

AKSA

Alte
Kantonsschule
Aarau

Guide for exchange students



Gymnasium
Wirtschaftsmittelschule

**ALTE
KANTONSSCHULE
AARAU**

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AKSA

Edition 2015

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General Information

The Alte Kantonsschule Aarau (AKSA) is a state school offering three different types of education: The Gymnasium (Kanti), the business-oriented Wirtschaftsmittelschule (WMS) and the Informatikmittelschule (IMS) for students interested in informatics.

For the first two years of Kanti, students choose a focus subject (AF), for the third and fourth a higher-level subject (SPF) and only for the fourth year an elective (EF). The school offers a 5-year baccalaureate option for athletes, an immersion programme (various lessons are taught in English), and a programme which focuses on science and maths.

The WMS and IMS offer 3 years of schooling which are followed by a practical placement year. Upon successful completion, students receive a federal certificate of vocational training and education (EFZ) and a vocational baccalaureate (Berufsmatur).

The Gymnasium offers 4 years of schooling (with the exception of the sports programme). Upon graduation,

the students get the baccalaureate certificate (Matura).

Our school offers a large variety of optional subjects, especially in languages where several certificates can be obtained (First, Advanced and Proficiency in English, Delf in French, Dele in Spanish, and more).

Currently, there are about 180 teachers and 1500 students at the AKSA. Upon entering, students are divided into sixteen classes every year, named by letters from A to L or M, and the letter S is used for the sports class. WMS classes have a W as a first letter and IMS an I; Kanti classes have a G (which stands for Gymnasium). So, for example, in the third year of Kanti, class F would be G3F.

The AKSA is proud to have had many famous people as former students, as well as three Nobel prize winners. Among them, the developer of the famous formula for energy $E = mc^2$, Albert Einstein. The main building is named after him. The other buildings are also named after famous people:

Karl Moser (a Swiss Architect; he built the Albert-Einstein building), Paul Karrer (a Swiss chemist), János Tamàs (a Hungarian composer and conductor who used to teach at the AKSA), and Frank Wedekind (a German author and former student of the AKSA).

The AKSA was founded in 1802 and is the oldest secular school of this kind in Switzerland. It was first located in another building in Aarau until it was relocated to the Albert-Einstein building in 1896. The other buildings were built in 1860 (Karl-Moser), in 1894 (Albert-Einstein) and in 1969 (Paul-Karrer).

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Exchange Students at the AKSA

What we expect from an exchange student:

1. Preconditions

Exchange students attend the Alte Kantonsschule Aarau (AKSA) for an academic year. The students' educational background may differ from the syllabus at AKSA in terms of their previous school career, types of subjects and subject matters covered. Notwithstanding such differences, exchange students are expected to participate fully, actively and for the whole duration of their stay in all school activities in and outside the classroom. Appropriate and disciplined behaviour and adherence to the school rules are expected.

2. Agreement

2.1 Integration

The exchange student actively seeks to become integrated into his/her class and school life in general. He/she is open to and interested in contact with classmates and teaching staff.

2.2 Language Skills (German)

A good knowledge of German (speaking, listening, reading and writing skills) is crucial for a successful integration in the host family and school. Exchange students commit themselves to improving their language skills by

- taking a placement test on entering school
- regular, active participation in the remedial German classes offered by the school
- completing self-learning modules set by teaching staff according to an agreed timetable
- reading and completing coursework on 4-5 books (reading list to be arranged with the remedial German teacher)
- taking a German test after the first semester (minimum level: A2, GERR)
- taking a German test after the second semester (minimum level: B1, GERR)

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It is very important for us that the exchange students have already reached level A1 before they come to Switzerland and start school.

Most exchange organisations offer online language courses which students can utilize to ensure an adequate level of German (for example Rosetta Stone). The language level will be tested at the arrival of the exchange students.

2.3 Classes and subjects

The exchange student attends all mandatory subjects as fixed in his/her timetable. He/she takes an active interest in the subjects, completes coursework, and plays an active part in the lessons as far as his/her language skills permit. In consultation with teaching staff, he/she may be asked or allowed to work on special assignments and topics tailored to the student's individual abilities.

2.4 Adherence to rules

The exchange student has taken note of school regulations regarding attendance, leave of absence, and house rules, and formally agrees to adhere to them. Serious violations of school regulations and/or failure to comply with the above commitment may result in the immediate termination of the exchange year.

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School Management

The management of our school is divided into several departments. There is one principal and four vice principals. Each one has his own office and responsibilities.

The principal is responsible for the pedagogical and administrative management and the outward representation of the school. At the moment the principal is Dr. Martin Burkard. He has no fixed consultation hours but meetings may be arranged through the school office.

Kurt Büchler is the vice principal responsible for the first and second year of the Kanti, sport classes, project weeks, Abteilungswochen, student exchange programmes and the granting of leaves. For matters concerning sports, he is the contact person.

Peter Hänsli is the vice principal responsible for the 3rd and 4th year of the Kanti. Additionally, he is in charge of project theory, Matura projects,

course and career guidance and various events in the fields of science and technology.

The vice principal responsible for the WMS and IMS is Ulrich Salm. He is also in charge of quality management and school development, further education, communication and public relations (open days, school newspaper and website), absence system and student associations.

Dr. Hans-Jürg Suter is the fourth vice principal. He creates the regular and special class schedules of the school. Additionally, he is responsible for the immersion classes and is the contact person for music and arts.

The sixth member of the school management is Stefan Märki, being the office manager. He is responsible for finances, staffing, infrastructure and IT.

The five vice principals have fixed consultation hours. You can find these on

the school homepage and they are also posted on the wall next to their respective office.

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Curriculum

Mandatory	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Abbreviation
	1 st Term	2 nd Term							
German	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	D
French or Italian	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	F/I
English	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	E
Mathematics	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	M
Physics	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	P
Chemistry	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	C
Biology	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	B
History	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	G
Geography	2	2	2	2	0	3	0	0	Gg
Economics/Law	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	WR
Art or Music	2	2	3	3	2	2	0	0	Big/Mus
Informatics	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	Inf
Sports	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	Spo
Focus Subject	3	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	AF
Higher Level Subject	0	0	0	0	6	6	6	6	SPF
Elective	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	EF
Project Theory	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	PRO
Matura Project	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	MA
Total	32	32	33	33	34	35	34	32	

Optional Subjects

Besides the mandatory classes that are assigned to you, there is also a range of optional subjects you can choose from:

Russian, Spanish, Italian, Hebrew, Chinese, Greek, Latin, Informatics, Mathematics/ Physics Lab, Art, Music, Instrumental Lessons, Choir, Orchestra, Religious Education, Singing, various Ensembles and more.

There are courses which begin in the first, third or fourth year and which are therefore not available to exchange students who usually attend the second year. Sometimes classes might not take place if not enough students sign up for them. Instrumental courses are only available for students who already play that specific instrument.



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School Rules

As in most schools, also the AKSA has some rules that must be followed. The most important ones are listed below:

School buildings are open to students from Monday to Friday from 07:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Students attending special courses which finish after 6.30 p.m. will be granted special permission to stay later than 6:30 p.m.

Bullying other students, any form of violence, sexism and racism are not tolerated and will be sanctioned.

Please be considerate of others. Voices must be kept at a conversational level and music should be played quietly.

Furthermore, skateboards, inline-skates and kickboards are prohibited inside the school buildings. Any ball games are also forbidden.



For your own safety, you are not allowed to sit on windowsills when the windows are open.

Eating and drinking during the lessons, especially while on the computer, are not permitted.

Mobile phones and other electronic gadgets must be on silent and are not to be used during the lessons.

Smoking is only allowed outdoors in the designated areas signified by the green lines painted on the ground. The consumption of alcohol and other drugs on the school grounds is illegal.

Failing to follow school rules will lead to the appropriate punishment.

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Absences / Cancelled lessons

Normal students at the AKSA get a certain amount of lessons they can miss without any excuse. This is called "Absenzenkontingent". However, this does not apply to exchange students. Instead, every absence has to be excused with a signature from the student and the host mother or father.

A permission for any kind of extended vacation has to be requested in advance.

If an exchange student is ill for longer than one day, it is his/her obligation to inform the class teacher of the illness at the latest by the end of the second day.

The same applies to sports lessons: If you are injured and it is impossible for you to participate in sports lessons over a long period of time, a medical certificate is required.

At the AKSA, lessons are cancelled when a teacher is absent. Teacher absences are posted on schulNetz together with self-study tasks to make up for the cancelled lesson(s).

When a lesson is cancelled, you may leave the school campus but must be back in time for you next class.

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Absenzenwesen für Spezialfälle

**Entschuldigungen / Urlaubsgesuche
für Schülerinnen und Schüler mit Spezialregelung**

Name: _____
Vorname: _____
Geburtsdatum: _____

Sr.	Abt.	Abt. Lehrperson

Datum der Abgabe: _____

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Breaks and Holidays

The school year usually begins in the 33rd calendar week which normally falls in the 2nd week of August. There are 15 weeks of school holidays (listed below). Two special weeks take place in those 15 weeks: one class week = Abteilungswoche and one project week = Projektwoche.

Herbstferien: three weeks in autumn, calendar weeks 39 - 41

Weihnachtsferien: two weeks around Christmas and New Year, calendar weeks 52 and 1

Sportferien: two weeks, calendar weeks 5 and 6

Frühlingsferien: three weeks, calendar weeks 15 to 17

Sommerferien: five weeks, usually starting in calendar week 28

There are also several public holidays throughout the year:

Good Friday and Easter Monday: usually in April

Ascension Day, usually in May, Thursday till Sunday off

Labour Day, 1st May, only afternoon off

Whit Monday, in May or June



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Project Weeks

As already mentioned, there are two special weeks at the AKSA: the class week and the project week.

Class week:

This week usually takes place in the autumn holidays in September, but it could also take place in April. It is spent together with your own class. In the first year it is used to get to know each other better. In the second year the class normally carries out a social work project. In the third year this week is reserved for a study week on a certain subject. In the last year it is used to concentrate on the chosen higher-level subject (SPF).

Project week:

For one week each year, students are able to attend a course of their choice (depending on availability). Some course examples are: biology lab, movie analysis, photography, climbing, physical experiments, nutrition, bike-tours, hiking, crafts, economics, finance, self-defence, ski camp, an excursion to a city in Europe and many more. The courses vary from year to year.

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School Sports

If you like to do sports, additionally to the compulsory sport lessons, you can join one of the several after school sports activities. They give you a great opportunity to meet people outside of your class and are open to everyone regardless of athletic ability. Although these courses are voluntary, once you have signed up you are obligated to regularly go. Each year there are different courses to choose from.



In addition, there are school teams which compete against other schools. If you are very good at a certain sport or even play in a league in your home country, joining one of these teams might be the perfect way to make your exchange year even more enjoyable. Try-outs are usually in the beginning of the year. If you are interested in joining one of the teams, talk to a gym teacher for more information.

- Basketball (Girls&Boys)
- Volleyball (Girls&Boys)
- Floorball (Girls & Boys)
- Handball (Girls&Boys)
- Soccer (Girls&Boys)



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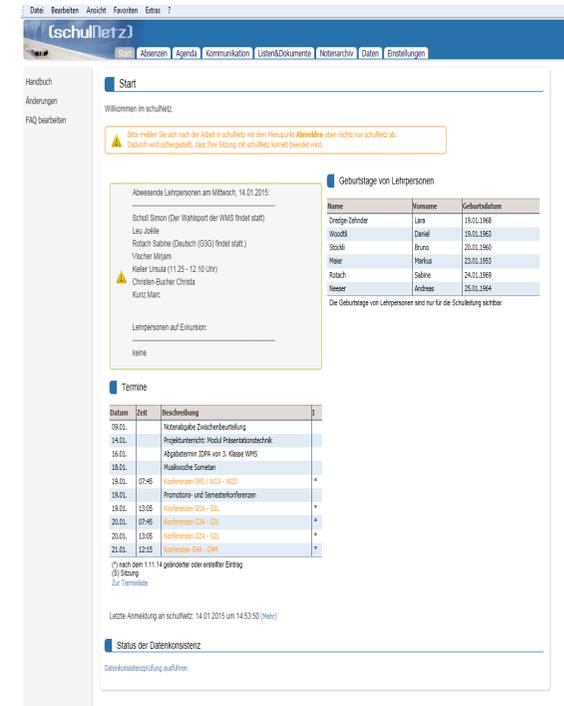
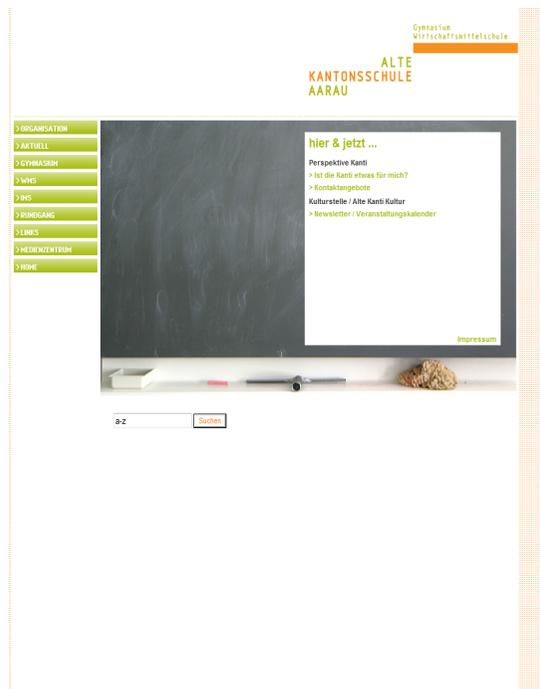
School Homepage / schulNetz

The AKSA Homepage is the best place to find information about our school. Under "Organisation" you will find links to information on the school administration, teachers, students, maintenance, and counsellors. Also the different regulations are published there. You can check out the schedule, the calendar and events. There are separate sites: one for the Kanti, the WMS and the IMS. On each site, there is general information about the specific courses of studies, subjects offered, the curricula and much more.

Through "Links" you can get to school clubs, websites, as well as e-mail addresses of students and teachers. Information on the media centre, and the virtual library "Digithek" can be found on the "Medienzentrum" site.

The new administration system of the school is called schulNetz which was released at the beginning of the school year 2014/2015. With schulNetz you can easily send e-mails and check your

schedule. Other administrative tasks are also done on this platform. For example, if a teacher is absent, it will be published on the entry page of schulNetz. You can also see if one of your lessons has been cancelled or moved to another room or will take place at another time than usual. And, of course, all your marks will be published on schulNetz too.

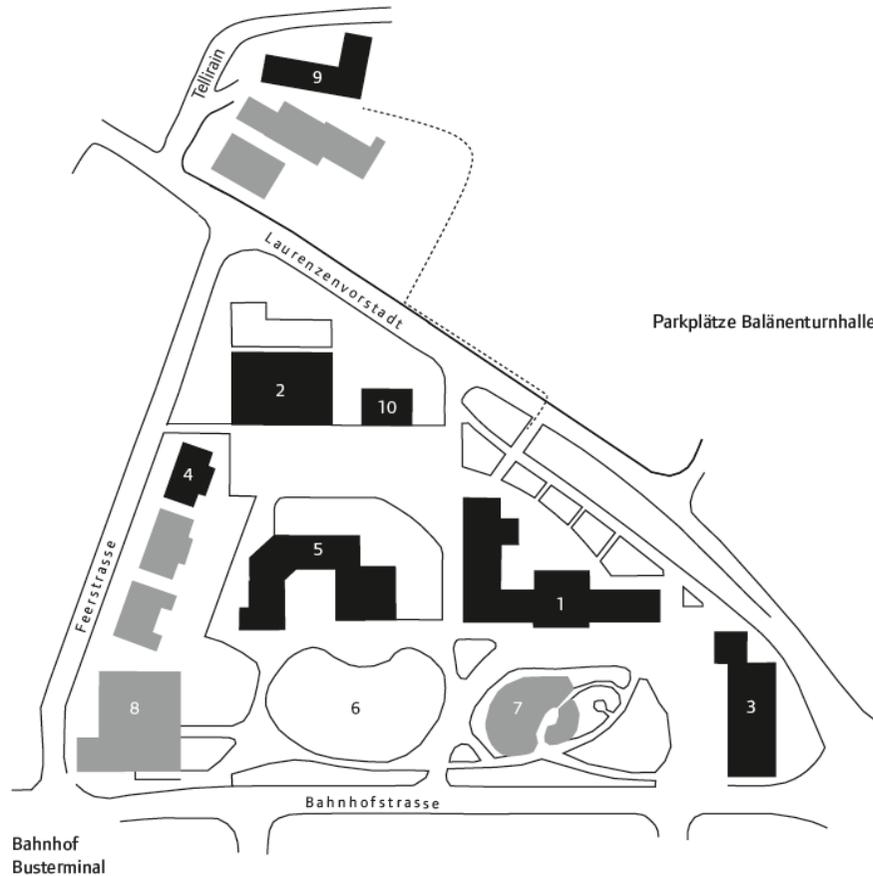


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Situationsplan Alte Kantonsschule Aarau



- 1 Albert-Einstein-Haus (Aula, Zimmer 04–39)
- 2 Paul-Karrer-Haus (Zimmer 211–275)
- 3 Frank-Wedekind-Haus (Mensa, Medienzentrum, BiG)
- 4 János-Tamás-Haus (Instrumentalunterricht, Zimmer 301–313 und 401–422)

- 5 Karl-Moser-Haus
- 6 Lustwiese
- 7 Schwanenteich
- 8 Naturama
- 9 Haeny-Gebäude (Zimmer 503–518)
- 10 Gärtnerhaus

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Room Numbers

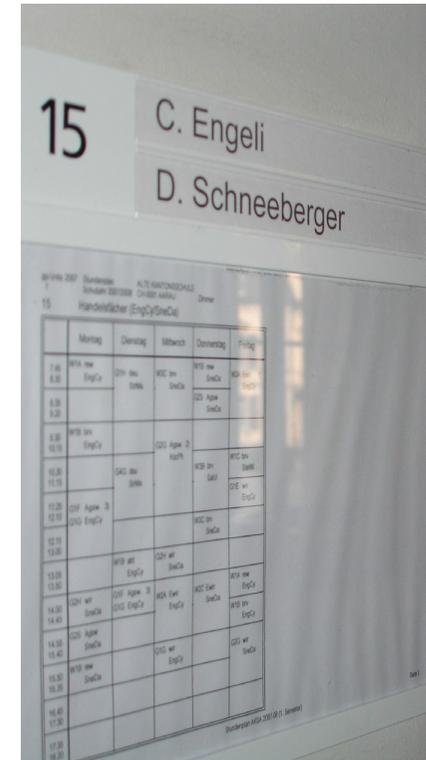
The classrooms at the AKSA are numbered according to the following system:

The room numbers in the Albert-Einstein building consist of two digits. The first digit stands for the floor. 1 refers to the first floor, 2 to the second floor, and 3 to the third floor. The second digit is the room number itself.

The room numbers in the Paul-Karrer building have three digits: the first one, which is always a 2, stands for the building. The rest is equivalent to the system in the Albert-Einstein-Haus.

The room numbers in the Haeny building have three digits as well: the first one, which is always a 5, stands for the building. The rest is equivalent to the system in the Albert-Einstein-Haus.

If you have a lesson in room 241, it will be in room number 1 on the 4th floor of the Paul-Karrer building. Room number 35 is in the Albert-Einstein building, on the 3rd floor, room number 5.



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Albert-Einstein Building

The Albert-Einstein building was built in 1896 and named after the famous Swiss physicist Albert Einstein. He is still the most famous person who has ever studied at the Alte Kanti Aarau. The administrative offices are in this building. It's the oldest and the most legendary building of the school.

School Office

The school office is on the first floor of the Albert-Einstein building. It is open from Monday to Friday from 08:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Here you can get information on all school-related subjects.

Panels / Notice Boards

Important information and upcoming events are listed on the panels. There is one panel in the Albert-Einstein building and one in the Paul-Karrer building.

The columns in the entrance hall of the Albert-Einstein building are also used as notice boards. The one on the left offers information on different events. Important information from the school administration is posted on the right column.

There are also two notice boards for students, one in the Aquarium next to the elevators, and one in the Albert-Einstein building next to the copying

machine. This is where students can find and post job offers and events. Before putting up a notice, you first need to get a confirmation stamp from the school office.

Practice Rooms

In the basement of the Albert-Einstein building, there are a couple of study rooms where students can spend their free time, eat lunch or do homework. There are also several microwaves to heat up your food.



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Paul-Karrer Building

The Paul-Karrer building, also called “Aquarium”, is named after the Swiss chemist Paul Karrer. With 7 floors, it is one of the tallest buildings in the area. Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry or Physics are taught in this building. The chemistry and biology laboratories are there as well.

The tables on the ground floor can be used for studying, doing homework, having lunch or just to use while hanging around with other students.

In the Paul-Karrer building the elevator will only take you to the 4th floor or higher. If you aren't able to walk up the steps (because of a broken leg or an illness), you may get a key from the caretaker so that you can use the elevator for all floors.



Lockers

There are some lockers in the basement of the Paul-Karrer building. If you like to use a locker, you need to get a key from the caretaker. His office is on the ground floor of the same building.



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Haeny / Telli

The AKSA has been using the Haeny building for lessons since 2012. The building is situated about 300 metres away from the Albert-Einstein building across the street. There is a computer room as well as class rooms, and a big room especially for exams. There are also a few tables at which you can eat lunch or spend your breaks.



The sports lessons are in the Telli, an area situated about a kilometre away from our school. There is a big sports facility centre with one large and four small gyms, an indoor pool and outdoor facilities. There is as well a small fitness centre with about five machines and other weight-lifting equipment like barbells in different weights. Two football fields, an athletic track and three fenced in courts, one with basketball baskets, are available for all students. To get to the Telli, take the bus number 2 "Telli-Rohr" which leaves the bus station every 15 minutes.

The sport lessons are obligatory unless you have a medical certificate because of an accident or illness. This includes the swim lessons, which take place once a week.

There are showers and gym change rooms which most students use following sports class.



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Library / Mediathek

The school library is in the Frank-Wedekind building. There you can borrow all kind of books, newspapers, magazines, videos, music, CDs, and cassettes, as well as a video camcorder. The number of items you can borrow is unlimited. The loan-term is one month which can be extended by renewing.

The library is a place for silent study and work on projects. There are several computers and a copying machine available, you can also borrow laptops. All laptops are connected to the Internet and the printer. If you need any help at printing, the staff at the desk of the media centre can help you.

It is forbidden to eat, drink, or make noise in the library.

To borrow books you need your student card and to use the computers you need a password which you will get at the beginning of your school year.

The library is open from Monday through Friday, 07:45 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. For more information have a look at the school homepage.

There is a room called "Wedekind Room" where you can work silently or sometimes presentations are held there. There is a projector, a TV, an overhead projector, a white board as

well as a blackboard which can all be used.

The AKSA provides three copying machines to the students. There is one in the Albert-Einstein building (in the room with the class pigeon holes), one in the library, and one in the Aquarium (next to the snack machines). In order to use these machines you need your student card. Using these machines, you can also copy onto transparencies for the overhead projector. Transparencies have to be bought in the library. Normal paper is already in the machines.



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Mensa / Microwaves / Janos-Tamas-Building

Since 2008 there has been a new cafeteria (Mensa) which is in the Frank-Wedekind building. Students, teachers, employers and others gather there to eat. You can do your homework there or just hang around. Three set menus are offered each day, including a vegetarian one. The menus cost between 8 and 10 CHF for students. The daily menus are listed on the Internet. You can also get various desserts, snacks, salads and drinks, including tea and coffee.

It is self-service, so please return your dishes after eating. It is not allowed to bring food or drinks bought elsewhere into the Mensa to eat it there.

There are between 270 places inside and during summertime another 80 places in the garden. The Mensa is open from Monday through Friday from 07:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

For those students who like to bring their lunch from home, the school provides microwaves. There are about ten in the study rooms of the Einstein building and three in the Aquarium next to the copying machine. You do not have to pay anything but there is usually a long line of students waiting to use them.

The instrumental lessons are held in the János-Tamás-building. This building is named after the famous Hungarian musician and former student of the AKSA, János Tamás.



Mensa
Alte Kantonsschule Aarau

SVGroup
Passion for quality. Since 1914.



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