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SCHOOL POLICY

on

STUDENT BEHAVIOR



Introduction

Schools have a responsibility to ensure that they are positive and safe places to learn. By setting clear expectations for student behavior and actively addressing behaviors of concern, schools can foster secure, respectful, welcoming, and enriching environments. In setting standards for individual and collective behavior and promoting the cultural values of the UAE, schools position their students to become positive citizens within the wider community.

This policy sets out the basic requirements for schools in defining and implementing a Student Code of Conduct, and in establishing systems to promote positive behavior.

Purpose

- Set out measures to proactively encourage positive student behaviors and to prevent and address behaviors of concern.
- Clarify expectations for student behavior through a Code of Conduct with a unified set of minimum requirements.
- Instigate bullying prevention through a targeted school-level policy.
- Support students who are finding it challenging to meet behavioral expectations through appropriate intervention.
- Outline requirements for dealing with student misconduct through a staged approach.

Definitions

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| Absence | <p>The state of not being physically present in class/at school.</p> |
| Absence rate | <p>The proportion of absences to school days as per the approved school calendar. If the student was admitted mid-year, the absence rate is calculated from their joining date.</p> |
| Additional Learning Needs | <p>Individual requirements for additional support, modifications, or accommodations within a school setting on a permanent or temporary basis in response to a specific context. This applies to any support required by students 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 student 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 student with hearing impairment may require adaptive and assistive technology to access content in class and may also require physical accommodations (e.g., sit in the front of the class to be able to lip read) to access learning.</p> |
| ADEK Wellbeing Policies | <p>The group of ADEK policies that relate to student and/or staff wellbeing includes the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADEK School Digital Policy • ADEK School Educational Risk Policy • ADEK School Extracurricular Activities and Events Policy • ADEK School Health and Safety Policy • ADEK School Food and Nutrition Policy • ADEK School In-School Specialist Services Policy • ADEK School Inclusion Policy • ADEK School Physical Education and School Sports Policy • ADEK School Safeguarding Policy • ADEK School Staff Wellbeing Policy • ADEK School Student Behavior Policy • ADEK School Student Mental Health Policy • ADEK School Student Protection Policy • ADEK School Sustainability Policy • ADEK School Wellbeing Policy |
| Behaviors of Concern | <p>A significant change in behavior (observed in relation to academic performance, interests, social activities, or ability to perform familiar tasks) with the potential to negatively affect an individual's wellbeing or that of others. This also includes “any repeated pattern of behavior, or perception of behavior, that interferes with or is at risk of interfering with optimal learning, wellbeing, physical</p> |

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| | safety, and/or engagement in pro-social interaction with peers and adults” (Smith & Fox, 2003) and includes risky or illegal habits. |
| Bullying | Repeated physical, social, or verbal aggression exercised by a person who feels they are in a position of power, against another person who is perceived as different, weaker, or powerless, to achieve specific gains or draw attention, in a way that hurts this other person physically and/or emotionally. Bullying can be committed by groups or individuals, in person or online (cyberbullying). The <i>National Bullying Policy for the Prevention of Bullying in Educational Institutions</i> (MoE, n.d.) provides a complete framework for bullying and cyberbullying. |
| Code of Conduct | A school’s principles, standards, and expectations for student behavior at school and during school-related activities outside the school. It includes a clear statement of what constitutes positive behavior and what constitutes misconduct. |
| Documented Learning Plan (DLP) | A plan which outlines any personalized learning targets, modifications to curriculum, additional support, or tools for learning which are agreed by school staff, parents, and students (where appropriate), including Individual Educational Plans (IEP), Individual Support Plans (ISP), Individual Learning Plans (ILP), Behavior Support Plans (BSP), Advanced Learning Plans (ALP), etc. This may be to address any specific identified academic, behavioral, language, or social and emotional need. |
| Extracurricular Activities | Organized activities that students can participate in that are external to the school. Activities can be athletic, cultural, intellectual, philanthropic, and/or social in nature. |
| Misconduct | Conduct that is not in line with behavioral expectations or the school's Student Code of Conduct. |
| Tiered Model of Support | An approach to meeting the different needs of students which acknowledges that most needs can be met by the teacher (Tier 1: Universal), whilst some may require specific interventions (Tier 2: Targeted) and a few may require a high degree of personalization and possibly external support by specialists (Tier 3: Intensive and Individualized). This includes models such as the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Graduated Approach Model, and others. |
| Parent | The person legally liable for a child or entrusted with their care, defined as the custodian of the child as per the Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema). |
| Positive Behavior | The expected standards of student behavior as set out in the school’s Student Code of Conduct. Such behavior is conducive to |

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| | the learning, wellbeing, and safety of the student and others in the school community. |
| Positive Handling | An approach to resorting to the least intrusive form of physical contact using reasonable force as the only available option to prevent harm to self and others. Positive handling involves not using more force than is reasonably required to intervene through physical contact, such as guiding an injured student to safety by the arm to more extreme circumstances such as restraining a student who is violently injuring a peer. |
| Student Behavior | A student’s responses to situations and stimuli, including the appropriateness or inappropriateness of their words, mannerisms, attitudes, and actions toward other students, staff, or members of the wider school community. |



Policy

1. Student Behavior Policy

- 1.1 Policy Requirement: Schools shall develop and implement a Student Behavior Policy, in line with the ADEK wellbeing policies and the *National Policy for the Prevention of Bullying in Educational Institutions* (MoE, n.d.).
 1. The school's Student Behavior Policy shall include the following:
 - a. An overarching positive behavior model (see [Section 2. Positive Behavior Model](#)).
 - b. The school's Student Code of Conduct (see [Section 3. Student Code of Conduct](#)).
 - c. Misconduct Policy and Procedures (see [Section 4. Misconduct Policy and Procedures](#)).
 - d. A policy on the prevention of bullying (see [Section 5. Bullying Prevention](#)).
 - e. How schools provide support and interventions for students (see [Section 6. Support and Interventions](#)).
- 1.2 Annual Review: Schools shall review their Student Behavior Policy and the effectiveness of its implementation annually based on a review of student's behavioral incidents.
- 1.3 Communication: Schools shall take active measures to ensure that the policy is clear and understood throughout the school community. Schools shall also share the policy with parents (e.g., on the school website) and ensure they acknowledge the policy when signing the parent-school agreement.

2. Positive Behavior Model

- 2.1 Positive Behavior Model: Schools shall implement a Positive Behavior Model to promote, recognize, reward, and reinforce positive behavior that consists of the following:
 1. The school's underlying approach and principles in creating a culture of promoting high standards of behavior in alignment with the values of the school, including:
 - a. UAE National Identity and Culture: Respect for religion, local culture and values, and traditions in line with the [ADEK School Values and Ethics Policy](#) and the [ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy](#).
 - b. Positive School Environment: A school environment that is welcoming, caring, safe, enriching, professional, and respectful to all, regardless of background, nationality, religion, ability/disability, race, gender, etc.
 2. School-wide strategies and frameworks that educate all students on positive behavior such as social-emotional development, self-management, emotional regulation, respect for diversity, and bullying prevention and intervention.
 3. Training for educators on the school's Student Behavior Policy and the positive management of student behavior.

4. Clear and comprehensive communications on the role and obligations of parents in embodying and promoting positive behavior, in line with the [ADEK School Parent Engagement Policy](#).
5. Mechanisms and procedures to identify students who are at risk of engaging in or appear to be engaging in misconduct or behaviors of concern.
6. Support, interventions, and procedures in cases of misconduct and behaviors of concern, in line with the requirements set out in [Section 6. Support and Interventions](#).

3. Promoting Positive Behavior Through a Student Code of Conduct

3.1 Student Code of Conduct: Schools shall encourage positive behavior amongst their student body by establishing a Student Code of Conduct that comprises the following, at a minimum:

1. A clear statement of actions defining positive student behavior, which includes:
 - a. Showing due care and respect for the school, its staff, students, and the wider community by:
 - 1) Complying with all school rules.
 - 2) Behaving safely and responsibly, and with regard to the safety and welfare of oneself and others.
 - 3) Caring for the school's property and facilities as well as the property of others.
 - b. Representing the school on public occasions and promoting a positive school image.
 - c. Demonstrating a positive mindset and engagement with learning by:
 - 1) Attending school and classes on time and providing an explanation for lateness and absences.
 - 2) Fulfilling all responsibilities as a student (e.g., completing classwork) with a good work ethic, personal effort, honesty, and a willingness to learn.
 - 3) Behaving responsibly and respectfully so as not to disrupt the learning of others within and outside the classroom.
 - 4) Engaging in extracurricular learning opportunities.
 - d. Demonstrating consideration, respect, and civility to others, including staff, students, parents, and the wider community, by taking actions such as:
 - 1) Speaking politely and behaving courteously with others (e.g., using "please", and "thank you" in speech, holding doors open for others, etc.).
 - 2) Queuing in an orderly way and respecting others' positions in queues.
 - 3) Respecting personal space and boundaries, including requesting consent to touch or use the belongings of others.
 - 4) Taking personal initiative to act as a "responsible citizen" of the school by not engaging in misconduct and protecting other students from bullying by intervening (when appropriate) and/or reporting incidents of misconduct witnessed.
 - 5) Showing sportsmanship in winning and losing.

- 6) Considering the impact of words and actions on all students, staff, and parents.
 - 7) Following good hygiene practices (e.g., washing hands, covering nose and mouth when sneezing/coughing, refraining from spitting, being mindful of unpleasant odours from oneself).
 - 8) Being vigilant of, caring for, supporting, and/or mentoring younger students, where appropriate.
 - 9) Taking personal initiative to encourage and promote environmental awareness, conservation, and sustainable practice, in line with the [ADEK School Sustainability Policy](#).
 - 10) Encouraging collaboration and open dialogues by engaging in teamwork and possessing an open and welcoming attitude toward fellow students, particularly those who may feel marginalized (new students, students frequently bullied, etc.).
 - 11) Dressing modestly and appropriately and following the school's dress code and grooming rules.
 - 12) Respecting UAE national identity and cultural values in line with the [ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy](#).
 - 13) Recognizing the diversity of the school and wider community, and not discriminating against others based on characteristics such as ethnic origin, race, nationality, culture, language, religion, gender, or ability/disability, in line with the [ADEK School Values and Ethics Policy](#).
2. The expectation for students to exhibit positive behavior when under the school's supervision.
 - a. This includes periods when students are traveling to and from the school using school transportation and moving between, waiting for, and taking part in all activities organized by the school inside or outside its premises.
 - b. Schools are authorized to extend the applicability of the Student Code of Conduct to situations where students are representing the school indirectly when not under the school's supervision, such as when wearing a school uniform in public settings.
 3. A clear statement of actions considered to be misconduct and the associated disciplinary actions, as defined in [Section 4. Misconduct Policy and Procedures](#).

4. Misconduct Policy and Procedures

- 4.1 Schools shall strive to create a culture of applying positive behavior approaches when dealing with student misconduct. This includes reviewing the incident with the student and giving them a chance to explain, understand, and take ownership and accountability for their misconduct. Schools shall equally analyze possible root causes for the student's behavior, engage the student in coming up with their own behavior management strategies, and provide students with the necessary social, emotional, and educational support to encourage positive behavior as much as possible prior to resorting to any disciplinary measures (see [Section 4. Misconduct Policy and Procedures](#)).
- 4.2 Policy Requirement: Schools shall develop and implement their Misconduct Policy and Procedures, in line with the requirements set out in this policy. In instances where schools have further requirements for managing student conduct, schools have the

option to adopt the student behavior management system (Article 4, 5, and 7) or any aspect of it as outlined in the Ministerial Resolution No. (851) of 2018 Concerning the Code of Behavior Management for Students in General Education Institutions (MoE, 2018), as long as it does not contradict this policy. The school policy shall outline, at minimum, the following elements.

1. This misconduct policy shall be applicable to students starting in Grade 5/Year 6. Disciplinary measures for students below Grade 5/Year 6 shall be subject to Ministerial Resolution No. (206) of 2020 on the Policy of Managing Positive Behavior for Children in Early Childhood in Educational Institutions (MoE, 2020).
2. Levels of Misconduct: Schools shall ensure that their Misconduct Policy and Procedures distinguish between the different levels of misconduct outlined in Article 7 of Ministerial Resolution No. (851) of 2018 Concerning the Code of Behavior Management for Students in General Education Institutions (MoE, 2018):
 - a. Level One Offenses:
 - 1) Failing to attend classes on time repeatedly without an acceptable excuse.
 - 2) Non-compliance with the school uniform (regular or PE) without an acceptable excuse.
 - 3) Not bringing books and other resources for school without an acceptable excuse.
 - 4) Not following the school's rules as stated in the Student Code of Conduct, both inside and outside the classroom (e.g., eating during class or assembly without permission, not staying calm/disciplined during class time, making inappropriate sounds inside or outside the classroom, not dressing modestly, sporting inappropriate haircuts, if applicable).
 - 5) Sleeping or eating during class time or during the morning assembly without justification or permission (after verifying the student's health status).
 - 6) Not complying with the completion of homework (if applicable) and assignments in a timely manner, if applicable.
 - 7) Misuse of digital devices in school (e.g., playing games, viewing social media, messaging, using head/earphones in the classroom without justification or permission).
 - 8) Any other forms of misconduct similar to the above as per the discretion of the Behavioral Management Committee.
 - b. Level Two Offenses:
 - 1) Leaving or entering the classroom during class time without permission.
 - 2) Not attending mandatory school activities and events without an acceptable excuse.
 - 3) Physical fighting, inciting quarrels, threatening, or intimidating peers in the school.
 - 4) Acting or appearing in a manner that contradicts the [ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy](#).
 - 5) Causing minor damage to school property (e.g., writing or sticking gum under tables or on bus seats, minor tampering with the alarm bell or elevators).

- 6) Taking out and/or using mobile phones at school without permission or in the case of emergency.
 - 7) Verbally abusing or insulting any member of the school community (including visitors).
 - 8) Using, promoting, possessing, and/or distributing tobacco and other tobacco-derived products and paraphernalia such as shisha, e-cigarettes/vaping, etc., lighters, and pipes on the school premises, on the bus, or during school activities offsite.
 - 9) Refusing to follow any reasonable safety instructions in line with the [ADEK School Health and Safety Policy](#).
 - 10) Any other forms of misconduct similar to the above as per the discretion of the Behavioral Management Committee.
- c. Level Three Offenses:
- 1) Bullying, intimidation, harassment, and/or abuse of members of the school community, including defaming them on social media.
 - 2) Fabrication, falsification of documents, and Impersonation.
 - 3) Academic dishonesty/plagiarism (including cheating in exams or falsely taking credit for individual work).
 - 4) Leaving the school premises without permission.
 - 5) Seizure, destruction, and/or vandalism of school property.
 - 6) Setting off or activating the school's fire alarm or fire extinguishers.
 - 7) Seizure, destruction, and/or vandalism of the school bus (including all furnishings), including causing harm to the driver, supervisor, and/or other road users.
 - 8) Assaulting others in the school, on the bus, or during school activities offsite, without causing injury to the victim.
 - 9) Driving a vehicle recklessly inside or around the school premises, and not following the security and safety instructions.
 - 10) Capturing, possessing, viewing, or distributing media (audio, images, videos, etc.) of staff and students taken without consent.
 - 11) Any other forms of misconduct similar to the above as per the discretion of the Behavioral Management Committee.
- d. Level Four Offenses:
- 1) Using forms of communication (e.g. social media, digital devices) for unlawful or immoral purposes, or in a manner discrediting the school and members of the school community.
 - 2) Possessing, using, or distributing weapons or objects used as weapons (e.g. arms, blades), or their equivalent, on the school premises, on the bus, or during school activities offsite.
 - 3) Committing sexual assault (including engaging in sexual harassment) inside the school, on the bus, or during school activities offsite.
 - 4) Assaulting others in the school, on the bus, or during school activities offsite, and causing injury to the victim.
 - 5) Theft and/or engaging in its cover-up.
 - 6) Capturing, possessing, viewing, or distributing information/media (audio, images, videos, etc.) with unlawful content (e.g. pornography, terrorist/extremist videos).
 - 7) Leaking exam questions or engaging in related activities.
 - 8) Setting fire to the school premises.
 - 9) Insulting political, religious, or social figures in the UAE.
 - 10) Using, promoting, possessing, and/or distributing alcohol, narcotics, medical drugs, or psychotropic substances, on the school premises, on the bus, or during school activities offsite.

- 11) Disseminating or promoting culturally inappropriate ideas/beliefs that go against the laws of the UAE with malicious intent, as per the [ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy](#).
- 12) Intrusive and/or illegal digital activity on school IT systems (e.g., hacking into school accounts, installing unauthorized software).
- 13) Trespassing on school premises after school hours.
- 14) Persistent bullying, intimidation, harassment, and/or abuse of members of the school community, including defaming them on social media.
- 15) Any other forms of misconduct similar to the above as per the discretion of the Behavioral Management Committee.

4.3 Behavioral Management Committee: Schools shall form a Behavioral Management Committee.

1. The committee shall consist of a minimum of 4 members, including at least the following:
 - a. The Principal (and/or their delegate).
 - b. A member of the teaching team.
 - c. A member of the social care team (e.g. social worker, counselor, wellbeing committee or lead) or any other member at the school's discretion.
 - d. The Child Protection Coordinator. If this role is filled by a member of the social care team, the committee can consist of just 3 members, if the school chooses.
2. The committee shall review and discuss student behavioral concerns, provided that disciplinary actions by the committee must be fair and equitable to all students without exception. All disciplinary actions shall be appropriate to the student's age and ability and the severity of the misconduct as per the levels identified.
3. The committee members shall be available to convene at any given time to issue decisions and resolutions, in accordance with the urgency of the situation.

4.4 Preventive Mechanisms: Schools shall ensure that their student behavior policy outlines the mechanisms by which students are offered appropriate opportunities and guidance to identify the motivation behind their actions and rectify any negative behaviours' before disciplinary action is taken (see [Section 6. Support and Interventions](#)).

4.5 Disciplinary Actions: Schools shall ensure that their student behavior policy outlines acceptable disciplinary actions, with descriptions of how each action is to be carried out, the stakeholders involved, and the internal escalation process.

1. Schools are permitted to use any of the following disciplinary actions, provided they are proportionate, age-appropriate, and in line with [Figure 1. Staging of Disciplinary Procedures](#):
 - a. Discussion with the student and/or parents
 - b. Formal and recorded meetings with the student and/or parents
 - c. Verbal warning
 - d. Written warning to parents

- e. Temporary or permanent removal from a class/group, under appropriate supervision (onsite suspension)
- f. Loss of school privileges
- g. Temporary or permanent confiscation of personal items belonging to the student if inappropriate (e.g., a mobile phone or music player) with a resolution by the Behavioral Management Committee
- h. Supervised detention during break, lunch, and/or after school (with parental consent)
- i. Supervised restorative community work
- j. Temporary exclusion of the student from school premises (offsite suspension)
- k. Permanent exclusion of the student from school via the withdrawal/cancellation of their enrolment (expulsion)

2. Schools are forbidden to use any of the following methods as disciplinary actions:

- a. Corporal punishment (e.g., the use of physical force as a means of discipline or punishment with the intention of causing bodily pain or discomfort, however slight; in line with the [ADEK School Student Protection Policy](#))
- b. Disclosing personal information about a student without their consent (e.g., medical status, financial status, family affairs)
- c. Psychological punishment (e.g., verbal abuse, issuing threats)
- d. Locking a student inside the school premises
- e. Seizing the student's personal belongings without having a resolution by the Behavioral Management Committee
- f. Lowering or threatening to lower the student's academic grade/score
- g. Punishing a group for an individual's misconduct
- h. Imposing additional schoolwork
- i. Mocking, insulting, or demeaning the student in private or in public
- j. Preventing the student from using washroom facilities or consuming water and food
- k. Detention outside of official school hours without parental consent

4.6 Disciplinary Procedures: Schools shall ensure that their policies outline clear and staged disciplinary procedures to address student misconduct, in line with [Figure 1. Staging of Disciplinary Procedures](#). Schools are permitted to practice leniency in issuing disciplinary measures but have a right to implement procedures as per [Figure 1. Staging of Disciplinary Procedures](#). Schools shall use the appropriate guidance and disciplinary actions to encourage students to understand why their behavior is unacceptable and how to behave better in the future. In their response to incidents of student misconduct, schools shall take into consideration the student's individual circumstances and personalities, including the social, emotional, and psychological factors that may underlie a student's behavior. Managing students' misconduct must be consistent with the following:

- 1.** In all cases of misconduct, the first approach shall always be focused on understanding possible factors contributing to the student's behavior providing related support where possible and reinforcing positive behavior to encourage students to take ownership of their actions (see [Section 2. Positive Behavior Model](#)).

Figure 1. Staging of Disciplinary Procedures

| Level of Misconduct | Occurrence | | | |
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| | First Time | Second Time | Third Time | More than Three Times |
| Level 1 | <p>Verbal Warning</p> <p>Discuss the expected change in behavior with the student.</p> | <p>Written Warning</p> <p>Notify the parent in writing about the student's misconduct.</p> | <p>Written Warning</p> <p>Notify the parent in writing and hold meeting(s) with them to agree on a reasonable joint home-and-school strategy.</p> <p>The parent is required to sign an undertaking to support the agreed strategy.</p> | <p>Written Warning</p> <p>Notify the parent in writing and summon the parent together with the Behavioral Management Committee to agree on how to implement a set of strategies aiming at reducing the negative behavior.</p> |
| Level 2 | <p>Written Warning</p> <p>Instruct the student to sign an undertaking not to repeat the offense.</p> <p>Summon the parent, who is required to sign an agreement to support their child in reforming their behavior.</p> | <p>Onsite Suspension</p> <p>Temporarily suspend the student up to 2 days and assign the student supervised study assignments inside the school with a notification to the parent.</p> <p>Notify both the student and the parent of a second written warning.</p> <p>Notify the Behavioral Management Committee to agree to a set of strategies for reforming the student's behavior.</p> <p>The parent is required to sign an undertaking to support the agreed strategy.</p> | <p>Onsite Suspension</p> <p>Temporarily suspend the student up to 3 days and assign the student supervised study assignments inside the school.</p> <p>Issue a final warning in writing to the student and the parent.</p> <p>Notify the Behavioral Management Committee to agree to a final set of actions for reforming the student's behavior.</p> <p>The parent is required to sign an undertaking to support the agreed strategy.</p> | <p>Expulsion</p> <p>Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation for a maximum of 5 days, with a notification to the parent.</p> <p>The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions which may include expulsion.</p> <p>After following the prior steps, if the student continues to repeat the offense, the school is permitted to apply to ADEK to expel the student. In making an application to ADEK, the school shall include evidence that all the prior stages have been followed, including proof of having provided sufficient support and counselling as per their behavior strategy.</p> |

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| <p>Level 3</p> | <p>Onsite Suspension</p> <p>Immediately suspend the student inside the school.</p> <p>The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and determine disciplinary actions.</p> <p>The school shall summon the parent immediately to inform of the disciplinary action and the requirement to sign an undertaking to support the agreed strategy.</p> | <p>Offsite Suspension</p> <p>Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation for a maximum of 5 days with a notification to the parent.</p> <p>The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions.</p> <p>Provide the student and the parent with a final written warning.</p> <p>Summon the student and the parent to the school to present the Committee’s decision.</p> | <p>Expulsion</p> <p>Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation for a maximum of 5 days with a notification to the parent.</p> <p>The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions which may include expulsion.</p> <p>After following the prior steps, if the student continues to repeat the offense, the school is permitted to apply to ADEK to expel the student. In making an application to ADEK, the school shall include evidence that all the prior stages have been followed, including proof of having provided sufficient counselling as per their behavior strategy.</p> <p>The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions which may include expulsion.</p> <p>After following the prior steps, if the student continues to repeat the offense, the school is permitted to apply to ADEK to expel the student. In making an application to ADEK, the school shall include evidence that all the prior stages have been followed, including proof of having provided sufficient support and counselling as per their behavior strategy.</p> |
| <p>Level 4</p> | <p>Offsite Suspension</p> <p>Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation with a notification to the parent.</p> <p>The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of disciplinary actions and a corrective plan.</p> | <p>Expulsion</p> <p>Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation for a maximum of 5 days with a notification to the parent.</p> <p>The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions which may include expulsion.</p> <p>After following the prior steps, if the student continues to repeat the offense, the school is permitted to apply to ADEK to expel the student. In making an application to ADEK, the school shall include evidence that all the prior stages have been followed, including proof of having provided sufficient counseling as per their behavior strategy.</p> | |

2. Throughout the disciplinary process, schools shall monitor, document, and provide students with ongoing support to focus (whether through the school counselor or the in-school specialist) and other forms of support (e.g., social worker), as required, throughout the disciplinary process.
3. Schools shall deal with misconduct that can be categorized as maltreatment (e.g., physical abuse, bullying, sexual abuse) in line with the maltreatment reporting procedure in the *Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions* (DAA Child Protection Committee, 2024).
4. Schools shall involve law enforcement authorities as appropriate where misconduct is illegal as per the latest applicable laws in the UAE.
5. Schools shall ensure that, where disciplinary procedures are being exercised in relation to students with additional learning needs, the Head of Inclusion shall be consulted to determine appropriate disciplinary action.
 - a. Schools shall ensure that any underlying special educational needs affecting behavioral regulation are considered in determining appropriate disciplinary action.
 - b. Schools shall develop a Documented Learning Plan (DLP) and/or Risk Assessment to manage instances where students with additional learning needs cannot regulate their behavior in a similar manner to their peers due to an underlying need.
 - c. Schools shall provide sufficient guidance to students to ensure continued learning during supervised detention and/or suspension periods.
6. As there is an obligation to re-enroll all students as per the [ADEK School Student Administrative Affairs Policy](#), where a school fails to re-enroll a student who has faced disciplinary action in the previous year, this is classified as expulsion. Schools shall therefore seek approval from ADEK (see [Section 4.9 Approval for Expulsion](#)).
 - a. Receiving schools shall not deny admission on the grounds of a student's behavioral history.
 - b. Schools shall support students in exercising their right to seek advice and support during suspension or supervised detention.
 - c. Schools are not permitted to use misconduct by parents as grounds for disciplinary action against a student.

4.7 Appeals Procedure: Schools shall establish an appeals procedure, based on the Behavioral Management Committee's decisions, which must include the following:

1. Timelines for the appeal:
 - a. To appeal a school's decision to suspend their child, parents have 1 working day.
 - b. To appeal a school's decision to expel their child, parents have 10 working days.
2. Modes of appeal (e.g., via email, telephone, or face-to-face meeting).
3. Appeals Committee: Schools shall form an Appeals Committee consisting of different members from the Behavior Management Committee and which does not involve the Principal, Vice Principal, or any staff who may have a conflict of interest.

4. Decision of the appeal: Where an appeal has been made and following a review by the persons concerned (e.g., teacher, social worker, and/or counselor), the school shall issue a final decision (accept or reject) within 2 working days for suspension cases and within 7 working days for expulsion cases and share the decision with the parent.
5. If the school does not respond to the appeal within 3 working days or the parent rejects the school's final decision, the parent shall be entitled to log a complaint to ADEK within 5 working days.
6. ADEK reserves the right to investigate any complaint in conjunction with suspension and expulsion following the school's final decision, but not prior to it, unless the school has not issued its final decision within the timeframe stipulated.

4.8 Positive Handling: Schools are authorized in certain circumstances, in order to maintain good order, to physically intervene to prevent students from harming themselves or others and allow staff to use reasonable force.

1. When choosing to restrain a student, all other options shall initially be considered, and positive handling shall be the last resort in managing situations. Schools are authorized to use positive handling to protect students, in circumstances such as to prevent students from:
 - a. Leaving the classroom or school premises, where allowing the student to leave would risk their safety and/or that of others.
 - b. Injuring themselves and/or others.
 - c. Damaging property.
2. Any response to extreme behavior should be reasonable and proportionate, and conducted with minimal usage of physical force and staff shall consider the risks and carefully consider any vulnerabilities of the student (e.g., vision and hearing impairment, mobility restrictions, mental health needs, medical conditions). Such conduct shall only be in accordance with the following:
 - a. The student should be in immediate danger of harming themselves and/or others.
 - b. The member of staff should have good grounds for believing this.
 - c. Only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury or damage should be applied.
 - d. Every effort should be made to secure the presence of other staff before positively handling a student, for the purpose of securing assistance or witnesses.
 - e. Once the situation is deemed to be no longer dangerous, the student should be allowed to regain self-control.
3. Schools are prohibited from using force as a form of punishment, which constitutes maltreatment, in line with the [ADEK School Student Protection Policy](#). This is considered unlawful.

4.9 Records: Schools shall keep a record of any student misconduct and actions taken by the school including root cause analyses, meetings with concerned stakeholders, intervention measures, observations of student behavioral progress, disciplinary procedures, communications (e.g., written warnings, appeals), etc.

1. Level 1 misconduct shall be recorded only at the class level by the teacher (unless systems are impacted, such as lateness). The misconduct may be added to the student's file or performance report where it is repeated, or where escalation is required.
2. Level 2, 3, and 4 misconduct shall be recorded at the school level by the administration. All level 2 (on/offsite suspensions and expulsions), 3, and 4 misconduct shall be reported to ADEK.
3. Schools, ADEK, and any social care support providers (e.g., social workers, and counselors) shall treat all information about students' behavior as strictly confidential.

4.10 Approval for Expulsion: Schools shall seek ADEK's approval to expel a student. In making an application to ADEK, schools must provide evidence that their internal procedures have been adhered to, and these procedures are no stricter than those set out in this policy.

1. At the end of each academic year, schools shall share a list of students at risk of expulsion with ADEK, along with the history of misconduct and all intervention strategies used to deal with the misconduct.

5. Bullying Prevention

5.1 Policy Requirements: Schools shall develop a Bullying Prevention Policy in line with the Ministerial Resolution No. (645) of 2020 on the Policy of Preventing Bullying in Private and Public Schools that Follow the Ministry's Curriculum (MoE, 2022), and in line with the [ADEK School Student Protection Policy](#). This policy shall:

1. Set out the provisions for educating students and staff on how to identify bullying.
2. Establish bullying prevention strategies by developing a school-wide anti-bullying program including recognizing vulnerabilities for students with additional learning needs.
3. Clarify steps students should take when confronted with bullying behavior when they are in the position of someone who is being bullied, who is bullying, and who is witnessing the bullying.
4. Set out procedures for staff to deal with bullying behavior.
5. Describe the support and interventions provided by the school for any student identified as a victim or perpetrator of bullying (see [Section 6. Support and Interventions](#)) and in line with the [ADEK School Student Administrative Affairs Policy](#).
6. Set out the disciplinary procedures that may be taken to address instances of bullying (see [Section 4. Misconduct Policy and Procedure](#)).

- 5.2 Monitoring: Schools shall establish systems to track and monitor instances of bullying (including frequency and severity).

6. Absence

- 6.1 Schools shall identify students as a “cause for concern” depending on absence rates, in line with the [ADEK School Student Administrative Affairs Policy](#).
- 6.2 Upon identification, schools shall determine if the student is at educational risk, in line with the [ADEK School Educational Risk Policy](#), or as being potential subjects of maltreatment (neglect), in line with the [ADEK School Student Protection Policy](#). Accordingly, schools are authorized to further escalate actions and develop intervention plans, in line with the [ADEK School Educational Risk Policy](#) and the [ADEK School Student Protection Policy](#), respectively.

7. Support and Interventions

- 7.1 Support and Interventions: Schools shall provide appropriate, focused, and supportive student-centric interventions to students who have been identified as either engaging in behaviors of concern, misconduct, or deemed to be at risk of engaging in behaviors of concern. This includes:
1. Needs analysis for causality as well as the extent of need, wherein a tiered model of support response is provided to the student, in line with the [ADEK School Inclusion Policy](#) and [ADEK School Educational Risk Policy](#).
 2. The provision of professional support to address the specific needs of the student, including counseling, in line with the [ADEK School Student Mental Health Policy](#). This support shall involve engagement with parents and other relevant stakeholders (e.g., teachers) where appropriate, as well as ongoing monitoring of student progress.
 3. Referral to external specialists to provide intensive, individualized, and long-term support. Where such support is provided, parents shall monitor the student’s progress and periodically update a staff member nominated by the school. The staff member is authorized to share this information with relevant stakeholders on a need basis.
- 7.2 In cases where student misconduct has been identified, schools shall take disciplinary action as appropriate and in line with the school’s Misconduct Policy and Procedures (see [Section 4. Misconduct Policy and Procedures](#)), alongside any interventions.
- 7.3 Schools shall ensure that any support and intervention to address a student’s behavior shall not reduce or replace the support available to students with additional learning needs, as outlined in their DLP.

Schools shall develop and implement referral structures, in line with the [ADEK School Student Mental Health Policy](#).

1. Schools shall encourage students and teachers to identify signs of behaviors of concern in students and report them to the school administration via these structures. Where such signs are identified and reported, schools shall inform the student's parents, except in cases where not reporting to parents is in the best interest of the student (such as suspected maltreatment in home settings).

8. Searching, Screening, and Confiscation

- 8.1 Where staff and/or students are at immediate risk, principals and staff delegated by the principal are authorized to search, screen, and/or confiscate a student's possessions if they have reasonable grounds or cause to suspect that the student may be in possession of an illicit item. Schools are also authorized to use metal detectors and mobile phone jammers, if required.

9. Compliance

- 9.1 This policy shall be effective as of the start of the Academic Year 2024/25 (Fall term). Schools are expected to be fully compliant with this policy by the start of the Academic Year 2025/26 (Fall term).
- 9.2 Failure to comply with this policy shall be subject to legal accountability and the penalties stipulated in accordance with 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 school is found to be in violation of its obligations.



References

- Dama Al Aman (DAA) Child Protection Committee. (2024). *Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions*.
- Federal Decree Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema).
- Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties and its amendments.
- Ministry of Education (MOE). (2020). Ministerial Resolution No. (645) of 2020 on the Policy of Preventing Bullying in Private and Public Schools that Follow the Ministry's Curriculum.
- Ministry of Education (MoE). (2018). Ministerial Resolution No. (851) of 2018 Concerning the Regulations for Managing Student Behavior in Public Education Institutions.
- Ministry of Education (MoE). (2020). Ministerial Resolution No. (206) of 2020 on the Policy of Managing Positive Behavior for Children in Early Childhood in Educational Institutions.
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Department of Education and Knowledge, Abu Dhabi (ADEK)

This policy applies to Private and Charter Schools in Abu Dhabi. However, any circular issued prior to this policy or issued specifically for Charter Schools thereafter supersedes the requirements of this policy.

Current version:

Updated due to name change of formerly [ADEK School Healthy Eating and Food Safety Policy](#) to [ADEK School Food and Nutrition Policy](#).

Past version:

- 2025 (September) ADEK_School_Student Behavior Policy_v1.2
Updated to align with changes to the attendance and absence sections in the [ADEK School Student Administrative Affairs Policy](#).
- 2024 (September) ADEK_School_Student Behavior Policy_v1.1
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