



SAHEL ACADEMY PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK



SIM BP 10065 Niamey, Niger
info@sahelacademy.com
20.31.53.86
- www.sahelacademy.com -

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The School

Sahel Academy was established in 1986 in Niamey, Niger Republic to meet the educational needs of SIM families. At present the school has SIM students not only from Niger but also from other West African countries as well as students from other missions and organizations. The school property is located across the Niger River from the main part of the city of Niamey. At present, buildings consist of the library, secondary block, (including computer and science labs), dining room and kitchen, elementary classrooms and a dorm which houses up to 18 residents. Facilities for recreation include a soccer field, an enclosed court for basketball, volleyball, tennis, etc., and a playground area.

Curriculum

Each year there are at least ten countries represented among the 70+ students. To cater to this divergent student body, Sahel is continuing to develop an international curriculum for Grades K - 12.

The elementary school encompasses **Grades K - 6** (approximately ages 5-12) with two grades per classroom, except for Kindergarten. Its curriculum covers all core subjects plus Bible, French, Physical Education and Music.

Grades 7 & 8, (ages 12-14) are considered part of the secondary school. The curriculum includes basic subjects as well as Art, Music, and French.

In **Grades 9 & 10**, students follow curriculum from the University of Cambridge, England, which prepares them to take examinations for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). Passing these exams gives students from England, and several other countries, the recognition needed before entering the final years of secondary school in their homelands. This qualification is being recognized increasingly in the United States. The emphasis is on study skills, problem solving and critical thinking.

Courses in **Grades 11 & 12** will prepare students for future studies.

Sahel Academy is also a testing site for the Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT) which are college entrance exams for students from the U.S. and Canada. The next testing dates are: November 3rd and May 3rd. Registration booklets will be available at Sahel but students are responsible for their own registrations.

School Year

Sahel Academy opens in mid-August, and closes in mid-June. There are breaks in October, at Christmas and at Easter.

Enrollment Procedures

Sahel Academy is a SIM school, which welcomes students from other organizations and local families as part of the student population. SIL, EBM & CRC have an agreement with Sahel and have priority after SIM in the matter of enrollment. It is strongly recommended that applications for the coming year be made prior to March 1st. Parents who wish to enroll their children are required to abide by the policies stated in this handbook.

Noon Meals and Snacks

Some semesters the school is able to offer prepared lunches. When students bring their own lunches they may be refrigerated in the dining room. At present this doesn't apply to mid-morning snacks.

Transportation

Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of parents. Students should be picked up immediately after the close of school in the afternoon. There will be a staff member on grounds duty until 3:00pm but elementary students who are not dependent on transport with secondary students should leave at 2:30 pm. Only students who have supervised school activities or have been invited by dorm students should remain after this time.

Student Drivers

Students who have a Nigerian driver's license, may drive onto the school property, being careful to observe the 20km/h speed limit. Motorbikes and cars must be parked in the area designated for parking.

Students are not permitted to drive for school related functions.

School Supplies



Parents are requested to provide the following supplies. Students should bring these on the first day of school. **Please mark everything with the student's name using permanent marker.**

Grades 1 & 2

plastic cup, pencil case, 6 lead pencils (2B), crayons, glue, tissues, scissors, large eraser, ruler (with inches and cm.), 2 pocket folders

Grades 3 & 4

plastic cup, 10 lead pencils, 3 red pens, 5 blue or black ball point pens, 2 large erasers, pencil sharpener, coloured pencils, crayons, felt-tipped markers, pencil case or space marker, pair of scissors, glue, scotch tape, ruler (with cm and inches), tissues

Grades 5 & 6

plastic cup, 10 lead pencils, 5 blue or black ball point pens, coloured pencils, felt-tipped markers, scissors, glue, ruler with cm and inches, 4 pocket folders, protractor and compass, tissues, towel for showering after PE

Secondary Students

plastic cup (personalized), all basic stationery items including pens, pencils, ruler, highlighters, erasers, geometry set and scientific calculator; planner/diary/agenda; towel for showering after PE.

Secondary students are required to have six ring- binders (preferably 2 or 4 rings), plus lined paper. For Math, students will need either two 5mm square graph books or 5mm square loose-leaf paper. Please note that regular lined paper isn't available in Niamey but it is possible to buy the French style paper which is quite acceptable. Binders (1000cfa) and planners/diaries/agendas (2000cfa) will be on sale at school on the morning of August 13th.

Fees

Fees for tuition and room and board are to be paid at the beginning of each semester. These may be paid at the SIM headquarters or at the school Business Office. The school will charge SIM and member mission families. Other families will be directly invoiced.

As financial planning and purchasing for the school year begins before school opens and is based on parents' requests for enrollment, a full refund cannot be made to parents withdrawing their children after the term begins. The School Board has set the following policy:

“Tuition: 50% refundable for children withdrawn within the first 30 days after the commencement of the semester. After 30 days, no further refund will be given.”

“Boarding fees: 50% refundable for children withdrawn within the first 30 days after the commencement of the term; 25% refundable up to 60 days. After 60 days no further refund will be given.

Permission Slips

Permission slips will be sent home in the first week of school, requesting permission for students to participate in excursions during the year. Information regarding planned field trips will be sent well beforehand.

Student Attendance, Absences and Late Arrivals

Parents are asked to notify the Principal in advance if they know their child will be absent for even part of a day or notify the school by 7:25am on the day of an unanticipated absence. This may be by phone or through a note sent to the school. Students who know they will be absent should collect work from the teachers prior to the absence.

It is expected that a student will make up missed work as quickly as possible. Where necessary for each day absent a student will have two days to make up the work missed. Work submitted after that time may not be accepted unless the student has previously arranged with the teacher.

On the day that a student is absent, a form will be sent home listing the homework for the day as well as any other requirements. It is the student's responsibility to negotiate or confer with individual teachers regarding the work that has been missed.

Late arrival to classes distracts from the learning opportunities of all who are participating in the class. Students who arrive late will be penalized by detention and ultimately by grade reduction.

If a student is absent for more than 10 classes in any given subject during a semester, an academic penalty may be applied (up to one letter grade reduction) which may put the student's course credit at risk.

Sign-out Book

This book is located on the desk outside the Principal's office. If a student needs to leave the campus before the end of the day or for part of a day due to illness or an

appointment, details must be entered into the book and it should be signed prior to departure and again on return. Staff must be notified of the student's intentions.

Travel Arrangements

Parents are encouraged to plan travel times to fit in with the school calendar. However, if an early departure is unavoidable, parents are requested to give 4-6 weeks notice of their intentions and to meet with the Principal to discuss arrangements for the completion of work and the scheduling of exams. There will be 2 main options:

1. the student will accept a zero for remaining work and exams or
2. the student will complete work and exams by email and will negotiate with teachers before departure regarding oral / practical assessment.

Illness

If a student becomes ill at school, the Principal will contact the parents. In very serious cases the student will be taken immediately to a doctor and the parents contacted regarding the situation. Parents will be responsible for any medical expenses incurred.

Medication

Parents are requested to complete the permission slip provided by the school.

School Closures

It should be noted that Sahel Academy is closed for the Islamic holidays of Ramadan Fete and Tabaski . The school calendar should be consulted for any other scheduled holidays.

Unexpected school closures are generally of two kinds:

- holidays called by the government to commemorate a special event;
- American Embassy warnings issued a day in advance due to civil unrest or other potentially dangerous situations.

Parents will be notified by phone in the event of other situations arising.

Dress Code



The following code is to ensure the modesty, neatness, safety and comfort of students during school hours and for all activities in which the students represent the school. Different styles of dress may be required for excursions off campus.

- Shoes are to be worn at all times on school property. Shoes having or needing laces must be tied. Going bare foot or in sox is not permitted.
- For safety reasons **elementary students** must wear footwear that fastens to the foot. (This means no flip-flops).
- Secondary students may wear slip-on footwear; all footwear should be neat and tidy.
- Girls' clothing should be modest in length and style. Girls may wear skirts, dresses or culottes, while both boys and girls may wear long pants, jeans or shorts.
- Students in K-4 may wear clothing that is 2/3 of the way from the crotch to the knee. For other students, clothing should be at least knee length. This

includes splits in skirts and dresses. PE shorts must cover at least 3/4 of the leg from crotch to knee.

- Spaghetti straps and clothing that reveals any areas of the waist or upper body (cleavage) is not permitted. The midriff must be covered at all times (even when the arms are raised)
- Tight fitting clothes of any kind are considered unacceptable for both boys and girls.
- Boys' shirts must have sleeves.
- Underwear should not be seen. Pants for boys and girls must be worn so that underwear does not show at any time, even when sitting.
- Clothing should be neat and clean. It should not have stains or holes or drag on the ground. Students are strongly encouraged to wear a hat outdoors but are not permitted to wear hats indoors. If hats are worn inside they will be confiscated.
- For PE and work-related activities students should wear appropriate footwear and dress as required by the supervisor.

It is primarily the responsibility of the parents to ensure that the dress code is followed. If a student chooses to wear clothing or footwear that is outside the guidelines, alternate clothing will be provided at school. If, over a period of time, a student does not respond to repeated requests for conformity to the rules, parents will be contacted and the student may be required to go home.

Playground Rules

These are designed for the students' safety.

- Slingshots, BB guns and other such items are not permitted on campus.
- Elementary students must play only in the designated areas: the playground, the court and the old soccer field.
- Playing tag on the platform is not permitted.
- Students may not climb trees or play games involving the use of sticks.
- Swings: Standing on swings, jumping off swings and twisting the chains is not allowed
- Only five students are allowed on the platform at a time.
- Only one person is permitted on the rope swing at a time.
- Balls are not permitted on the grass area between the secondary and elementary classrooms.


Elementary school children are not permitted in the school buildings during recess times.

Use of Sahel Facilities

Computers: Responsible students may use the computer lab during study halls or after school in the following situations:

- to complete school assignments
- when permission has been given by a staff member
- when a staff member is available to supervise.

At all times, these rules apply:

- Students and parents will be required to  sign an agreement for responsible use of the Computer Lab.
- Students are not permitted to install or play music or games on computers.
- No food or drink is allowed in the Computer Lab.

- A charge of 50cfa per page will be made for printing.
- Students will be permitted to access email during recess and lunch times only – not before or after school.

Dormitory: The Dorm is not a public area of the school compound. It is a private home and should be treated accordingly. Students are **not** permitted in the Dorm during school hours.

Use of school facilities / rentals

Requests for the use of school facilities for any function outside of school hours must be made in advance and be approved by the Sahel Director.

Library

Students may borrow **4 books** at a time for up to **2 weeks**. At a teacher’s request, additional books may be taken out for research purposes. Students are permitted to take 6 books during the Christmas and Easter holidays. It is requested that the books are kept at home and not taken on family vacations.

Fines will be charged for overdue books and the privilege of borrowing suspended until the fines are paid. Parents will be requested to pay for lost or damaged books. (This also applies to textbooks on loan to students.) Report cards will not be issued to students who have fines outstanding.

Please note that books with a red dot are recommended for Grades 7+ and books with black dots are recommended for reading for Grades 11 & 12 students only, due to content.

Note: Elementary children are allowed in the Library only when someone is there to supervise. Due to the computerization of the library, individuals will no longer be able to check out books on their own. The library will be locked when there is no-one on duty in the library.

Memory Verses

Bible verses are chosen relating to the lessons being taught. The number of verses will be appropriate to students’ ages. Students will be given the list of verses for the whole year. It is imperative for parents to work with students on the verses each week!

Teachers will test the students weekly on the assigned verses. Students will be tested at the end of each quarter on all the verses current to that point.

Elementary students will recite the entire year’s work at the end of the year; secondary students may either write or recite their verses for the year. Certificates will be awarded:

Zero errors	Highest Honors
1-10 errors	High Honors
11-35 errors	Honors

Homework

Students in kindergarten, first, and second grade will be assigned occasional light homework in addition to memory verses and spelling words.

Other elementary students will be assigned homework regularly:

Grade 3/4 – 30 minutes

Grade 5/6 – 45 minutes

Secondary students:

Grades 7&8: 20 minutes per subject per night

Grades 9&10: up to 2 hours

Grades 11&12: 2 - 3 hours.

It should be noted that on many occasions class time is provided for students to commence doing homework.

Semester Exams

As Sahel is an international school, consideration has been given to the standards of countries represented in its student body and a moderate position has been chosen with regard to grading and exams. Some parents may find their children's grades are lower than they would be in their homelands and their end-of-term tests more extensive. Others may find that the reverse is true.

Grades 7 & 8

- The examinations given at the end of each semester will cover the entire semester and count for 15% of the semester grade.

Grades 9 - 12

- The examinations given at the end of each semester will cover the entire semester.
- The semester exams will count as 15% of the semester grade for students in Grades 9 & 10 and 20% for students in Grades 11 & 12.
- Students in grades 11 & 12 who have achieved an A or above (90+) in a course **may** be exempt from the second semester exams in some subject areas.

IGCSE

The results from IGCSE exams will be recorded on report cards as a percentage equivalent and will be included after the results are available in August. This grade will be counted as the semester exam. In the interim, a copy of the report will be issued at the end of the year.

Student Reports

Student Reports are issued twice a year with a Mid-Semester Progress Report being sent home at the end of the 1st and 3rd Quarters; this will be followed by Parent/Teacher interviews. However, parents are urged to contact teachers, particularly if there are questions or concerns that need to be addressed.

Expressing Concerns

The staff of Sahel Academy and the parents of the students are exhorted to follow the Biblical principle of going directly to the person concerned when there is a problem. (Matthew 18:15-17.) If the matter is not resolved, parents are encouraged to speak with those in school administration.

+Survey of World History**Grades 7&8**

Students will get an overview of world history from ancient times to the beginning of the 20th century.

+Geography/W. African History (07) Grades 7&8

Students learn the basic themes of geography and study several regions of the world including Europe and southwest Asia.

English**Grades 7&8**

The emphasis is on communication through language, creative writing, literature and reading. The conventions of English grammar are taught in an integrated way throughout the course.

Math**Grades 7&8**

Grade 7 and Grade 8 are separated for Math. The courses follow the Cambridge School Mathematics Project program with the aim of having students ready to start the IGCSE Math course in Grade 9. The program covers a broad range of topics including number, algebra, statistics and geometry.

+ NT Bible (07)**Grades 7&8**

The year's focus is a survey of the New Testament.

+ OT Bible**Grades 7&8**

The focus of this year is Old Testament survey.

*** Coordinated Science*****Physical Science****Grade 9****Credit: 1**

This course covers topics outlined in the IGCSE curriculum including: the nature of matter, atoms, elements and compounds, stoichiometry, chemical reactions, acids, bases and salts, the periodic table, metals, air and water, organic chemistry.

Biology*Grade 10****Credit: 1**

This course covers the major areas of biological sciences such as microbiology, plants, animals, ecology, and the human body. Laboratory periods provide "hands on" activities and demonstrations.

+ Sociology*Grades 9&10****Credit: 1**

This introductory course covers sociological perspectives on race, class, age, gender, family, and deviance.

+ 20th Century History (07)*Grades 9&10****Credit: 1**

This course covers some of the major international issues of the twentieth century in preparation for the IGCSE exam. Some topics of study include the First World War, international relations League of Nations, The Cold War, Communism, Russia, Japan, and Germany.

+ Literature (07)*Grades 9&10****Credit: 1**

This course covers novels, poetry, and drama selections required by IGCSE. There is extended focus on understanding and writing about literature. The major text includes a wide variety of literary genres and authors.

+ Government) /& Economics (07) **Grades 11&12** **Credit: 1**
This course covers fundamental economic concept, microeconomics, as well as macroeconomics, institutions, and politics. In the civics portion, the course deals with the emergence and structure of the national government, as well as politics and elections (US and Canada).

+ World Literature **Grades 11&12** **Credit: 1**
This course covers literature thematically using literary works from ancient to modern times, as well as from different cultures. The emphasis is on learning to analyze and write about literature.

+ British Literature (07) **Grades 11&12** **Credit: 1**
This course covers the total literary spectrum from earliest Anglo-Saxon poets to 20th century writers. Drama, poems, novels, and short stories are all included in the course of study.

Algebra 2 (prerequisite - algebra 1) **Grade 11** **Credit: 1**
This course covers polynomials and polynomial functions, exponential and logarithmic functions, probability and statistics, trigonometric functions and graphs, and operations with numbers, including irrational and complex numbers.

Precalculus (prerequisite–algebra 1) **Grade 12** **Credit: 1**
This course covers polynomial and rational functions, exponential and logarithmic functions, analytic trigonometry and additional topics in trigonometry, matrices and determinants, sequences and probability, topics in analytic geometry.

*** + French Program** **Credit: 1**
The French Program at Sahel Academy has various levels each year according to the proficiency of the students attending and their needs for further instruction.

All students in **Kindergarten through grade 6** take French four times a week for 30 minutes each day. There are two to three levels within each class grouping. The emphasis in the early grades is on comprehension and oral production while instruction in reading and writing increases with age and progress in fluency.

Students in **grades 7-12** take a placement test upon entering the school to determine the appropriate level. Students in **grades 9-12** must gain two foreign language credits to graduate. The following courses are offered each year at Sahel:

French I This course takes beginners or near beginners to a higher proficiency level in all areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking. This course may be taken over two years according to the rate of progress attained by each student (i.e. French I A and I B).

French II This course takes students to an intermediate level in the areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking. The emphasis is on a growing ability to use a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary to communicate effectively.

French III This course takes students to a high-intermediate level of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Students in this course begin novel

studies. Ninth and tenth graders following this course will be eligible to take the Cambridge IGCSE Exam in French at the beginning of the fourth quarter.

French IV This course takes students to an advanced level of reading, writing, listening and speaking with more emphasis on the literature, culture and history of the French-speaking world.

+ Bible 3 (07)

Grades 11 & 12

Credit: 0.8

This course includes a study of Islam; recognizing false teachings; looking at ethical issues.

+ Bible 4

Grades 11&12

Credit: 0.8

Semester 1: *The Jesus I Never Knew*

Semester 2: This course looks at life-shaping decisions, learning to apply God's word to career planning and continuing to develop a Christian worldview.

Peer Tutoring

Grades 11&12

Credit: 0.8

A limited number of senior students may have the opportunity to operate as a peer tutor and teacher's aide. The course would be of benefit to those senior students interested in exploring career options in teaching, social work and human relations. (Admittance to this course will be subject to approval of the administration and the facilitating teacher).

Physical Education

Grades 7&8

Grades 9-12

Credit: 0.6

Music

Grades 7-12

Computer Studies

Grades 11&12

Students will learn to use common computer applications to accomplish everyday tasks from the education and business worlds.

Independent Study Courses

Under certain conditions, students may apply to do an independent study course. This will be considered only if a student has already completed the course that's offered or needs an alternate course to satisfy graduation requirements. The student and parents involved must enter into a written agreement regarding supervision and marking.

Additional Courses

Each year a number of fine or technical arts subjects are offered sometimes as a course and other times as electives. These may include:

Art	Home Economics
Computer	Music
Drafting	Woodworking
Drama	

The credit given for these courses is dependent on the number of hours completed.

Withdrawal from a course

A student may be allowed to withdraw from a course within the first 5 weeks, only if the course load is too heavy or it is evident that lack of background or ability will prevent success.

General Requirements

Students are expected to take pride in their classrooms, keep lockers clean and tidy and care for the school compound.

Backpacks are to be stored in lockers and not taken to classrooms or left in the corridor. Students will not be permitted to go to lockers during class periods.

Use of portable music playing devices and electronic games is not permitted on campus during school hours (between 7:25am and 3:10p.m). Cell phones will not be permitted in class. Infringement of this rule will result in confiscation.

Food is to be eaten outdoors or in the dining room. Water may be brought to class but must be in a personalized container and the container should not be left in class.

Families that are new to the school will be given a copy of the Child Protection Policy. The signed slip should be returned to the school by the end of the second week.

School Schedule

Elementary:

7:30	Classes begin
9:40 – 10:10	Recess
11:45 – 12:30	Lunch
2:30	School ends

Secondary:

7:25	First bell; students are to be in their classes by the 7:30 bell.
7:30 – 7:38	Homeroom
7:40 – 8:27	Period 1
8:30 – 9:17	Period 2
9:20 – 10:07	Period 3
10:07 – 10:22	Recess Break
10:25 – 11:12	Period 4
11:15 – 12:02	Period 5
12:02 – 12:30	Lunch
12:33 – 1:20	Period 6
1:23 – 2:10	Period 7
2:13 – 3:00	Period 8
3:00	Final bell

