37.5°C/99.5°F) for at least 48 hours without medication before returning. If your child has a significant fever one day, keep them home for at least the next two days fever-free.
- **Diarrhea and/or Vomiting:** Keep home for 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or loose stool. These bugs are highly contagious, so we enforce the 2-day rule.
- **Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye):** If eyes are red with discharge (“gunky”), keep home. They may return 24 hours after starting treatment (antibiotic drops) and once discharge has cleared.
- **Coughs/Colds:** Minor cough or cold is okay for school if the child feels well enough to participate. If a cough is severe, persistent, or accompanied by difficulty breathing, see a doctor and keep the child home until improved. “Bad” colds (very runny nose, heavy cough, lethargy) warrant at least a day or two of rest at home. When in doubt, seek medical advice.
- **Sore Throat:** If it’s just a mild sore throat with no fever, the child can attend. If strep throat is diagnosed, they need at least 24-48 hours on antibiotics and no fever before return.
- **Rash:** Any unexplained rash should be checked by a doctor. Do not send a child with a rash until a doctor confirms it’s not contagious. A note from the doctor may be required to return, stating the rash is not contagious or the child has been treated.
- **Chicken Pox:** Keep home until all chickenpox lesions have scabbed over and no new spots appear – usually about 7-10 days from onset.
- **COVID-19:** (If still applicable) Follow current public health guidelines. Usually requires isolation for a set number of days and symptom improvement. The school will communicate any special COVID policies separately if needed.

If your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness (flu, strep, COVID, chicken pox, etc.), please inform the school nurse. This helps us alert other parents to watch for symptoms if necessary (no names are shared, just the class may be informed “a case of X was reported”).

**Illness at School:** If a child becomes ill during the day (fever, vomiting, etc.), we will call parents to collect them.

**Important:** If your child is sent home by the nurse due to illness, they may not return the next day; they should stay home until fully recovered (and meet the above criteria). A child

must be symptom-free for 24 hours (or 48 hours for some symptoms as above) before coming back.

**Doctor's Notes:** If a child is absent for more than 3 consecutive days due to illness, a doctor's note or certificate stating they are fit to return is required. Also, if a child returns with any limitations (e.g. no PE due to injury), please provide a doctor's note with details.

**Medication Administration:** Our policy on medicines in school is cautious. Whenever possible, we ask that medications be given at home (e.g., a three-times-a-day antibiotic can often be given before school, after school, and at bedtime). However, if it is necessary for a student to take medicine during school hours, the following applies:

- **Permission and Instructions:** Parents must complete and sign a Medication Permission Form (available from the nurse or admin) detailing the name of the medication, dose, and time it should be given. This form, and the medication, should be delivered to the nurse or homeroom teacher by the parent (or a responsible adult). Students should not keep medication in their bags (exceptions below).
- **Packaging:** Medication must be in its original container/package with the pharmacy label or manufacturer label intact, clearly showing the student's name (for prescribed meds), medication name, and dosage instructions. We cannot accept loose pills in baggies, for example.
- **Who Administers:** The school nurse (or a trained designated staff member) will administer the medication per instructions. A record will be kept each time medicine is given, noting date/time and by whom. We will generally not administer the first dose of a new medication at school – the first dose should be given at home in case of any reaction.
- **Self-Carry Meds:** Only in special cases may a student carry their own medication, such as an asthma inhaler or EpiPen for severe allergy. In these cases, parents must still inform the school and ideally provide a backup to keep with the nurse. Asthma inhalers are kept in a secure but accessible place (often with the student or teacher) because quick access may be needed. All staff are trained in how to help a child use an inhaler or EpiPen if needed.
- **Long-term Medications:** If a child requires daily or emergency medication on a long-term basis (like an inhaler, insulin, etc.), parents should meet with the nurse to complete a Health Care Plan. This will outline what the school needs to do, signs to watch for, etc., and include a consent form similar to the above. Any special training for staff (e.g. using an insulin pen) will be arranged, with parents potentially covering the cost of outside training if necessary.

All medications are stored securely in the nurse's office (usually in a locked cabinet or refrigerator if needed) and are kept out of students' reach.

At the end of the school year (or end of treatment), parents should collect any remaining medicine; we will dispose of unclaimed medications safely.

**Important:** Our staff will not administer the first dose of any new medication to a child. The first dose should always be given by parents at home to monitor for any adverse reaction. This is especially true for antibiotics or any potent drugs.

**Allergy and Anaphylaxis:** For students with severe allergies (e.g. peanuts, bee stings) that could cause anaphylactic shock, parents must provide the school with the necessary emergency medication (typically two EpiPens). These are stored strategically – often one in the nurse’s office and one in the child’s classroom or carried by the homeroom teacher during transitions. All staff receive annual training on recognizing anaphylaxis and administering an EpiPen. We also have specific protocols for students with epilepsy or other conditions that might require urgent response, worked out with those families.

**Chronic Conditions:** If your child has a chronic condition like asthma, diabetes, or epilepsy, please ensure we have an action plan on file. For asthma, children who are mature enough can self-carry and use inhalers with permission; otherwise inhalers are kept with the teacher or nurse and given as needed. For diabetes, arrangements will be made for blood sugar checks and insulin if applicable – this is handled on a case-by-case basis with input from the child’s doctor. For epilepsy, staff will be informed how to recognize a seizure and what steps to take (and not to take) according to the doctor’s advice.

**We ask for partnership:** parents should keep us updated, and in turn we will communicate any health incidents at school. For any significant injury (a hard bump to the head, a deep cut, etc.), the nurse will notify parents immediately by phone. For minor first aid (a scraped knee), we may simply send a note or inform at pick-up.

### **Sickness Guidelines for Parents**

Children commonly catch illnesses, and while most are minor, it’s important to know when to keep your child at home to rest and recover, both for their sake and to avoid spreading germs. Below is a summary of guidelines (some we covered above) for reference:

- **Fever:** Keep home until fever-free for 48 hours without medicine.
- **Vomiting/Diarrhea:** Keep home until 48 hours after the last vomit or loose stool. Ensure your child is hydrated and can keep food down before returning.
- **Flu:** Keep home until fully recovered (usually at least 3-5 days). Influenza can make a child very weak; they should return only when fever is gone and energy has returned.

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- **Conjunctivitis:** May return 24 hours after starting treatment and when eyes are no longer discharging.
- **Unexplained Rash:** See a doctor; return with a doctor's note confirming it's not contagious (e.g. heat rash) or after treatment has begun for contagious rashes (like 24h on medication for impetigo, or after chickenpox lesions scab over).
- **Stomach Ache:** If severe pain or combined with other symptoms, keep home and possibly consult a doctor (could be appendicitis or something requiring attention). Mild belly ache from anxiety or minor indigestion is okay if the child feels up to school.
- **Head Lice:** If lice are detected, the child should begin treatment (medicated shampoo) before returning, and all nits (eggs) should be diligently combed out over a few days. We have a nit-free policy, so after treatment, the nurse will check the child's hair before clearing to return. We will inform the class anonymously if a case of lice is found so other parents can check heads.

**We follow the principle:** "If your child is too sick to fully participate in school (including PE and outdoor play), they should stay home." Please do not give a sick child fever-reducing medicine and send them to school; as soon as it wears off, the fever (and contagiousness) returns. It's better for them to rest and recover properly.

## **Safety and Security**

Safety of students on campus and during school activities is a top priority. Here are key aspects of our safety policy:

**Campus Security:** Our school campus is gated and monitored by security personnel and cameras. All visitors (including parents who come during school hours) must check in at the Reception Desk at the main entrance, sign in, and wear a visitor badge. Parents dropping off items or picking up children outside regular times should not go directly to classrooms – always stop at Reception and the staff will assist you. Unidentified individuals will be questioned by security. We instruct students not to open gates or doors for anyone – only staff handle that.

During the school day, all gates remain closed and a guard or receptionist manages entry. Students are not permitted to leave the campus on their own during school hours. If a parent needs to collect a student early, they must inform the office and sign the child out (as noted in Daily Life).

**Pick-up Authorization:** The school will only release students to their parents or legal guardians, or to individuals whom the parents have officially designated. If someone else will

regularly pick up your child (e.g. a driver, babysitter, grandparent), you must provide their details in writing to the school office. We may request a copy of their ID for our records. If an unexpected person is picking up (e.g. another child's parent, or an aunt visiting town), and notify the office via phone/email with the person's name. That person should have an ID when they arrive. This is to ensure children go with the correct person. If there's any custody consideration (e.g. one parent is not allowed to pick up), please provide legal documentation and clear instructions to the school. We will strictly adhere to court orders regarding custody.

**Parent/Guardian Absence:** If both parents will be out of town and another adult is responsible for the child, inform the school in writing, including dates and the temporary guardian's contact information. We need to know who to contact in case of emergency and who has authority to make decisions if parents are away.

**Emergency Drills:** The school conducts regular emergency drills for different scenarios, including fire drills, earthquake drills, and lockdown drills. All students and staff participate and are taught the proper procedures. For example, in fire/evacuation drills, students learn to exit the building quietly and quickly to a designated assembly point where attendance is taken. In earthquake drills, students practice "drop, cover, and hold on" under desks and then evacuate once shaking stops. Lockdown drills prepare for an intruder or other threat – students practice moving to a secure location, staying silent and out of sight. While we hope to never face real emergencies, these drills ensure everyone knows what to do and can stay safe. If an actual emergency occurs, the school will notify parents as soon as is feasible once students are secure.

**General Safety Rules:** Students are instructed in everyday safety: do not run in hallways, use equipment properly, no rough play, report any hazards (like spilled water or broken glass) to a teacher immediately. We maintain the school facilities to be safe – for instance, we have regular inspections of playground equipment and electrical systems. Hazardous materials (like science lab chemicals) are stored securely and only used under supervision.

We also emphasize personal safety. Students should not talk to strangers around the school premises, and if someone they don't know approaches them on the way to or from school, they should report it to a school official or their parents. We encourage the buddy system – especially for younger children moving around the campus – and staff are always monitoring common areas during transitions and breaks.

**Pick-up/Drop-off Traffic:** For families who drive, please follow the traffic flow rules around the school. Use the designated drop-off zone if one is established, and do not park in no-parking areas or neighbors' driveways. Drive slowly and cautiously near the school. If your

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child uses the school bus service (if offered), they must follow the bus rules (stay seated with seatbelt, no distracting the driver, polite behavior). A bus monitor or driver will ensure younger students are met by an adult at their stop.

**School Bus (if applicable):** The bus service has its own guidelines. Generally, parents or a designated adult should be at the stop to meet young children. Bus students must abide by the Code of Conduct on the bus as it is an extension of school; any misbehavior (standing while bus is moving, disrespect, etc.) will be reported and can result in losing bus privileges.

**Emergency Communication:** In the event of a serious emergency (for example, a lockdown or an evacuation to an alternate site), parents will be alerted via our emergency SMS system and/or email. It's crucial that the school has up-to-date contact information for all parents (mobile numbers, emails). If your contact info changes, notify the office immediately. We also require at least one emergency contact person on file (someone local, like a relative or friend, who can be reached if parents are unavailable).

If we ever have to close the school unexpectedly (e.g. severe weather, utility outage), you will be informed through the same channels. In such cases, information about continuity of learning (like temporary online classes or makeup days) will be communicated.

### **Personal Property and Lost & Found**

Students are responsible for their personal belongings. We strongly recommend that all items brought to school – jackets, sweaters, backpacks, lunch boxes, water bottles, etc. – be labeled with the student's name. This greatly increases the chance of lost items being returned.

The school is not liable for personal items that go missing. Students are advised not to bring valuable items or large sums of money to school. This includes expensive electronics, jewelry, special toys, or collections. If such items are needed for a project or event, arrangements should be made with the teacher. Mobile phones, if brought, must be kept off and away (as noted in Tech policy). Other electronics like tablets or smartwatches should not be brought unless explicitly allowed for educational use.

If an item is lost, students should check the Lost and Found area located near the main entrance (or another designated spot announced by the school). Found items that have names on them are returned directly to the owner. Unnamed items are stored in **Lost & Found**. We periodically display Lost & Found contents (at parent events or end of term) to be

claimed. Unclaimed articles will be donated to local charities after ample time, usually at winter break and end of year.

Students should not borrow without permission or tamper with others' property. If a student is found in possession of another student's item without permission, it will be treated as a disciplinary matter – possibly as theft if intentioned – and parents will be involved. We foster an environment where students respect each other's belongings. Likewise, damage to another's property (accidental or intentional) should be reported and restitution made as appropriate.

### **Student Discipline Procedures**

Despite clear expectations, children do sometimes misbehave. Our approach to discipline is guided by the philosophy of being “firm, fair, and caring.” We believe misbehavior is often a learning opportunity – the consequence should be related to the behavior and delivered with empathy, not intimidation or anger.

**Minor Infractions:** These might include things like interrupting class, running in the halls after reminders, minor disobedience, or a first instance of teasing. Teachers handle minor issues on the spot, usually by redirecting the child, giving a reminder or warning, or having a quick one-on-one chat. The teacher may assign a brief time-out or ask the student to reflect on their behavior (e.g. fill out a “think sheet” about what rule was broken and how to fix it). Teachers use professional discretion to decide if parents are notified for minor incidents; often, a pattern of repeated minor infractions will prompt communication home.

**Repeated or Significant Infractions:** If a student repeatedly breaks rules or commits a more serious misbehavior (like blatant defiance, bullying language, or minor physical scuffles), the issue escalates. Typically:

- On a 2nd occurrence of the same issue, or if it's significant, the teacher informs the parents and may involve the Deputy Head or Divisional Head. The incident is documented in the student's file. The student might lose a privilege (e.g. miss part of recess to complete work or have a behavior reflection).
- For a 3rd occurrence or any severe situation, the student is referred directly to the School Leadership (Divisional Head or Head of School). A meeting with the student and leadership occurs, parents are contacted for a conference, and a formal consequence is given.

**Examples of Logical Consequences:** If a student misuses an object (say, throws a rock at recess), the logical consequence might be losing the privilege to play freely in that area for a

time and having to help clean the playground (to understand responsibility). If a student writes on a desk, they will be asked to help clean it. If homework is not done due to procrastination, they might complete it during part of lunch under supervision. We aim for consequences that fit the behavior and help the child learn.

**Behavior Contracts:** For students who struggle with ongoing behavior issues, the school counselor or Divisional Head may implement a behavior support plan or contract. This involves setting specific goals (e.g. “use polite language” or “keep hands to self”) and tracking them daily, with rewards for success. Parents, student, and staff all agree on the plan.

**Serious Misconduct:** Certain actions are considered serious and will result in immediate administrative involvement. These include but are not limited to: fighting or intentionally harming another student, bullying/harassment, theft or vandalism of property, bringing a prohibited item (weapon, drugs, etc.), gross disrespect or defiance toward staff, or any behavior that severely disrupts the learning environment.

For serious cases, possible consequences (depending on severity and context) are:

- **Suspension:** The student is temporarily removed from school. We have in-school suspension (the student attends school but does not attend regular classes; instead they complete work in a designated area under supervision) or out-of-school suspension (the student stays home for a day or a few days). Suspension is meant as a clear signal that the behavior is unacceptable and must change. Parents will meet with the school and often a re-entry plan is made to support better behavior going forward.
- **Expulsion (Exclusion):** This is permanent removal from the school and is extremely rare. Expulsion would be considered for very severe cases such as dangerous violence, repeated bullying despite interventions, drug distribution, or any criminal act, or if a student’s behavior consistently and gravely violates the school’s standards with no improvement. Before expulsion, there is typically a hearing with the Head of School, leadership team, the student, and parents. The Head of School and Senior Leadership Team would review the case. The Head of School has authority to make the final decision on expulsion. We hope never to reach this stage, and will have exhausted other supports first.

**Suspension Policy:** If a student is suspended (in or out of school), they are expected to complete all classwork and homework they miss. Suspensions are noted in the student’s file. Multiple suspensions can jeopardize a student’s re-enrollment for the next year. Our policy states that a student with 20 or more unexcused absences (which could accrue if suspended out of school repeatedly) may not be promoted or guaranteed a place the next year.



**Parental Involvement in Discipline:** We view parents as partners. If a child is struggling with behavior, we will communicate early and work together on strategies for consistency between home and school. We ask that parents support the school's consequences (for example, if a student is suspended out of school, that it's treated seriously at home as well). Conversely, if behavior issues seem to stem from an underlying issue (learning difficulty, emotional distress, etc.), we ask parents to share insights so we can address root causes, not just symptoms.

**Restorative Practices:** Whenever possible, we incorporate restorative justice principles. This means if one student wrongs another, part of the discipline may involve making amends – a sincere apology, repairing any damage, or doing something positive for the victim. For instance, if a student says hurtful words to another, beyond a punishment, we might have them write a letter of apology and identify 3 compliments or kind things to say to that person. The aim is to heal relationships and teach empathy.

**Note on Special Circumstances:** If a student has identified emotional or behavioral disorders, the approach to discipline may be adjusted according to their individualized plan. We still hold high expectations, but we will work with specialists to ensure consequences and supports are appropriate to the child's development.

Overall, our disciplinary approach can be summed up as “kind but firm.” We care about the student and understand mistakes happen, but we will hold them accountable for learning from those mistakes. Parents can expect to be kept informed and involved when necessary, and students can expect that rules will be enforced fairly and consistently.

Complete details of discipline procedures can be found in the school's Primary and Secondary Behaviour Policies.

## 7. Technology and Safety Policies

(This section combines remaining policies on student technology use and additional safety/security guidelines not covered elsewhere.)

### Internet and Digital Citizenship

All members of the Verita community must use technology in a safe, ethical, and responsible manner. We expect students to practice good digital citizenship: being safe, respectful, and

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responsible online. The school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) for technology provides detailed rules which students (and parents for younger students) sign at the start of the year.

**Key points of our technology policy:**

- **School Network:** The school's internet is filtered to block inappropriate content. Attempts to bypass filters or access blocked sites are prohibited. All internet use at school can be monitored by IT staff. Students should have no expectation of privacy on school devices or accounts – while we don't spy on students, we can review browsing history or files if there's a concern.
- **Appropriate Content:** Students may not access, display, or share content that is sexually explicit, excessively violent, discriminatory/hate-filled, or otherwise inappropriate for school. This applies to websites, images, videos, music, and games. Even on personal devices using school WiFi, the same rules apply.
- **Communication:** School-provided email or educational platforms (Google Classroom, etc.) are to be used for learning purposes. Tone in electronic communications with teachers or peers should be respectful and school-appropriate.
- **Cyberbullying and Online Conduct:** As noted, any form of bullying or harassment via text, email, or social media that involves our students will be addressed as a disciplinary matter. Students should not engage in spreading rumors, sending nasty messages, or excluding others in online forums/groups. If it happens off-campus but carries into school life, we will intervene.
- **Securly Filter for BYOD:** Students in Year 6 or in Secondary who bring their own computers to school to be able to complete school work must have our Securly Filter installed on their device. This filter allows Verita to ensure their online safety while on the school network. If a parent refuses to install the filter on their child's device, they can request a school owned computer and they must use only that device during school hours.
- **Personal Data Protection:** Students are taught not to share personal information online. They should also not share logins/passwords with friends. Each student is responsible for activity under their account, so passwords must be kept private (except that parents of younger students should know them). If a student believes their account is compromised, they must inform a teacher or IT.
- **Intellectual Property and Piracy:** Students should respect copyright. In practical terms, this means they shouldn't illegally download music/movies on school network, and they should avoid plagiarizing content (as discussed under Academic Honesty). When doing research, they should cite sources. We provide age-appropriate guidance on how to do this.
- **Use of AI Tools:** As mentioned, AI like ChatGPT can be used only with teacher permission for specific educational tasks. Students should not rely on AI to do their thinking for them. We train older students in how to use such tools critically (for example, checking AI output for

accuracy). Misuse (like submitting AI-generated work as their own) has consequences as per Academic Honesty policy.

The first time a student violates the tech rules (minorly, e.g. visiting a blocked game site), the teacher or IT will warn them and log it. Repeated or serious violations will result in loss of computer privileges for a period, parental notification, and possibly additional discipline (e.g. if a student deliberately looked up inappropriate content to show others, that's more serious).

### **Device Care**

Whether using school devices or BYOD, students must care for hardware: use clean hands, no food/drink near computers, handle gently, carry laptops with two hands, and plug/unplug cords carefully. Any damage or issues should be reported immediately rather than hidden. For BYOD, families are responsible for maintenance and insurance of personal devices; the school is not liable for loss or damage though we will aim to provide a secure environment.

No software should be installed on school computers without permission. Students shouldn't change system settings or configurations. If a device is found to have a virus or prohibited software due to misuse, IT will need to service it and the student may face a restriction.

### **Privacy and Media**

The school will often take photos or videos of students during classes or events to document learning and celebrate achievements. These may be used on our website, newsletters, yearbook, or social media. Parents sign a media release (or opt-out) at enrollment. If you do not wish your child to be photographed or featured, make sure you have indicated this on the form; we honor those requests and maintain a list for staff.

**For parents and students:** When at school events, you are welcome to take photos of your own child. If you post pictures on social media that include other students, please be mindful – you should have permission from those students' parents to post. We discourage posting group photos from school unless you are sure others are okay with it.

Students are not allowed to photograph or video others at school without permission. This includes recording teachers. It violates privacy and can be very inappropriate especially if shared. This rule is part of the AUP they sign. If a student is caught secretly recording someone, the device will be confiscated and serious consequences will follow.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

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We have an Emergency Response Plan for various scenarios, including fire, earthquake, lockdown (intruder or threat), severe weather, etc. Key info for parents in emergencies:

- **If we evacuate the building** (for fire, earthquake, etc.), our assembly point is on the school field (or alternate safe open area). If the campus is unsafe, we will evacuate to a designated secondary location (parents will be informed of where that is – e.g. a nearby school or community center). Do not immediately drive to school if you hear of an evacuation; roads need to be clear for emergency vehicles. Wait for instructions; we will let you know where and when to pick up your child.
- **If we lockdown** (for example, a security threat in the neighborhood), the school will secure all doors. During a lockdown, do not come to the school or call your child's mobile (it may compromise safety by making noise). We will communicate when it's safe and how dismissal will work.
- **We conduct at least one drill per term for each main scenario.** After drills, teachers debrief with students to address any fears or questions in an age-appropriate way.

We ask families to also have home emergency plans for things like if school closes early due to snow – make sure your child knows where to go or whom to call if you're not home. Ensure the school has your latest emergency contact who can pick up your child if you are unreachable.

### **Tobacco, Alcohol, and Illegal Substances**

Verita International School is a smoke-free campus for everyone – students, staff, parents, visitors. Smoking and the use of any tobacco or vaping products are not allowed on school grounds or at school events. Students are not allowed to smoke or vape at any time during school or school functions, even off campus. If a student is found with cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes, or any tobacco, they will face disciplinary action and the items will be confiscated. Parents will be notified and the student will undergo counseling about health risks. Repeat offenses could lead to suspension.

Alcohol is of course forbidden for students on campus or at any school event. No student may possess, consume, or be under the influence of alcohol. If this occurs, it is considered very serious. Parents will be called immediately to pick up the student, and the student will face suspension or more severe consequences. The same zero-tolerance applies to illegal drugs or controlled substances. This includes possession or use of marijuana (which is illegal for minors even if decriminalized generally), misuse of prescription drugs, or any narcotics. If a student is found in possession of or clearly under the influence of drugs, the school will

involve the parents and possibly law enforcement if required by law. Expulsion is a likely consequence for distribution of drugs or repeated drug incidents.

We also forbid any look-alike substances or paraphernalia. Students should not bring to school any items that could be perceived as weapons, drugs, or dangerous.

Random bag checks are not a routine practice, but the school reserves the right to search a student's locker or belongings if there is reasonable suspicion of contraband for safety reasons. This would be done in the student's presence with an adult witness.

By adhering to these technology and safety policies, we maintain an environment where students can focus on learning, feel safe, and develop responsible habits that will serve them beyond school.

## 8. Communication and Parental Involvement

Effective communication between home and school is essential for student success. We encourage parents to be involved in the school community and to reach out whenever there's a question or concern. This section explains how we communicate with parents, how parents can communicate with us, and the expected conduct for positive partnerships.

### Channels of Communication

**Contacting Teachers:** Parents can contact teachers in several ways: in person (before or after school hours), by email, or by leaving a message with the school office or, through the Verita portal. Teachers will provide their school email addresses at the start of the year. Please understand that during the school day, teachers are in class and may not see emails until later. We ask that non-urgent communications be via email, which the teacher can respond to within 1-2 working days. Urgent messages (e.g. a change in who is picking up your child that day) should go through the Reception office, which can relay to the teacher promptly.

We do not permit teachers to share personal phone numbers with parents, to maintain professional boundaries and work-life balance. We appreciate your understanding in contacting them through the approved channels.

**School Communication to Parents:** We keep parents informed through:

- **Regular Newsletters:** The school sends out newsletters (via Parent Portal with email notifications) on a regular basis (weekly) with news, important dates, and highlights of school life. Please read these as they contain valuable information.
- **Verita Portal:** Teachers use the Verita portal to post class updates, photos of activities, and quick announcements. Parents are given access so they can see their child's portfolio and class news. In Secondary, teachers typically use email to send class announcements.
- **Direct Emails:** For specific notices (e.g. a field trip form, a change in schedule, an upcoming parent meeting), the school administration or teachers will email the relevant class or group of parents. Please ensure the school has your correct email and check it frequently. If you prefer communications to go to multiple addresses (e.g. both parents), let us know.
- **SMS for Alerts:** For urgent alerts (like sudden school closure or bus delays), we may use SMS to broadcast for parents. These are used sparingly for urgent needs.
- **School Website & Social Media:** General information, calendars, lunch menus, and news updates are also available on our website ([www.veritaschool.ro](http://www.veritaschool.ro)). We have an official Facebook/Instagram page where we post highlights; following those can give you a glimpse into daily activities. However, any critical announcements will be emailed directly, not solely posted on social media.

**Communication Protocol for Concerns:** If you have a concern or question regarding your child's experience:

- 1.** Talk to the teacher first (the person closest to the situation). Whether it's academic progress, a behavior issue, or a peer conflict, the homeroom or subject teacher is usually best positioned to address it. You can arrange a meeting or phone call with them.
- 2.** If that discussion doesn't resolve the matter or you have further concerns, you may then contact the Divisional Head (Head of Primary & EY for primary or EY issues, Head of Secondary for secondary). They can investigate more, mediate, or provide additional support.
- 3.** Finally, if there is a broader issue or policy matter, or you feel it's still unresolved, you can reach out to the Head of School. The Head of School's role is to ensure overall quality and satisfaction. The Head of School or a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team will review any serious complaints in line with our Complaints Procedure.

By following this sequence, we ensure that issues are addressed at the appropriate level and that those directly involved have an opportunity to resolve them. In our experience, most concerns can be amicably resolved with a timely conversation and mutual understanding.

**Availability:** Teachers will let you know their preferred hours for communication. Many are happy to chat briefly at pick-up time if you have a quick question; just be mindful that they are also supervising children at that time. If you need a longer talk, it's better to schedule.

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Divisional Heads, Deputy Heads and the Head of School are available by appointment; you can contact the school office to set up a meeting.

**Office Communication:** For any administrative matters (fees, admissions, bus arrangements, etc.), the school secretaries and administrators are your point of contact. Office hours are typically 8:30–17:00 on school days. You can call the main number (provided at the front of this handbook) for assistance. The office email is school@verita.ro for general inquiries. The parent portal provides essential information on who to contact for different issues.

**Email Etiquette:** When emailing staff, please include your child’s name and class in the subject line for clarity (e.g., “Question about Homework – [Child Name], Year 4”). Allow up to 24-48 hours for a response on weekdays. If something is urgent and you don’t get a quick reply, call the office. Keep emails respectful and concise; we will do the same. Note that teachers are not expected to reply to emails during evenings, weekends, or holidays (except in emergencies). We appreciate your patience.

### **Parental Involvement Opportunities**

We highly value parent involvement. When school and home work together, children benefit. Here are ways to be involved:

- **Workshops and Information Sessions:** The school offers parent workshops on various topics (curriculum information nights, parenting seminars, university counseling sessions for high school parents, etc.). We invite and encourage parents to attend these, as they can be very insightful. For example, we may have an “Understanding the IB Diploma” night, or a session on “Positive Discipline at Home” led by the counselor. These are announced via email/newsletter.
- **Classroom Involvement:** At times, teachers might invite parent helpers for special projects or reading aloud. In Early Years, parents might come in for “Mystery Reader” or to share about their culture or job. If you have time and interest in helping in class or running an after-school club (if you have a particular skill), let the teacher or Divisional Head know. We welcome enrichment contributions. (Parent volunteers working with students will always be under supervision of staff and for certain regular roles may need to undergo a background check, in line with safeguarding best practices.)
- **School Events and Celebrations:** Come to assemblies, school shows, sports days, and exhibitions. Your presence means a lot to the children. We often invite parents to our Friday assemblies or end-of-unit showcases. Also, international parents often help with our International Day by setting up tables of food or artifacts from their country – that’s a fun way to share your heritage.

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- **Feedback and Surveys:** The school may send out parent surveys (perhaps annually) to gauge your satisfaction and gather suggestions. Please take the time to respond – your feedback helps us improve. We also appreciate direct positive feedback when things go well, as it boosts staff morale to know their hard work is appreciated.

### **Parent Code of Conduct**

Just as we have expectations for student behavior and staff code of conduct, we have guidelines for parent behavior to ensure a respectful and safe environment. The vast majority of our parent interactions are wonderful – these guidelines exist so that we have mutual understanding, especially in moments of stress or conflict.

- **Respectful Communication:** Speak to teachers, staff, other parents, and students with respect and courtesy at all times. Shouting, threatening language, or harassment are never acceptable. If you're upset about something, we understand emotions can run high regarding one's child, but please approach discussions calmly or request a mediated meeting if needed. We commit to listening to your concerns attentively; in return, we ask that you communicate those concerns in a civil manner.
- **Appropriate Forum:** If you have a serious complaint about a staff member or policy, address it through the school's channels (meeting or writing to administration) rather than airing grievances on social media or at the school gate. Miscommunication can easily happen in informal gossip. We can resolve issues much better one-on-one.
- **Support for School Policies:** By enrolling your child at Verita, you agree to support the school's policies (even if you might privately disagree with a particular rule, we expect that you will uphold it for the child's sake and the community's consistency). For example, please ensure your child follows the uniform policy and homework expectations, and reinforce the importance of school rules rather than undermining them in front of your child. If you have concerns about a policy, bring it to the leadership in a constructive way for review.
- **Custody and Legal Matters:** Parents should avoid involving the school in any personal disputes. If there is a custody arrangement or restraining order the school needs to know about for child safety, inform the Head of School with official documentation. We will follow legal directives (e.g., only releasing a child to the parent with custody on that day as per a schedule). We will not, however, take sides in personal conflicts or relay messages between feuding parents. Please handle adult conflicts outside of school.
- **Social Media Etiquette:** If you post about the school on social media, we urge you to do so responsibly. Do not post photos of other people's children without permission, and do not use social platforms to slander or complain about specific teachers or students. We have a Complaints Procedure for legitimate issues – social media rants can harm our community



and even be grounds for libel if false information is spread. We do appreciate positive reviews and posts highlighting great experiences!

- **School Grounds Behavior:** When on campus for pickup or events, please model good behavior. For instance, don't crowd classroom doors or hallways during school hours, as it can disrupt classes. If you bring younger siblings to events, supervise them (so they don't wander into off-limits areas or have accidents on equipment meant for older kids). No smoking on school grounds, as stated. And please follow any directions given by staff regarding safety (e.g., in a drill or emergency).

- **Conflict with Other Parents/Students:** If an issue arises between your child and another, do not directly confront someone else's child or parent in anger. First, talk to the teacher. It is not appropriate for a parent to discipline someone else's child on campus. In the case of parent-to-parent disagreements (maybe arising from outside interactions or misunderstandings), seek resolution privately or with mediation – do not engage in arguments at school or at school events. Our community is diverse and there may be differing opinions; maintaining basic respect is key.

The school reserves the right to bar a parent from the premises or school events if their behavior seriously violates these expectations or threatens the safety or well-being of staff or students. We never want to do that, and it has never been needed in our experience, but it's important to state. We are fortunate to have a very involved and supportive parent body and we aim to keep that relationship strong.

### **School-Home Partnership**

In conclusion, we believe that a strong partnership with open, honest communication is the foundation for your child's success. We ask that parents:

- Stay informed (read the emails, check the calendar).
- Attend parent meetings and conferences.
- Share relevant information with us (for example, if something significant is happening at home that could affect your child's mood or performance, let the counselor or teacher know in confidence – e.g., a family illness, or a change in living situation). We can better support your child with that context.
- Reinforce the importance of education by showing interest in what your child is learning, celebrating their efforts, and maintaining routines that support schooling (adequate sleep, nutritious breakfast, a quiet place for homework).

We in turn commit to keeping you informed about your child's progress, contacting you promptly if issues arise, and welcoming you into the learning process. By working together,

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we create the “Verita Family” – a community dedicated to the growth and well-being of our students.

Thank you for taking the time to read this comprehensive Parent Handbook. It contains the collective details from various school documents and policies, unified to give you a clear guide. Please keep it for reference throughout the year. We are excited to partner with you for a successful and enriching school experience!

*Please note: The school reserves the right to amend the Parent Handbook and any other School Policies at any time if needed. Any new policies introduced during the school year will be considered an addendum to this Handbook.*

*Created and Reviewed by: Senior Leadership Team  
Policy Category: Governance  
Next Review: Aug 2025*