

# LEARNER HANDBOOK

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Florida Islamic School seeks to provide an Islamic environment, and thus, sets out the following policies:

- Combining Islamic teachings, Department of Education prescriptions, policies and administration guidelines.
- Specifying the rights and responsibilities of learners and describing conduct which violates their rights and responsibilities.
- Standardizing the procedures the school will use in responding to conduct violations.

Cooperation between the school and parents is essential for the progress of the learner.

Parents are encouraged to meet the school staff and participate in school-related activities at parent-educator conferences, open days and extra-curricular activities.

By establishing close contact, parents, administrators, and educators can work together to better manage a lot of discipline issues and promote learner success.

A discipline problem involving a learner in a particular class should be brought to the attention of the educator of that class.

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## LEARNERS HAVE THE RIGHT TO: 8.1

- Learn in a safe, positive Islamic atmosphere that is unbiased, non-judgmental and free from prejudice or discrimination.
- Believe that school rules will be enforced in a consistent, fair, and reasonable manner.
- Discuss and receive assistance with educational concerns from the school staff.
- Receive a copy of the Code of Conduct and follow its grievance policy if needed.

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## PARENTS/GUARDIANS HAVE THE RIGHT TO: 1.2

- Receive official reports of the learner's academic progress and attendance.
- Request and be granted conferences with educators, counsellor and/or the principal.
- Receive explanations from educators about the learner's grades and disciplinary procedures.
- Read all school records pertaining to their learner and follow grievance policy if needed.

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## SCHOOL PERSONNEL HAVE THE RIGHT TO: 1.3

- Work in a positive Islamic atmosphere for learning and teaching.
- Expect compliance with rules from learners and parents.
- Be present, when appropriate, at conferences or hearings concerning classroom and school concerns.

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## LEARNERS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO:

2.1

- Strive for academic growth by attending school regularly, arriving on time, bringing appropriate materials, completing assignments, and being prepared to participate in class.
- Respect the rights, feelings, and property of fellow learners, parents, school staff, visitors, guests, and school neighbours.
- Make up work resulting from an excused absence.
- Follow discipline guidelines adopted by the school.
- Read, ask questions, and understand the information in this Learner Handbook.
- Maintain a positive school spirit in and outside of school.
- Maintain the highest standards of academic integrity.

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## PARENTS/GUARDIANS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO:

2.2

- Assume responsibility for the learner's timely regular attendance.
- Promptly provide explanations for learner absences or tardiness.
- Encourage learner compliance with school rules.
- Provide supervision for the learner's health and physical and emotional well-being.
- Partner with educators staff by sharing ideas to improve learner learning and prevent and/or resolve learner discipline problems.
- Fulfil all financial obligations towards the school.
- Be involved in child's learning by fulfilling parent service hours.

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## SCHOOL PERSONNEL HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO:

2.3

- Develop, implement, and communicate written classroom expectations for learners' behaviour and grades.
- Inform parents/guardians of learner progress, behaviour, and attendance.
- Work with parents to prevent discipline problems.
- Refer learners to other staff or programs as appropriate.
- Maintain accurate learner records, while protecting confidentiality of learners, parents, and school staff.
- Protect learners' health, safety, and welfare by supervising learners in the school building and grounds.
- Respect the rights, feelings, and property of learners, parents, school staff, visitors, guests, and school neighbours.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

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At Florida Islamic School, we believe that each child has the right to be educated in an environment conducive to quality teaching and learning. Our Code of Conduct has been designed to provide such an environment and encourage our learners to diligently apply themselves to their studies and reach their highest potential. It promotes the mission statement and philosophies of the school and the basic objectives of a:

- Well balanced and broad education for learners and
- Professional environment for educators

We assume that learners attending our school will have been taught, by their parents, to respect the rights of others. In doing so, healthy working and functional relationships will be created between learners, educators and parents, which is the foundation of a constructive working environment.

The staff of Florida Islamic School undertake to educate each learner in the basic rights of other individuals – be they staff, educators, parents or fellow learners. Learners are to understand that they, through their own response and daily behaviour must encourage each other to attain the Schools objectives and reach the best of their potential. In addition learners are to:

- Maintain mutual respect, courtesy and awareness of the needs and feelings of others.
- Undertake to make the most of every opportunity to achieve well in school by diligently applying themselves to their studies, school activities and supporting activities to the best of their abilities.
- Adopt a strong commitment to academic studies and any other endeavours they may partake in that is a part of their school career.

Learners are expected to behave impeccably at all times. They must display loyalty to the school, be obedient, courteous, polite and show respect to educators, peers and all humans.

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## THIS CODE OF CONDUCT WILL BE IN EFFECT:

- While learners are on school property and/or are on school vehicles.
- When learners are attending or participating in school activities.
- In any situation or circumstance related to the need to uphold good order and discipline of the school. Remembering that you represent Florida Islamic School at all times.
- **On all forms of social media at all times.**

The following procedures will be applied to learners whose behaviour causes a disturbance. Before applying disciplinary action, the following steps must be taken:

- The learner must be informed about conduct which is expected or prohibited.
- The educator will deal with the disturbance within the classroom first.
- If a follow-up is needed the educator will express his/her concerns to the HOD or Principal, in writing.
- The learner will have a chance to present his or her side of the story in writing.
- A meeting will be convened with the learner to discuss the information gathered.

Florida Islamic School wants every learner to have and to experience a quality education. In order to achieve this, regular, punctual attendance is essential. Moreover, learners have the primary responsibility for prompt classroom attendance. Parents, educators, and school administration will monitor learner attendance to help learners learn responsible behaviour. While an occasional, unusual circumstance will be taken into consideration, learners regular being late or absent from without significant reason will be succumb to disciplinary action.

Learners should arrive at school by 7:25 am to prepare for classes. School begins promptly at 7:30 am. On the day of an absence, the parent should call the school by 9:00 am to inform us of the learner's absence. Learners who leave early for appointments must have a parent come to the office to sign them out. Should a learner arrive late, he/she MUST report first to the office.

Learners are responsible for ALL work missed while absent. Usually, one day of absence does not release a learner from completing any assignment or test on the day of return. Learners are encouraged to call classmates, or contact educators to keep up with assignments and subject requirements.

1. All learners are to arrive at school before the official starting time. Learners who are late for school will be marked absent as registers are completed at the beginning of each school day.
2. All appointments (e.g. dentist, doctor etc.) should be made outside of school hours if possible.
3. Learners absent must produce a parent's/guardian's letter to explain their absence on the day of return.
4. If a learner does not attend school regularly, the relevant register teacher will report the absence of the learner to the parent and the Principal in writing. The register teacher will keep an accurate register of learners' attendance and will keep copies of all communication to parents when absence from the classroom is reported.
5. Absence from a class, without the permission of the relevant subject teacher, is prohibited.
6. Frequent absenteeism will not be tolerated.
7. Should a learner be absent from school for a period of three (3) days or longer, this leave of absence must be supported with a medical certificate.
8. Any absence from a formal examination, test or task must be supported by a letter from a medical doctor.
9. No learner may leave the school during school hours without a letter from a parent/guardian requesting the release of their child and the permission of the Principal/Deputy Principal/Head of the phase from whom an exit note must be obtained.
10. Truancy from School is prohibited.

1. Attendance at assembly is compulsory.
2. Learners must report promptly for assembly.
3. Silence and respect should be upheld in the assembly area.
4. At the end of assembly learners must return to their classrooms swiftly and quietly.

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## BREAKS

1. Boys, girls and grades specific learners must remain in their prescribed areas.
2. Accidents, injuries or issues must be reported to educators on duty immediately.
3. Learners should begin returning to their classrooms as soon as the bell is rung.
4. During breaks, learners are not allowed in any classroom, unless supervised by a teacher.

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## CLASSROOMS

1. Classrooms should be kept clean and tidy at all times.
2. Disruptive behaviour will not be tolerated.
3. Learners will be held liable for (any) damaged, defaced or lost textbooks or any other school property.
4. Eating and drinking in the classroom is totally prohibited (except in the Foundation Phase where the teacher will supervise).
5. Placing food or drinks on the window sills are not allowed.
6. Boys and girls should remain within their sections of the classrooms.
7. Learners are not allowed in the classrooms during breaks, before or after school.
8. Whilst in class, learners are to remain seated and should not loiter nor stand.
9. Learners should be punctual for all lessons and changing of classrooms must be rapid and orderly.

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## HOMEWORK

1. Daily Qur'an lessons will be regarded as homework- to be constantly revised.
2. Failure to produce homework at school will be regarded as homework not done.
3. Learners must ensure that all homework/tasks assigned are completed by the due date.
4. Copying of homework is not allowed.
5. Absentees should make it their duty to enquire about any work completed or given during their absence and duly complete it.
6. Learners also need to rest, relax, spend time with family, and participate in Islamic activities; therefore, weekend homework is limited and the due date for projects is not to be a Monday.
7. There should not be more than two tests given in one day. During Standardized Testing, Midterms, and Finals, there should be no homework given.

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## SALAAH

1. It is compulsory for learners from Grade 3 upwards to perform their Salaah at school.
2. Learners will occupy their prescribed places allocated to them for Salaah.
3. Learners should proceed immediately with the commencement of the Salaah Break .

Talking, whispering, joking and playing during the Salaah is strictly prohibited

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## SCHOOL UNIFORM AND GENERAL APPEARANCE

Learners are expected to wear the official school uniform and appear neat and tidy at all times.

1. Additions to the uniform that are not in accordance with the regulations will not be allowed.
2. Earrings, jewellery, accessories or coloured contact lenses are also not allowed.
3. The colouring of hair or wearing of exotic hairstyles is prohibited.
4. Fingernails must be kept trimmed short and clean at all times.
5. During events that allow the wearing of casual wear, learners should wear neat, presentable clothes, which are modest and Shariah compliant. Beachwear, tight-fitting clothes, clothes that are see-through and/or too revealing are not allowed.
6. Hair, shoes and accessories should be neat at all times.
7. Only learners that have applied and submitted relevant supporting documents and received the necessary permission from the School's Board, may be allowed a concession.

### BOYS UNIFORM

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- Stipulated Florida Islamic School uniform.
- Plain black *topi* (hat).
- Plain white T-shirt or vest (optional).
- Plain black track pants only for sports/extra murals.
- Modest plain black attire for swimming.
- Black school shoes.
- Plain black or grey socks.
- Plain navy blue V-Neck jersey and/or *Drimac* type jacket.
- Short, neat hair at one length.
- No designs, or unevenly hair allowed.
- Hair must have its natural colour – No other colours allowed.

### GIRLS UNIFORM

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- Stipulated Florida Islamic School uniform.
- Plain navy blue *burkha*. No scarfs.
- Hair must be covered at all times
- Plain white T-shirt or vest (optional).
- Plain black track pants only for sports/extra murals.
- Modest plain long black tights and top for swimming.
- Black school shoes.
- Plain black or grey socks.
- Plain navy blue V-Neck jersey and/or black *Drimac* type jacket.
- No jewellery except stud earrings!
- No Make-up allowed.

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## SPEECH CONTESTES, JALSAS ETC.

1. The above are considered as school activities.
2. Normal school rules concerning behaviour and uniforms apply to such functions.
3. Guest speakers and visitors must be shown the utmost courtesy and respect.

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## MOBILE ELECTRONICS

1. The use of mobile electronics is not permitted on school premises unless supervised by an educator and forms part of a lesson.
2. All devices brought to school must be left with the secretary and may only be collected at the end of the school day.
3. Mobile electronics includes radios, cameras, card games, electronic cigarettes and toys.
4. Should a learner be found to have one with them then:
  - First Offense – Parent(s) will be called to pick up device at the end of the day.
  - Second Offense – Device will be confiscated until the end of the term.

NOTE: FLORIDA ISLAMIC SCHOOL is not responsible for any lost or stolen electronic devices.

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## VALUABLES AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

1. The school will not be held responsible for theft of or damage to personal belongings on school premises (e.g. cell phones, bags, books and clothing).
2. Learners should avoid bringing cell phones, large sums of money and valuables to school.
3. If a learner brings a mobile phone/tablet to school, it must be left with the secretary, who will not be liable for any loss to it.
4. If a parent sends a learner with school fees to be paid on their behalf, such fees should be paid before the start of the school day.
5. Arrangements should be made with the educator in charge for safekeeping of valuables, etc. during extra murals.

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## SPORTS & EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

1. It is compulsory for learners to participate in school sports, however extracurricular activities are optional.
2. Learners selected to represent the school are to be present for all sessions.
3. The stipulated dress code for sports must be followed.
4. Sports equipment ought to be used with care to avoid damage.

All sports equipment are to be returned to the educator in charge at the end of the session

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## EXCURSIONS

1. Learners are to dress in the school uniform on all excursions unless otherwise informed.
2. Impeccable behaviour during excursions must be displayed as learners are ambassadors of the school.
3. Electronic devices or any dangerous and undesirable articles may not be taken on an excursion.
4. Salaah arrangements must be made and taken into account while on an excursion.
5. All rules and regulations pertaining to the excursion must be strictly adhered to.

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## RULES GOVERNING PUBLIC PLACES

The School is a place of safety where laws pertaining to public spaces are applicable.

1. No dangerous objects or illegal drugs as defined in the SA Schools Act or the Safety Regulations will be brought onto and/or used on the school property unless authorised by the Principal for educational purposes. Dangerous objects include knives, firearms or any item that could harm a person.
2. The carrying and/or smoking of cigarettes is prohibited.
3. Alcohol is not permitted on school premises or during any school activity.
4. The carrying of and/or consumption of illegal chemical substances and drugs is prohibited.
5. At random learners may be searched for prohibited items and drug tests may be carried out to test for substance abuse.

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## GENERAL RULES

1. In addition to Qur'an recitation, learners should inculcate the habit recitation of *Duas* and *Surahs* daily.
2. All circulars, notices, etc. issued by the school must be brought to the attention of parents/guardians.
3. Learners must co-operate with the RCL members at all times.
4. Smoking in and around the school premises is strictly prohibited.
5. Obscene material is strictly prohibited.
6. No notices, advertisements or petitions may be put up or distributed at school without the express permission of the principal.
7. Learners are required to take good care of the school buildings and all associated facilities.
8. Wilful damaging, vandalising or neglect of School property and the property of others, either by writing or by a physical act, is prohibited.
9. Learners are to take care of their possessions. The school will not be held liable for any loss of learners' personal property.
10. Learners may not communicate with outsiders across school boundaries nor leave the premises without permission.
11. Visitors are to be treated with respect and courtesy.
12. Disruption of classroom activities will not be tolerated.
13. The sale of goods or services on school grounds will not be permitted.
14. Firecrackers, matches, lighters, cigarettes including electronic cigarettes, knives, weapons, stink bombs and any offensive and dangerous articles are prohibited on school property.
15. No toys may be brought to school (unless used by the teacher to enhance the lesson).
16. Loitering and/or playing in and around the corridors, stairwells and toilets are forbidden.
17. All litter must be placed in refuse bins or wastepaper baskets.
18. Theft of school and private property is also prohibited.
19. Any act of cheating in classwork, homework, informal and formal tests or internal or external examination is prohibited. Furthermore, copying of another learner's work is forbidden.
20. Disruptive, unruly, rude and/or offensive behaviour will not be tolerated.
21. The timeous handing in of work is the responsibility of each learner.
22. Learners who fail to produce a medical certificate on absenteeism during formal examinations/tests/assessment tasks will obtain a mark of "0" (zero) for the particular examination/test/assessment task.

23. Learners will respect the beliefs, culture, dignity and rights of other learners, as well as their right to privacy and confidentiality.
24. Language that is seen as pejorative, discriminatory or racist is prohibited.
25. Any act that belittles, demeans or humiliates another learner's culture, race or religion is prohibited.
26. All learners have the right to an education free of interference, intimidation and/or physical abuse. The learner will respect the property and safety of other learners. Fighting or threatening of other learners is forbidden.
27. The learner will respect those learners in positions of authority. A learner who is in a position of authority will conduct him/herself in a manner befitting someone in authority. He/she will respect the rights of other learners and will not abuse such authority bestowed upon him/her through his/her position.
28. The carrying, copying and/or reading of offensive material is prohibited.
29. Learners must keep clear of areas that are indicated as out of bounds. These include:
  - 29.1 The school parking area.
  - 29.2 The playing fields, courts, shooting range, swimming pool and area, except while attending official sports practice and matches or during a lesson while under the supervision of the subject educator.
  - 29.3 Electrical mains distribution boxes, fire extinguishers and hoses.
  - 29.4 Parking lots, except while accessing their own vehicles.

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## GRIEVANCE POLICY

Care will be taken at all times to ensure that learners are treated fairly, and that adequate provisions are made for responding to grievances. A *grievance is defined as the formal written claim by a learner of Florida Islamic School, or a parent/guardian that there may have been a violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of the prescribed regulations or school policies.* Grievance proceedings shall be kept as confidential as possible at all levels of the procedure.

- It is desirable for grievances to be resolved through free and informal communications. A learner or parent/guardian should first attempt to resolve any grievance through discussion with the educator. If a grievance cannot be resolved at this level, the aggrieved person may request a conference with the principal in a written email request to discuss the grievance and seek resolution. The request shall describe the grievance and name the specific policy, rule, or law believed to have been violated and be submitted no more than 30 days after disclosure of the facts giving rise to the grievance.
- The principal shall grant the conference within five school days following receipt of the request.
- The principal will state in writing his position on the question to the learner or parent/guardian within five school days following conference.
- Only the parent/guardian shall be permitted to join or represent the learner in the conference with the principal.
- Failure of a learner to comply with timelines listed above will result in denial of the grievance or appeal.
- Failure of school administration to comply with these timelines will result in automatic right of appeal to the next level.
- If grievance is not resolved, learner or parent/guardian may appeal the principal's decision in writing to the Florida Islamic School Board of Education.

- The appeal must be made within five school days following receipt of the principal's written response.
- The Board shall review the grievance and conduct any necessary hearing within fifteen school days following receipt of the appeal.
- Either party is permitted to present witnesses who can provide relevant information and to be represented by counsel. The Board will notify the aggrieved party in writing of the decision within five working days of hearing.

## BEHAVIORAL INFRACTIONS

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### MINOR OFFENSES:

- Leaving the Class without Permission
- Hiding Belongings of Others
- Rough Housing, Throwing Objects in Classroom
- Inappropriate (Non-Malicious) Conversations
- Unintentional Plagiarism
- Accidental Minor Damage to School Property
- Misuse of School Materials

### MAJOR VIOLATIONS: (Consequences range from suspension to expulsion)

- **Disrespect to Any Person, Verbal Abuse and/or Vulgarity**
  - Directing obscene, abusive, vulgar, profane, harassing, insulting, racial, sexual, religious or ethnic slurs, written or verbal, toward learners, school personnel or any member of the community. This includes obscene gestures/signs that insult or in any other manner disrespect or abuse others, and negativity towards an individual and/or Florida Islamic School
  - Using social media to speak ill of Florida Islamic School learners, staff and/or institution
- **Academic Dishonesty**
  - Plagiarizing; cheating; copying another's work; attempting to gain or gaining unauthorized access to materials; using, submitting, or providing data or answers dishonestly, by deceit, or by means other than those authorized by the educator
  - Providing intentionally untrue/misleading information
  - Presenting another person's work as one's own
  - Allowing another learner to use one's work
  - Forgery, falsification, or unauthorized alteration of a document
- **Tuancy**
  - Being absent from school without authorization
  - Failure to follow proper attendance check-in, check out, and absence procedures; skipping classes or school
- **Trespassing**
  - Being in the building or on school grounds without permission or refusing to comply with a request to leave school premises
- **Bullying**
  - Threatening or harassing, verbally or nonverbally; inflicting damage or fear of damage to property; instigating or encouraging misconduct
  - Repeated teasing, exclusion from a group
  - Obtaining information or property from another by threat, intimidation, or coercion
  - Unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance
  - Any form of unwanted physical contact

- **Theft**
  - Stealing, attempting to steal, possessing or transferring school or private property, or participating in the theft or attempted theft of school or private property
- **Unauthorized Use of Technology**
  - Learners using school on-line services for inappropriate purposes
  - Using electronic passwords or codes to access, control, or disable technological devices or service
- **Vandalism**
  - Willful damage or destruction of property (restitution must be made)
- **Mixing with the Opposite Gender**
  - Committing acts that fall outside Islamic teaching as it relates to relationships between opposite genders, inside or outside the school
- **Endangering Health and Safety**
  - Acting in a manner likely to cause accident or injury
  - Tobacco/Alcohol Use
  - In the case of illegal activity, police will be notified

**Possible Actions:**

- Conference between Educator and Learner to discuss changes in behaviours.
- Contract with Learner – via a written statement listing steps to be taken by the learner to improve behaviours, date for review, and the consequences if the contract is not honoured.
- Conference with Staff, Parent/Guardian, and Learner – a meeting or telephone conversation with staff, parent/guardian, and learner to discuss learner achievement and conduct and prepare a plan to rectify mannerisms.
- Time-Out System – Assigning a learner to a different location in the classroom or building, coordinated by staff members, educators, or school administrators.
- Exclusion from Extracurricular Activities/Field Trips – Learner denied the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities for specified time period.
- Class Exclusion – A learner who misbehaves may be denied the right to attend particular classes for one day. An alternative educational setting and make-up privileges will be provided for this period.
- Community Service – Learner may be required to help clean up, sweep, wash desks, classrooms, etc.
- Afterschool Detention – Learners will be required to be in school for one hour after dismissal. Parents of learners will be notified prior to the detention. Supervision is provided by school staff for all detained learners.
- One Day In-School Suspension – A learner may be denied the right to attend a class/school activity for one school day.
- In-School Suspension (up to 5 days) – After an informal hearing, a learner may be barred from attending scheduled classes and be required to attend a special program for up to five consecutive school days.
- Off-Premise Suspension (up to 5 days). The principal may deny a learner to attend classes and activities for one to five school days. Homework will be provided and make-up privileges may or may not be available.
- Referral for Professional Counselling – The learner may not be readmitted to school prior to receiving professional evaluation.
- Expulsion – A due process hearing with Board, Principal, and Parent will be held to determine if learner will be expelled from Michigan Islamic Academy.
- Referral to Law Enforcement Agency

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

I have received my copy of the Florida Islamic School Learner Handbook.

The Learner Handbook describes important information about the Academy, and I understand that I should consult my Guidance Counsellor or Principal regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. I understand that any and all policies and practices may be changed at any time by the Board of Education. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may modify or eliminate existing policies. Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook supplements the Enrolment Application.

I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

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Learner's Name and Grade (Print)

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Learner's Signature

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Parent Signature

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Date