



Effective From	AY 2024/25 (Fall term)
Compliance From	AY 2025/26 (Fall term)

EARLY EDUCATION INSTITUTION **POLICY**

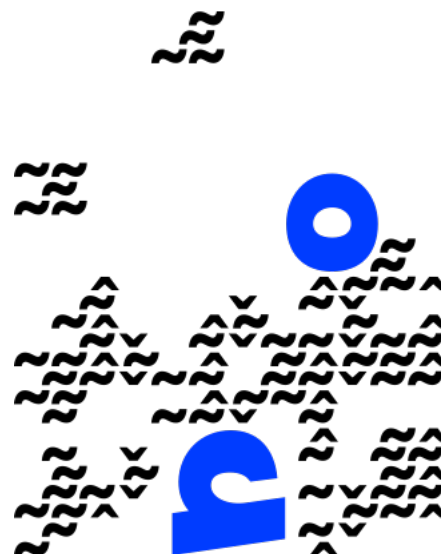
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OBSERVATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS

Purpose

This policy establishes the fundamental principles for conducting observations and assessments of children in Early Education Institutions (EEl). It ensures consistent implementation of these principles through standardized procedures while setting transparent expectations for all involved stakeholders, including EEl management and staff, parents, regulators, and service providers.

Additionally, the policy promotes a holistic approach to observations and assessments, recognizing the importance of addressing various aspects of a child's development, including cognitive, social, emotional, and physical domains. It emphasizes the use of age-appropriate and culturally sensitive assessment tools to gather comprehensive information about each child's progress and individual strengths.



Definitions

Additional Learning Needs	<p>Individual requirements for additional support, modifications, or accommodations within an early years setting on a permanent or temporary basis in response to a specific context. This applies to any support required by children of determination and those who have special educational needs and/or additional barriers to learning, access, or interaction in that specific context (e.g., dyslexic, hearing or visually impaired, twice exceptional, or gifted and/or talented).</p> <p>For example, a child with restricted mobility may require lesson accommodations to participate in Physical Education and building accommodations to access facilities but may not require any accommodations in assessments. Equally, a child with hearing impairment may require additional support in class to access lesson content but may not require any physical accommodations to access learning.</p>
Anecdotal Records	Detailed descriptive narrative recorded after a specific behavior interaction occurs.
Assessment	Evaluation of a child’s competencies, development of skills, and progress within all areas of development.
Assessment Report	A written record concerning the context and results of an assessment.
Child	A person under the age of 4 years, as per Federal Decree Law No. (51) of 2022 Regulating Nurseries.
Developmental Goals	Areas of development (e.g., a child's social, emotional, behavior, thinking and communication skills) which are linked, and each depends on and influences the others.
Early Education Institutions (EIs)	All ADEK-licensed institutions that offer early years service (e.g., nurseries).
Formative Assessments	Continuous process of evaluating a child as they go through the learning phases and acquire new skills and concepts.
Holistic	Whole or complete, connected to all areas.
Jottings/Notes	Informal notes taken when observing children.
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/or EE Aide.
Learning Goals	Intended purposes and desired achievements.
Learning Journals/Portfolios	A collection of children’s work or photographs, as evidence of their learning, usually accompanied with comments from the child’s key person or teacher.

Learning Outcomes	Specific knowledge, skills, or expertise that a learner will get from a learning activity. These are measurable achievements.
Learning Stories	Observations made over a long period that are based on the child’s interests, their level of involvement, persistence, communication, and responsibility-taking, usually written as a story in the first or second person, as if the child is being addressed.
Observation	Practice of looking at and listening to children to find out how they are developing, what they like doing, and what they are learning through their interaction with the environment and with other children.
Pedagogy	Philosophy, method, and practice of teaching.
Sociograms	Documented observations of the social groups that children play in.
Summative Assessments	Evaluation of learning after a certain period of teaching has passed.



Policy

All EEIs shall develop and implement an Observations and Assessments Policy, which clearly outlines:

1. Observation methods
2. Types of assessments
3. A staff training plan
4. Parent communication

1. Observation Methods

EEIs shall conduct ongoing observations, formally or informally, throughout the day.

1.1 Informal observations

EEIs shall use informally gathered information, such as from watching and listening to children whilst they play, interact socially, eat, communicate, and participate in activities or events, to enhance the learning and development of children.

1.2 Formal observations

EEIs shall conduct formal observations, using evidence-based methods, aimed at documenting children's progress within all areas of learning and development.

1.3 Observation Techniques

EEIs shall identify and use a variety of formal (or planned) observation techniques to check the child's progress within a certain developmental area or competency.

1.4 Recording and Documenting Observations

EEIs shall document and record observations used to assess children's progress and improve practice, and thus include the following elements in their Observations and Assessments Policy:

- a) Frequency of observations.
- b) The requirement that all observations shall be supported by evidence.
- c) The requirement that all observations and assessments shall be treated with confidentiality.
- d) Clear guidelines on how observation records are to be stored and accessed, along with the requirement to train staff members on these guidelines.
- e) The requirement that recorded observation information is easy to understand (for staff and parents), objective (factual, focusing on what children do and say, avoiding assumptions and inferences), and easy to complete regularly.

2. Types of Assessments

EElS shall conduct systematic and regular formative and summative assessments for every child throughout the year, so that, over time, educators gain a complete picture of each child's progress about the learning outcomes. This shall be reflected in their policy.

2.1 Assessment Reports

EElS shall define a method for tracking children's progress and highlighting their achievements via an assessment report. Assessment reports shall be:

- a) Aligned to the expected developmental goals and learning outcomes as per the child's age and the learning pedagogy the EEl follows.
- b) Discussed with parents at the end of a learning period, such as at the end of each term, or mid-year. Parents shall be informed in advance about the frequency with which such assessment reports are prepared and shared with them.
- c) There shall be a minimum of two summative assessment reports sent to parents per academic year.

2.2 Individual Assessments

EElS shall have a method of assessing children with additional learning needs, based on their developmental needs, including assessments that will help to determine if the EEl is equipped to provide for the child's additional learning needs or justify the requirement for screening or specialized support.

These assessments shall be evidence-based, using a minimum of 6 weeks of observations and a variety of observation techniques (see [ADEK EEl Inclusion Policy](#)).

3. Staff Training Plan – Observations and Assessments

EElS shall support EE Educators with the implementation of this policy through regular training and staff development meetings, which include how to:

- a) Monitor the range and quality of observations made.
- b) Evaluate the effectiveness of planning considering observations made.
- c) Prioritize time for observations of children to monitor, support, and assess their learning.

3.1 Training on Observation

EElS shall provide their staff with appropriate guidance and training on conducting meaningful observations and using this information to assess children's progress, as well as their own teaching, environment, and strategies. This includes:

- a) Using a variety of observation techniques to assess and support children's learning and development.
- b) Awareness of the Observations and Assessments Policy, its methods, and guidelines.

3.2 Training on Interpretation of Observations for Assessments

EEl's shall provide training on effectively conducting and interpreting observation assessments, which shall be linked to the expected goals and objectives set out within the EEl's curriculum framework.

3.3 Training on Assessment Reports

EEl's shall train staff on preparing assessment reports as per the EEl's chosen assessment method, which should be specified in their Observations and Assessments Policy.

4. Parent Communication Plan – Observations and Assessments

4.1 Sharing Observations

EEl's shall have a systematic method of communicating children's progress and achievements and involving parents in their child's EEl journey (see [ADEK EEl Parent Engagement and Communication Policy](#)).

In cases where parents do not have access to the appropriate digital application, or they do not feel comfortable using this medium of communication, EEl's shall devise an alternative method for the communication of observations.

EEl's shall also seek to provide information to parents on the observation and assessment methods used to evaluate children's progress (see recommendations in the [ADEK EEl Observations and Assessments Guide](#)).

4.2 Parent Conferences

EEl's shall organize parent conferences throughout the year in addition to phone calls and daily communication through a parent communications app/daily diary. These conferences can be scheduled for the end of each term or planned biannually (mid-year and end-year).

5. Compliance

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

5.2 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 EEl is found to be in violation of its obligations.

References

- Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties and its amendments
- Federal Decree Law No. (51) of 2022 Regulating Nurseries

Publication

2024 (September) ADEK_EEI_Observations and Assessments Policy_v.1.0

Department of Education and Knowledge, Abu Dhabi (ADEK)

This policy applies to Early Educational Institutions (EEI) in Abu Dhabi.

