

PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK



Academic Year 2022-2023

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Introduction

In the name of Allah, most Gracious, most Merciful.

All praise is due to Allah, Light of the heavens and the earth, and salutations and blessings be upon Muhammad, the messenger of Allah, and the guide to what pleases Allah most High.

Bayaan Academy is an Online School, with Elementary, Middle, and High School divisions. We are registered with the Maryland Department of Education, and we follow Maryland State's Common Core Standards for curriculum design in Language Arts, Science, Mathematics and Social Studies.

In an effort to cater to the all round development of children, our classes place emphasis on Islamic moral education along with their regular subjects.

The purpose of this handbook is to help students and parents/guardians understand how online schooling with Bayaan Academy will work for them, what to expect and what to be mindful of as the student enrolls with us. In addition to the information in this handbook, parents/guardians are welcome to get in touch with us at contact@bayaanacademy.com for any further queries.

1. Mission:

We provide a holistic, globally accessible, faith-based learning environment taught by experienced teachers. We promote excellence, both in the classroom and beyond.

2. Vision:

An aware, educated, and spiritually rooted global community.

3. Philosophy:

The philosophy of the institute is encapsulated in its name 'Bayaan', an Arabic term which means 'declaration' or 'elucidation'; it holds the connotation of 'making clear', and 'illustrating'. As an Islam-centred institute, Bayaan Academy aims to provide its students with the opportunity to be educated through online, digital technology-based methods of instruction and learning, whilst maintaining a connection with their Muslim identity and morals. The role of the Academy is to provide students with high-quality instruction outside of a physical classroom, in a faith-based environment, where religious approaches to all aspects of education are catered to and encouraged.

Centering on the core values of faithfulness, understanding, mindfulness, dutifulness, and reflectiveness, our institute takes a holistic approach, combining faith with knowledge, cultivating awareness of a need to introspect, and developing a keen sense of our responsibilities toward ourselves and others.

Ultimately, our philosophy culminates in the ability to reflect on ourselves in order to continually strive to achieve our full potential as world citizens. In measuring ourselves as leaders and facilitators using these criteria, we hope that the same values will ripple outwards through the actions of our learners, enabling them to successfully navigate the difficult terrain of the real world with clarity, skill, and confidence.

SECTION A: GENERAL POLICIES

1. Acceptable Use Guidelines:

This document describes the policies and guidelines for the use of the Bayaan Academy program and exists to ensure that all Bayaan Academy students are aware of, and understand, their responsibilities when accessing and using Bayaan Academy resources. Bayaan Academy reserves the right to update or to alter this agreement at any time. Such revisions may substantially alter access to Bayaan Academy instructional computing resources.

Bayaan Academy instructional computing resources include any computer, software or transmission system that is owned, operated or leased by Bayaan Academy. As a parent or guardian of a student enrolled at Bayaan Academy, you should be aware of the following guidelines and expectations. Any activity that is not listed here which constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal laws, is considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Guidelines. Failure to follow these guidelines could result in removal of your access to Bayaan Academy instructional computing resources, which could result in your inability to complete learning activities.

2. Code of Conduct:

“On the Day of Resurrection, nothing is heavier on the scale of the believer than a good character (good manners). And verily, Allah detests the shameless, indecent one who has foul manners.”
(At Tirmidhi, 2002)

We must each be watchful of our behavior and conduct, students and teachers alike, above all else, out of the consciousness of Allah.

We have come together on this common platform in an effort to seek beneficial knowledge. Let us strive to maintain an environment that is conducive to productive learning and growth. For this, there are some important key guidelines students *must* follow during all forms of interaction with each other and with the teachers, online and offline:

- **Respect:** You must respect each other, yourself, and the fact that this institution is solely meant for healthy and constructive learning.

- **Responsibility:** Hold yourself responsible and accountable for abiding by the rules.
- **Honesty:** You are expected to be truthful in all your words and actions. Cheating and lying are strictly prohibited at all times.
- **Modesty:** You must be most modest in your behavior, speech and for offline meetings/events, dressed modestly. Additionally, sharing personal social media accounts or contact details amongst students on school platforms is not acceptable and will have serious repercussions.

In addition to the guidelines above, posting anonymous messages is not permitted unless authorized by the teacher of the online course. Impersonating another person is also strictly prohibited. Use only your own username and password, but do not share these with anyone.

If a student is found to violate any of the above mentioned codes of conduct, disciplinary action will be taken, such as: restricting a privilege, notifying and/or meeting with parents, suspension or expulsion, depending on the severity of violation.

3. Cyberbullying:

Cyberbullying refers to any form of bullying or harassment that takes place through electronic means such as SMS, text, and other applications. It is the use of technology to threaten, harass, embarrass, and/or target another individual. Any Bayaan student found to be cyberbullying either on a Bayaan educational platform or outside of it will be reprimanded, and continued offense will lead to expulsion from the school and parents will be liable to pay the remainder of the academic year fees.

4. Discipline Policy:

At Bayaan, we lay more emphasis on counsel based intervention and positive behavioral management concentrating on values, manners, morals, and principles. The effectiveness of mutual counseling has proven to be the most effective method of creating an engaging and positive community in our school.

5. Suspension and Expulsion Policy

In the event of unacceptable behavior, we have formulated a suspension and expulsion policy in the best interest of the students and the institution. Such a decision is only taken after assessing the severity of offense caused by the student, and going through the following series of warnings. Failure to rectify at one step shall lead to the next:

1. Warning to the student through email.

2. Email to the student and parent
3. Telephone conference between parent and school administration.
4. Suspension of the student from classes (suspension period at the Principal's discretion)
5. Expulsion from school.

Please note that in case of expulsion, parents are liable to pay the academic fee for the year.

6. Grievances:

Should the students or parents have a complaint or concern regarding any academic or non-academic activities associated with Bayaan Academy, they can directly get in touch with the administration through email or the LMS (Learning Management System) messaging tool, stating their concern. Another alternative is to fill out Bayaan's [Help Desk Form](#) citing their issue. A team member will respond to the query within 12 hours.

7. Contact Procedures:

Query	Method of Contact
Admissions and General queries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Email: Admission@bayaanacademy.com 2. Phone: (410) 881-2160
Academic Enquiries	Email: principal@bayaanacademy.com contact@bayaanacademy.com
Subject Teachers	Contact relevant teacher via <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. School Messenger 2. PowerSchool [direct email] 3. principal@bayaanacademy.com
Absences	Email both: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. principal@bayaanacademy.com 2. Relevant teachers
Documentation requests Reports/Transcripts/Referrals etc.	Email: records@bayaanacademy.com
Withdrawals	Submit a request in writing to: admission@bayaanacademy.com
Tuition Fees, invoices and payments	Email: accounts@bayaanacademy.com
Technical Issues, Logins	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Live Help Desk Monday-Thursday 2:30 – 3:30 PM EST https://bayaanacademy.zoom.us/j/83906808541 2. Help Desk: https://bayaanacademy.com/help-desk
Curriculum Support (Self Paced) and Electives Queries.* <i>[*Only currently enrolled students (for program inquiries contact admissions)]</i>	Email: self-paced@bayaanacademy.com
Job Vacancies / Applications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply via the website: https://bayaanacademy.com/employment/ 2. Email: career@bayaanacademy.com

SECTION B: ACADEMICS

1. Curriculum:

At Bayaan Academy, we believe that any student, if provided with the appropriate learning environment, will grow intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. Our curriculum is designed from the ground up to cater to students studying at home. Whether you choose our qualified teachers or find your own, we believe in empowering the student in his/her quest for excellence.

Our Core Principles and curriculum include:

- Spiritual Literacy (*Tawhid* - Oneness of God)
- Moral Literacy (*Tazkiyah* - Purification of the Soul)
- Intellectual Literacy (*Hikmah* - Wisdom)
- Physical Literacy (*Istiqama* - Steadfastness)
- Social Literacy (*Amanah* - Stewardship)
- Interpersonal Literacy (*Ihsan* - Pursuit of Excellence)
- Cultural Literacy (*Deen* - Way of Life)

English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies will follow the Maryland Common Core Standards. Students will be assessed through national standardized testing methods.

a. Secular Subjects:

i. Core Courses:

Bayaan provides a well-balanced curriculum with Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Health Science. These follow public school curriculum and Maryland State Standards.

ii. Electives:

In addition to the core subjects, students can also take up self-paced electives from a variety of courses that we offer. Depending on elective course work completed at the end of the academic year, students will be awarded the due credit. One semester's worth of work completed earns 0.5 credit. Two semesters' worth of work earns 1 credit. All electives are offered at no additional cost, with the exception of Technology courses.

b. Textbooks

To support our curriculum, we have chosen to build our own curriculum for our Elementary division, this one of a kind curriculum was created by our expert team over scouring all available curriculum to build a robust learning program. **Apex Learning** has been chosen for our Middle and High School divisions, as these courses were found to be rigorous, structured and engaging for our online learners. All learning material for students will be provided by the school.

c. Etiquettes and Manners (Akhlaq)

In Etiquettes and Manners, at the Elementary stage, teachers will embed concepts relating to good character from Islamic sources of knowledge, and by modelling those qualities it is hoped children will embody them in their own dealings.

d. Arabic

The Arabic program at Bayaan is an immersion program with a focus on spoken and written Arabic, Quranic vocabulary with proper usage of grammar, and Arabic comprehension. Teachers and students have to converse in Arabic during the Arabic Language class.

Curriculum series from *Arabiyyah Bayna Yadayk* are used as the main resource.

2. Programs:

a. Live Class Programs

i. Full Live Academy

The full live academy offers live classes for English, Math, Science and Social Studies as well as Arabic and Islamic Studies along with two self-paced electives. Live classes are available in two timings: 9 AM EST onwards and 12 PM EST onwards.

ii. Partial Live Academy

The partial live academy offers live classes for all the academic subjects and is available in two timings: 9 AM EST onwards and 2 PM EST onwards. Students also have access to 2 self-paced classes.

b. Self-Paced Programs

i. Curriculum Support

Students enrolled in Curriculum Support Program get access to six self paced academic courses. These courses are self-paced but students may have their pace guided by deadlines by placing a special request with the administration. Students also have access to join any club or activities for students run by the school.

Parents receive a weekly progress report which summarizes the student's activity during the week and lists any overdue work (if you opt for deadlines).

Students and parents have 24/7 access to school support staff for any technical issues or questions regarding the program.

Report cards are not issued for this program.

ii. Full Homeschool Package (Curriculum Support + Live Islamic Studies/Arabic)

This program has Curriculum Support services with additional access to live classes for Arabic and Islamic Studies. Arabic classes are three hours a week and Islamic Studies classes are two hours a week.

Report cards are issued for the live classes only. For self paced courses, the same report is issued as for the Curriculum Support program.

3. Assessments:

Assessments include, but are not limited to, standardized tests. To promote a more holistic and fulfilling learning environment, our teachers use several other means of assessing the students. These include presentations, projects, homework assignments and activities, attendance, and participation in class discussions.

Most assessments for Curriculum Support students are computer graded with the exception of a few teacher-graded tests assessed by our qualified staff.

4. Grading:

- Formative assessments make 20% of the total academic grade and include attendance, teacher's observation, participation in class discussions and quizzes.
- Summative assessments make up 80% of the total academic grade and include regular assignments, assessments following completion of a lesson, projects, and midterm and end-term assessments.

Our standard for grading is as mentioned below:

Number Grade Conversion		
Numeric Grade	Standard Grade	Grade Point Average
90-100	A	4.0
80-89	B	3.0
70-79	C	2.0
60-69	D	1.0
Less than 60	E	0.0

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education

Grade point is the numerical value of a grade. Grade Point Average or GPA is the average taken from the grade points earned by the student in a graded course. It is calculated by dividing the total grade points earned by the total course credits attempted. Courses that don't carry any grades don't contribute to the GPA calculation.

5. Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity refers to maintenance of academic standards, ensuring that all work received from students is free of cheating and/or plagiarism. Plagiarism is when a student submits work that is copied

from another person's efforts, then presents it as if it is their own, without acknowledging the source copied from.

A dishonest assignment will not earn any credit. Depending upon whether cheating/plagiarism was done on formative or summative assessment, or its frequency, action taken may be one of these:

- Alert parents
- Call parents for a meeting with concerned subject teacher
- Failing grade in the subject
- Call parents for a meeting with teacher and administration
- Suspension from the concerned subject class

6. Report cards and transcripts

Soft copy of the student's report card is accessible to the parents through the LMS at the end of each academic quarter with the seal of Bayaan Academy.

For parents based in the United States, a state authenticated printed copy of the annual report card with the seal of Bayaan Academy can be mailed to the parents on the postal address provided. For parents based outside of the US, a special request has to be made for receiving the report card by post and international mailing charges will apply.

Students on our Curriculum Support Program do not receive a report card from Bayaan Academy as parents are responsible for providing instruction and paces. However, they do receive weekly progress reports generated by our LMS which is recognized by the Department of Education in all fifty states.

7. Field Trips and other School Activities:

Field trips are a great way to give the students a break from the monotony of academics without compromising on learning. In fact, they prove to be a practical and hands-on way for the students to experience their surroundings in person and truly absorb what they learn.

Students are highly encouraged to get involved in activities outside of the academic domain.

For participation in online activities and clubs, interested students should:

- Register themselves with the coordinator
- Be punctual for online meetings with other members

- Cooperate in team spirit
- Maintain the code of conduct in all interactions

For participation in events/activities organized offline, interested students should:

- Have consent of their parents for student-only trips
- Arrive at the assembling venue on or before the specified time
- Carry with them necessary items as instructed by the organizer
- Take charge of their belongings
- Maintain the code of conduct

8. Parental Involvement:

At Bayaan Academy, we recognize that in order to be successful in school, our children need support from both the home and school. A strong partnership will make a great difference in our children's education. As partners, we share the responsibility for their success and want you to know that we will do our very best to carry out our responsibilities.

We ask that you guide and support your child's learning by ensuring that he/she:

- Has a set schedule and logs-in on time daily, ready for the day's learning experience
- Completes all homework assignments given by teachers
- Reads daily to develop a love for reading and to improve literacy skills
- Shares school experiences with you so that you are aware of his/her school life
- Informs you if he/she needs additional support in any area or subject
- Knows that you expect him/her to succeed in school

a. Communication between Parents & Teachers

All parents will provide an email address at the beginning of the school year. Parents may contact the teachers with any academic issues pertaining to their child through the school LMS.

Disciplinary issues should be directed to the Principal. Parents may make prior appointments through the Principal to meet with teachers to discuss their child's performance. It is not appropriate for a parent to talk with a teacher or interject during live classes.

b. Progress Report & Parent Conferences

Bayaan Academy conducts an annual parent-admin conference that provides parents an avenue to discuss their child's performance throughout the year. Parents will be emailed their child's progress report card with Bayaan's seal, for every quarter. If you have any concern about the progress of your child(ren) in between the quarterly report cards, please contact the concerned teacher and the Principal.

Before sending the student's annual report card, it is ensured that there are no payments due upon the parents. The annual report card will only be sent to the parent once all pending payments are cleared.

For students doing self-paced program, parents receive automated reports which help them monitor their child's activity and progress in secular subjects.

SECTION C: ADMISSIONS & ENROLLMENTS

1. Statement of Non-Discrimination

Bayaan Academy, Maryland supports diversity and does not discriminate against a student because of his or her race, ethnicity, culture, color, creed, age, gender, national origin, ancestry, native language, or socio-economic status (SES).

Siblings and children of faculty, staff, and administration will be given priority in the admission process.

Bayaan Academy does not use any kind of lottery system for enrollment.

2. Admission Process:

a. Application Form

Application form is submitted online for enrolling your child at Bayaan.

The online form can be found on our website at:

<https://bayaanacademy.com/online-schooling-registration/>

We accept applications throughout the year but admission is contingent upon the availability of open seats in a given grade.

b. Application Review

Upon submission of the application form to the school, the administration may contact you for further documents. This takes typically three working days.

c. Additional Documents Submission

The following documents are required during application process:

1. Previous school report card
2. Current school report card if transferring during the academic year
3. Student work samples (for homeschooled students):
 - Picture snapshot of the last writing assignment the student completed on their own
 - Last math assignment the student did.

d. Assessment Scheduled

If required, a placement test is scheduled following the review of documents. However, we weigh more heavily what the student has actually done and feedback from parents rather than tests. This is because some students do not test well, especially when it is virtual.

e. Assessment Review

The student will be evaluated on the basis of (1) a diagnostic test for Language Arts and Mathematics, Quran, and Arabic; and (2) previous school performance.

At Bayaan, we give more importance to the skill level of a child than their age and will place the student according to his/her skill level.

f. Results Notification

Upon successful completion of the evaluation process, parents will be informed of the admission through email sent on the address provided in the application form. Bayaan maintains a teacher-student ratio of approximately 1:15. If seats are full, students will be placed on a waiting list and parents will be informed accordingly. In case of higher enrollments, we may start a new section of the class to accommodate new enrollments.

g. Registration Fee

Bayaan Academy charges \$150 registration fee for new registrations. During registration, parents are also required to pay \$200 as assessment/tech fee. Assessment refers to third party assessments given to students in September and May to measure gains during the academic year. Tech refers to allocation of digital resources to students (access to the LMS, digital books, curriculum, etc). The \$200 assessment/tech fee is for all registrations, new and returning. Registration fee and Assessment/tech fee are a non-refundable deposit at the time of registration. Parents will have to pay this fee to secure the admission.

i. Tuition

Bayaan Academy, Maryland is a non-profit organization. Tuition and fees are charged only to account for the cost of our dedicated teachers' time of instruction and basic LMS and web administration. The tuition fee is due by the last Friday of each month. Students with an outstanding balance from the previous year will not be re-enrolled in school until the payment has been made in full. This tuition is subject to change at the beginning of each academic year.

j. Enrollment

When the student is officially enrolled at Bayaan Academy, parents will receive a welcome email along with the parent portal access and student's personal login credentials to access the LMS, live classes and the curriculum. Students can, thereafter, login and have access to the academy instantly.

3. Refund Policy:

Parents can withdraw their child any time round the year. Refunds will be issued according to the following schedule:

1.	2 weeks before the semester starts:	90% refund
2.	1 week before the semester starts:	75% refund
3.	Within 7 days of the semester starting:	50% refund
4.	After the 7th day of semester starting:	No refund

The refund schedule is to recover a portion of the costs incurred by Bayaan for each student. For example, 1 week before the semester begins, LMS accounts, Virtual Classroom accounts, Teacher and Curriculum allocations all take place which takes a substantial amount of planning, time, and money.

4. Financial Aid

Financial aid is available to all deserving families who are currently facing financial hardship. Bayaan Academy strongly believes in providing financial support to students who cannot afford the cost of tuition. Please request more information from the Director.

Financial aid application may be requested from the administration. Recent pay stubs, tax returns, federal/state assistance documentation is required to determine eligibility for financial aid. Financial aid applications typically require 1-2 weeks of processing time by the Executive Committee.

SECTION D: TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Hardware and Software Requirements:

Below is the list of minimum hardware and software requirements.

	Minimum Specifications
Processor	At least 1.6 GHz or above; or less than three years old
RAM	At least 500 MB
Internet Access	dial-up (56 Kbps)
Screen Resolution	1024 x 768
Operating System	Microsoft Windows 7, Vista, XP, 2000, or ME [Note: Windows 95 and Windows 98 are not supported]
Computer Storage	50 MB disk space
Sound and mic	Sound card, noise-cancelling headphones, mic
Webcam	HD webcam is required (720p-1080p). Most newer laptops have a built-in webcam that meets these requirements. If you don't have a built-in webcam, please purchase a USB HD-capable webcam.
Web Browser	Chrome/Mozilla Firefox /Internet Explorer 11 or later/Safari 9 or later

2. Technical Skills:

The following technical skills, listed from least to most complex, are examples of what would be needed to study online:

Basic Computer Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keyboarding• Audio recording (microphone)
Database Management:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data entry Data editing• Database creation
File Management:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create & name files.• Understand file formats (doc, .docx, JPEG, GIF, PDF, WAV, MPEG etc.).• Understand file storage Organize and manage files.
Word Processing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create, edit & save documents.• Use formatting techniques (bulleted/numbered lists; page numbers, etc.).• Insert tables, graphs, and graphics into documents.
Presentation Software:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create, edit & save presentations.• Add multimedia to the presentation.
Email:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Send & receive email.• Attach documents & pictures.• Participate in email discussion groups/listservs.

Internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand & use different browser types. • Know how to do targeted searches. Understand how to use online databases • Be familiar with YouTube, Skype, podcasts, blogs, webinars & wikis
Learning Management System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upload content • Make content accessible • Upload multimedia • Use IM or chat • Understand & use other learning management system tools

SECTION E: LEARNING TOOLS

1. Approaches to Online Learning:

Two approaches to online learning have emerged:

a. Synchronous learning

Synchronous learning is instruction and collaboration in “real time” via the Internet. It typically involves tools, such as:

- live chat
- audio and video conferencing
- data and application sharing
- shared whiteboard
- virtual "hand raising"
- joint viewing of multimedia presentations and online slideshows.

b. Asynchronous learning

Asynchronous learning methods use the time-delayed capabilities of the Internet. It typically involves tools, such as:

- e-mail
- threaded discussion
- newsgroups and bulletin boards
- file attachments

Asynchronous courses at Bayaan are mostly self-paced and self-taught, unless parents arrange for an instructor independently. In asynchronous courses, learning does not need to be scheduled in the same way as synchronous learning, allowing students and instructors the benefits of anytime, anywhere learning.

Our teaching practice includes both the approaches for the benefit of students. To offer this flexibility, Bayaan Academy ties up the following means together to build a robust learning plan to cater to different students, depending on their learning needs and preferences:

2. Learning Management System (LMS)

Bayaan faculty members use the academy's approved Learning Management Systems (LMS):

- a. Schoology
- b. School Messenger
- c. Apex Learning

a. Schoology:

Schoology is a Learning Suite which incorporates classroom and productivity tools. The suite enables students and parents to:

- view the live classes schedule
- access the link for entering those classes
- access the relevant curriculum
- communicate with teachers through personal message
- keep a track of important class announcements
- access a record of their child(ren)'s progress
- read quarterly reports

We highly encourage parents to monitor their child's progress and follow their activities on the portal.

For all assignments posted by the teacher, students are required to complete and upload them as directed by their teacher.

b. Bayaan Academy Curriculum:

For our Elementary division, the curriculum we have chosen to implement is created by our staff, we have brought together teachers with extensive experience in the field of teaching and curriculum design to build a robust, engaging curriculum using the latest virtual engagement tools.

c. Apex Learning:

This is the portal used to provide the curriculum for our secular subjects for Middle and High School. We found it to be rigorous, structured and engaging for our online learners. Apex

Learning, Inc. is a privately held provider of digital curriculum. It is accredited by AdvancED. Students can access Apex digital material through the Schoology LMS.

Assessments:

Assessments on Apex are of two types: Teacher scored, and Computer scored.

Computer Scored Assessments:

For all computer scored quizzes and activities on Apex, students have three attempts to score a minimum of 60%. If unable to get the minimum score within three attempts, the student is locked out of the course and has to request the subject teacher to unlock the course. We encourage the students to prepare well for each quiz, then try and achieve a passing score in as few attempts as possible. If a student fails one attempt, they should return to the lesson content and review it thoroughly before a reattempt. Note that when a student starts a quiz, the rest of the course is automatically locked till they complete the quiz.

Teacher Graded Assessments:

Activities and test sheets that are teacher-graded have to be downloaded and then completed, either by typing in a saved Word file or printing the sheet, writing by hand and scanning or photographing the completed work.