

DISCOVERY LANGUAGE ACADEMY STUDENT HANDBOOK



Discovery Language Academy
128 UNION ST., NEW BEDFORD, MA. 02740 (508) 997-02740

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Student Handbook

Discovery Language Academy

128 Union St, Suite 301

New Bedford, MA 02740

Welcome to the Discovery Language Academy!

We are delighted to have you as part of our language-learning community. This handbook is designed to provide you with essential information about our courses, specifically tailored for different age groups. Whether you are starting your language learning journey or advancing to more intermediate levels, we are here to support your growth.

Mission Statement:

At Discovery Language Academy, our mission is to provide skill development and training opportunities in the areas of language acquisition, cultural understanding, and career education to achieve personal, professional, and vocational goals.

Courses DLA Offers:**Beginners (Ages 4, 5, 6)****Course Overview:**

Children in this age group will embark on an exciting adventure to acquire basic communication skills in Portuguese. Our focus is on providing linguistic competence to understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases. The aim is to meet immediate needs in any part of the Portuguese-speaking world.

Learning Objectives:

- Develop basic listening and speaking skills.
- Engage in activities and games that enhance language comprehension.
- Understand language in its cultural context.
- Participate in short interactions.

Beginners (Ages 7, 8, 9)**Course Overview:**

Building on the foundation laid in the previous level, this course continues to provide linguistic competence for understanding and using everyday expressions. Children will learn how to take part in conversations actively, fostering their ability to communicate effectively in Portuguese.

Learning Objectives:

- Use familiar everyday expressions with confidence.
- Engage in conversations with peers and instructors.
- Develop conversational skills for meeting immediate needs.

Beginners (Ages 10, 11, 12)**Course Overview:**

In this level, students will further enhance their linguistic competence, focusing on understanding and using everyday expressions. The course aims to empower them to communicate comfortably in any part of the Portuguese-speaking world.

Learning Objectives:

- Deepen understanding of familiar expressions.
- Use basic phrases to meet immediate needs.
- Strengthen language skills for effective communication.

Intermediate (Ages 13-16)**Course Overview:**

At the intermediate level, students will delve into more sophisticated grammatical structures, enabling them to handle more complex conversations. Beyond language skills, there will be a focus on gaining insights into the history and cultural traditions of Portugal.

Learning Objectives:

- Acquire advanced grammatical structures.
- Handle complicated conversations with confidence.
- Develop comprehension and expressive skills.
- Gain insights into Portuguese history and cultural traditions.

At Discovery Language Academy, we believe in fostering a positive and enriching learning environment. To ensure a successful and enjoyable experience for all students, we outline the following expectations, goals, and behaviors:

Student Expectations**1. Attendance:**

- Students are expected to attend classes regularly and punctually.
- In case of absence, students or their parents should notify the academy in advance.

2. Active Participation:

- Actively engage in classroom activities, discussions, and exercises.
- Contribute positively to a collaborative learning environment.

3. Respect:

- Treat instructors, peers, and academy staff with respect.
- Embrace and appreciate the diversity within the language learning community.

4. Preparation:

- Come prepared for each class with necessary materials and completed assignments.
- Demonstrate a commitment to individual and collective progress.

5. Communication:

- Communicate openly with instructors regarding any challenges or concerns.
- Check academy communications regularly for updates and announcements.

6. Responsibility:

- Take responsibility for personal learning goals and progress.
- Seek assistance when needed and actively seek solutions to challenges.

Student Goals**1. Language Proficiency:**

- Develop proficiency in understanding and using Portuguese expressions and phrases.
- Progress through language levels with increasing confidence and competence.

2. Cultural Awareness:

- Gain cultural insights into the Portuguese-speaking world.
 - Appreciate the historical and cultural context of the language.
3. **Effective Communication:**
- Develop strong listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.
 - Engage in meaningful conversations with both peers and instructors.
4. **Collaboration:**
- Collaborate with fellow students to enhance learning experiences.
 - Participate in group activities and projects.
5. **Continuous Improvement:**
- Set personal language learning goals and work towards achieving them.
 - Embrace a growth mindset, seeing challenges as opportunities for improvement.

Program Placement, Promotion, and Completion Procedures

Placement Procedures

Before beginning classes, each student completes a placement process that includes:

- An English language placement assessment
- A brief speaking interview
- Review of educational background and English language experience

The results are used to place students in the Beginner, Intermediate, or Advanced ELD course that best matches their current English proficiency.

Student Progress

Throughout the course, teachers use a variety of assessments to monitor student learning, including:

- Speaking assessments
- Listening assessments
- Reading assessments

- Writing assessments
- Classroom performance tasks
- Digital literacy activities

These assessments measure progress toward the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for each course.

Promotion Requirements

Students are promoted to the next level when they demonstrate achievement of the Student Learning Outcomes through direct evidence collected from course assessments.

Attendance is monitored separately and supports student success but is not the basis for promotion decisions.

Program Completion Requirements

Students complete the program when they demonstrate achievement of the Student Learning Outcomes for the highest course level through direct evidence of assessment.

Student Progress Reports

Students receive written progress reports:

- 1st trimester
- 2nd trimester
- End-of-Term

These reports summarize progress toward the Student Learning Outcomes and provide information regarding progression or program completion.

Student Behaviors

1. Positive Attitude:

- Approach learning with a positive and open mindset.
- Encourage and support classmates in their language learning journey.

2. Responsibility for Learning:

- Take ownership of your learning experience and progress.

- Actively seek clarification and additional help when needed.

3. **Respectful Communication:**

- Communicate respectfully with instructors and peers.
- Listen attentively and value diverse perspectives within the classroom.

4. **Adaptability:**

- Embrace new language structures and cultural concepts with an open mind.
- Adapt to various learning methodologies and activities.

5. **Time Management:**

- Manage time effectively to meet assignment deadlines and study requirements.
- Balance language learning with other responsibilities.

Cell phones and iWatch Policy

- Cell phones and smartwatches are NOT ALLOWED in school unless permitted by the teacher. In case of an emergency, students may use the office phone. Students must keep them off in their backpacks.

Dress Code Policy

Students should wear clothing that is appropriate for learning. (Please note that tube tops with spaghetti straps, hoods, and sagging pants are prohibited.) By adhering to these expectations, goals, and behaviors, students contribute to a positive and vibrant language learning community at Discovery Language Academy. We look forward to supporting each student on their journey to language proficiency and cultural understanding. Discovery Language Academy reserves the right to update or modify this handbook as needed. Any changes will be communicated to students on time.

Complaint Procedures

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures for parents or guardians to raise concerns or complaints regarding any aspect of the school's operations, ensuring all issues are addressed promptly, fairly, and respectfully.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all parents and guardians of students enrolled at the school.

3. Principles

All complaints will be taken seriously and handled with confidentiality. Complaints will be addressed in a timely and impartial manner. No parent, student, or staff member will face discrimination or retaliation as a result of raising concern.

4. Types of Complaints

Complaints may relate to, but are not limited to:

- Teaching and learning Student welfare and safety
- School environment and facilities Communication and administration Staff conduct

Procedure

Step 1: Informal Resolution

Parents are encouraged to discuss concerns directly with the relevant staff member(s), (e.g., teacher, support staff) as soon as possible. Many issues can be resolved quickly through open communication.

Step 2: Formal Complaint

If the issue is not resolved informally:

1. Submit a written complaint to the school administration (Principal or designated officer), including:

- **Name and contact details**
- **Details of the complaint**
- **Steps already taken to resolve the issue**

2. The school will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 working days.

Step 3: Investigation

The school will investigate the complaint, which may involve meetings with relevant parties. All parties will have the opportunity to present their views. The investigation will be completed within 10 working days where possible.

Step 4: Outcome

The school will communicate the outcome in writing, outlining any actions taken or proposed. If the parent is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may request a review by the school board or governing body.

Step 6: Record Keeping

All complaints and outcomes will be documented and stored securely, in accordance with privacy laws.

Step 7. Monitoring and Review

The school will regularly review complaints to identify trends and areas for improvement. This policy will be reviewed annually.

Step 8. Contact Information

For formal complaints, contact:

Executive Director's Office Phone: 508-997-8295

Email: lvicente@discoverylanguageacademy.org

Address: 128 Union Street • Suite 300 • New Bedford • MA. 02740

This policy is available on the school website and upon request from the school office.

Health Insurance and Wellness Information

Why Health Insurance Matters- Although Discovery Language Academy does not require students to maintain health insurance coverage, students are strongly encouraged to obtain adequate health insurance.

Failure to maintain health insurance coverage may result in:

- Difficulty accessing medical care • Delayed treatment for illness or injury • Significant out-of-pocket medical expenses • Financial hardship due to unexpected medical bills • Reduced access to preventative health services

Students who need assistance obtaining health insurance may contact local community health organizations or visit the Massachusetts Health Connector.

Local Resources

- Massachusetts Health Connector
- New Bedford Community Health Center
- Southcoast Health System
 - For additional information, please speak with a DLA staff member.

Housing Information and Community Resources

Discovery Language Academy does not own, operate, arrange, supervise, or provide housing for students enrolled in any program.

Students are responsible for securing and maintaining their own housing arrangements.

Although Discovery Language Academy does not provide housing, staff may aid students by providing information about local community resources that may be helpful when seeking housing assistance.

Examples of available community resources may include:

- **New Bedford Housing Authority**
- **Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program**
- **South Coast Community Action Program**
- **Local housing assistance agencies**
- **BayCoast Bank housing and homeownership counseling services**

Discovery Language Academy cannot guarantee housing availability, housing placement, housing approval, rental assistance, or housing outcomes.

Questions about housing resources may be directed to the Administrative Assistant.

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Student's Name: _____

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____