دائرة التعليم والمعرفة
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE
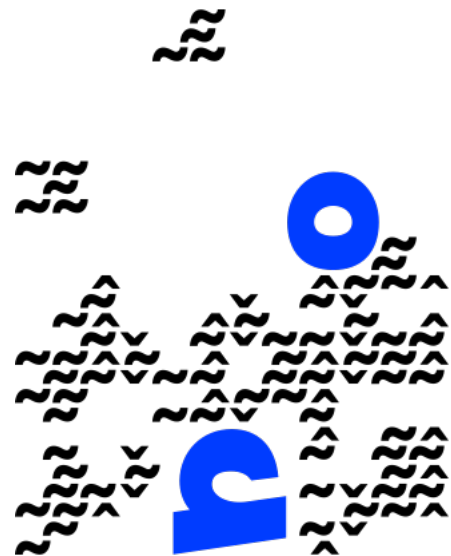
EARLY EDUCATION INSTITUTION **POLICY**

on

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND COMPLIANCE

Purpose

This policy establishes essential guidelines for Early Education Institutions (EEIs) to ensure high standards of quality. It provides a framework for self- and external evaluation to foster a culture of reflective practice and continuous improvement. Additionally, it serves as a reference point for regulatory compliance and supports a consistent and equitable educational experience across all EEIs.

1

Definitions

Authorized Personnel	Personnel who are authorized by ADEK or other relevant government entities to visit an EEI and access its premises and resources for a specific purpose.
Child	A person under the age of 4 years, as per Federal Decree Law No. (51) of 2022 Regulating Nurseries.
Compliance	Adherence to the minimum requirements of EEIs as per applicable legislation.
Early Education Institutions (EEI)	All ADEK-licensed institutions that offer early years service (e.g., nurseries).
EE Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework	The standards and framework which establish clear quality benchmarks and offer a structure for continuous improvement, professional development, reflective practice for EE settings, professionals, and stakeholders.
Enforcement Action	Action taken against an EEI in response to an instance, or instances, of non-compliance. Enforcement actions are progressive and range from the issuance of a letter of concern to, in cases of extreme or repeated non-compliance with ADEK's requirements, the closure of an EEI.
Key Group	Known as a "class" in more formal educational settings, comprises a group of children, an EE Educator, and any other members of the key team.
Key Team	The team of staff in a child's key group, whom they interact with daily and who take care of their physical, emotional, and educational needs, typically including the EE Educator, EE Assistant, and EE Aide.
Quality Assurance	The process of continuous improvement through internal and external evaluation to achieve excellence.
Self-Evaluation Plan	Self-evaluation is a structured framework through which an EEI continuously reflects and responds to its own performance, achievements, strengths, and areas of improvement using varied sources of evidence and data.
Self-Evaluation Process	A process of systematic analysis and evaluation by which an EEI reflects on its practice and identifies areas of improvement using varied sources of evidence and data.

Policy

All EEIs shall develop and implement a Quality Assurance and Compliance Policy, which is aligned with the EE Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework and includes:

1. EEI quality assurance
2. EEI compliance
3. Staff training

1. EEI Quality Assurance

EEIs shall commit to continuous improvement as per the EE Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework.

1.1 Self-Evaluation

EEIs shall have a self-evaluation process in place to ensure that the quality of practices and services provided are regularly assessed internally and that actions are continuously integrated into an improvement plan.

a) Self-Evaluation Process

EEIs shall define a clear and comprehensive self-evaluation process within their policy.

b) Self-Evaluation Plan

EEIs shall use a variety of self-evaluation tools (including the self-evaluation tool provided by ADEK) to measure quality within all aspects of their provision. Self-evaluation documentation shall always be dated, filed, and referenced for the next self-evaluation.

1.2 Improvement Plan

EEIs shall ensure an improvement plan is in place for each aspect of their service provision, which includes a method to track progress and is:

- Updated regularly (at least once a year) and on an ad hoc basis whenever any self- or external evaluation has identified actions to improve quality.
- Adjusted based on feedback and evaluation.
- Available on request by ADEK.

1.3 External Quality Assurance

Quality assurance processes that are external to the EE Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework, are not mandatory, but EEIs are highly encouraged to seek relevant accreditations and certifications based on the type of curriculum or learning framework/approach they offer.

3

2. EEI Compliance

EEIs shall adhere to all compliance requirements in Abu Dhabi, which includes undergoing all required inspections by ADEK, Abu Dhabi Civil Defense Authority (CDA), Department of Health – Abu Dhabi (DoH), and other applicable authorities, which are relevant for an EEI's license renewal.

2.1 Compliance Visits

EEIs shall undergo the following types of compliance visits conducted by ADEK, or by appropriate authorities, to assess their compliance with ADEK requirements. ADEK reserves the right to conduct compliance visits at its discretion.

a) Annual Compliance Visits: Visits conducted annually to determine the EEI's compliance with ADEK requirements and all health and safety requirements, in line with the ADEK EEI health and safety policies.

b) Ad-Hoc Visits: Visits conducted at ADEK's discretion for the following:

- To assess compliance with specific ADEK requirements (e.g., assessments, leadership), or

- To investigate adverse reports or concerns/complaints from parents, staff, divisions within ADEK, etc. regarding the EEI (e.g., capacity inspection, validation of buildings code, incident investigation, building condition, etc.).

EEIs shall grant authorized personnel (e.g., compliance specialists) with unhindered access to the EEI premises and relevant resources to conduct compliance visits, in line with the *ADEK EEI Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy* (see *ADEK EEI Quality Assurance and Compliance Policy Guide*).

EEI staff shall demonstrate courteous and ethical behavior while dealing with authorized personnel from ADEK or other relevant authorities. This includes maintaining professionalism, respecting the rights and dignity of others, and acting with integrity in all interactions. Compliance with this policy is mandatory to ensure a positive and safe environment for everyone (see *ADEK EEI Quality Assurance* and *Compliance Policy Guide*).

2.2 Action Against Non-Compliance

EEIs found to be non-compliant shall ensure that they follow the instructions given by the ADEK compliance team to meet the compliance requirements within the deadlines specified by ADEK. In addition, EEIs shall be subject to enforcement actions issued by ADEK.

3. Staff Training

EEIs shall ensure their staff are aware of the EE Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework, and EEI compliance requirements that are to be achieved and they shall also provide continuous professional development to ensure quality improvement.

4. Compliance

4.1 This policy shall be effective as of the start of the Academic Year 2024/25 (Fall term). EEIs are expected to be fully compliant with this policy by the start of the Academic Year 2025/26 (Fall term).

4.2 Failure to comply with this policy shall be subject to legal accountability and the penalties stipulated in accordance with the ADEK's regulations, policies, and requirements, notwithstanding any other penalties imposed by Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties and its amendments or any other relevant law. ADEK reserves the right to intervene if the EEI is found to be in violation of its obligations.

References

- Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK). (latest version). *Early Education Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework.*
- Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties and its amendments
- Federal Decree Law No. (51) of 2022 Regulating Nurseries
- Ministry of Education (MoE), (2020). *Regulatory Compliance Manual for Early Childhood Institutions.*

5

800 555 | www.adek.gov.ae | Abu Dhabi, UAE   September 2024 | Version 1.0 | ADEK EEI Quality Assurance & Compliance Policy