



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

## SCHOOL POLICY

on

# PARENT ENGAGEMENT



### Introduction

Parents are the main enablers in improving the quality of education outcomes for their children as they provide the primary support, resources, and social emotional context for their child's development. Parent partnership with schools and teachers is indispensable, and it is crucial that an open and collaborative setting is made available for parents to engage with their child's learning and the school community at large.

This policy sets out the minimum requirement that schools must put in place to ensure that they are engaging their parents, both as the home teacher of their children and as a member of the school community.

### Purpose

- Set out ADEK's expectations in relation to schools' engagement with parents.
- Outline the requirement for a parent-school agreement and a parent handbook.
- Stipulate the requirements for parent engagement including their role in supporting their child's learning, development, and wellbeing and further opportunities for parent involvement in school life.
- Encourage schools to communicate effectively with parents, and to provide parents with opportunities to actively engage in their children's education.

## Definitions

<b>Additional Learning Needs</b>	<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>
<b>Documented Learning Plan</b>	<p>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.</p>
<b>Equivalency</b>	<p>The process by which the UAE Ministry of Education officially endorses a secondary school certificate and declares it to be equivalent to the UAE General Education Certificate (Al Thanawiya), as per relevant ministerial decrees and their amendments.</p>
<b>Extracurricular Activities (ECA)</b>	<p>Organized activities that students can participate in that are usually external to the school curriculum (but may be connected to it). Activities can be scientific, athletic, cultural, intellectual, philanthropic, and/or social in nature, and include, but are not limited to sports teams, clubs, private sports lessons, competitions, performances, recreational activities, field trips and overseas travel, as well as activities hosted virtually.</p>
<b>Head of Inclusion</b>	<p>The Senior Leader with responsibility for the coordination of provision for students with additional learning needs.</p>
<b>Healthy Eating</b>	<p>Consuming a variety of foods to ensure the intake of nutrients (carbohydrates, healthy fats, proteins, vitamins, and minerals) and fluids in appropriate proportions and quantities to support the energetic and physiological needs of the individual and maintain overall health. Healthy eating includes sustainable practices that consider the health of the planet (Cena &amp; Calder, 2020).</p>
<b>Individual Assistant</b>	<p>Formerly known as “Shadow Teachers”, Individual Assistants are parent-funded staff who provide 1:1 support for students with additional</p>

	learning needs for any logistical, safety-related, behavioral, medical, and/or social and emotional need. In these cases, the student requires 1:1 support for at least 50% of their school day.
<b>Parent</b>	The person legally liable for a child or entrusted with their care, defined as the custodian of the child as per the Federal Decree Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema).
<b>Parent Engagement</b>	Active involvement of a parent and their collaboration with the school to support and improve their child's learning, development, and wellbeing.
<b>Parent involvement</b>	Participation of a parent in school activities, to support ongoing school improvement, community relationship-building, and/or leadership decision-making.
<b>People of Determination (PoD)</b>	Every person suffering from a temporary or permanent, full, or partial deficiency or infirmity in their physical, sensory, mental, communicational, educational, or psychological abilities to an extent that limits their possibility of performing the ordinary requirements (Federal Law No. (29) of 2006 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its amendments).
<b>Governing Board</b>	The governing body of a school, appointed by the school owners, including qualified representatives and parents. The Governing Board is the senior authority of the school, with responsibility for the overall governance of its activities.
<b>School Fees</b>	All fees charged to parents by a school.
<b>Sustainable Meal Practices</b>	Meal practices with low environmental impacts, including low carbon footprint, and which are accessible, affordable, and healthy, while optimizing natural and human resources (FAO, 2010).



## Policy

### 1. Parent-School Agreement

- 1.1 Requirements: Schools shall require all parents to sign a parent-school agreement prior to their child's enrollment in the school and annually upon re-enrollment.
1. The agreement shall outline the obligations of each party and require parents to accept the full set of school policies.
  2. The agreement shall include a code of conduct for parents (see [Section 1.2 Parent Code of Conduct](#)) when interacting with the school community, and an acknowledgment of the Student Code of Conduct (see [ADEK School Student Behavior Policy](#)) that parents are expected to ensure their children adhere to. The code of conduct shall be aligned with the [ADEK School Values and Ethics Policy](#), [ADEK School Digital Policy](#), [ADEK School Student Behavior Policy](#), [ADEK School Inclusion Policy](#), [ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy](#), and [ADEK School Student Administrative Affairs Policy](#).
- 1.2 Parent Code of Conduct: Schools shall work in partnership with parents to support their child's learning. In encouraging parents to model appropriate behavior, schools shall require parents to agree to the following code of conduct at a minimum:
1. Respect the vision, mission, and value statements of the school and its learning environment.
  2. Treat members of the entire school community including students, staff (including security guards, cleaners, etc.), parents, in a professional and respectful manner and maintain relationships in the best interest of students.
  3. Acknowledge that the education and wellbeing of each child whilst in school is a joint responsibility based on a positive school-to-home relationship between the school and the parent and that they will commit to their responsibilities (e.g., ensure their children engage in home learning, get adequate sleep, consume healthy foods in moderate amounts, engage in physical activity).
  4. Set a good example with regard to speech and behavior and a willingness to resolve concerns in a professional manner whether verbal or written (e.g., not raising one's tone of voice, using offensive language, or using social status to belittle or threaten others).
  5. Refrain from posting culturally inconsiderate or defamatory content about parents, students, or staff of the school on social media as per the [ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy](#).
  6. Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any disputes.
  7. Correct their child's behavior (or those in their care), where it could lead to conflict/unsafe conduct or limit the ability of other children to learn.

8. Commit to and be respectful of the school's general policies and whilst on school premises, behave and dress in a manner that is respectful of UAE national identity and cultural values and its current legislation.
9. Strive to achieve and maintain excellent daily attendance and punctuality of their child, including not taking holidays outside of official school breaks, following up on their child's academic performance, and being respectful of arrival and pick-up timings.
10. Respect the school's policy on academic honesty and integrity (i.e., monitoring their child's schoolwork for plagiarism, refraining from providing unnecessary assistance) to ensure the work accurately reflects the child's ability. This includes refraining from providing false information to the school (i.e., submitting fraudulent documents, and making false excuses for absences).
11. Respond to teacher requests to attend parent/teacher meetings as invited and maintain frequent positive communication to benefit their child's growth and steady progress.
12. Cooperate with the school's recommendations for additional learning support, in instances where the school deems learning support is necessary for their child's educational progress and development.
13. Should the above minimum requirements be disrespected or ignored, at the discretion of the school, parents may be asked to leave the school premises or be denied access.

## 2. Parent Handbook

- 2.1 Requirements: Schools shall develop and implement a Parent Handbook that includes information about the school's programs, policies, and procedures. The school shall make the handbook available to parents at the beginning of the academic year on the school website. The handbook shall include, at minimum:
  1. School rules, policies, and procedures relating to admission, enrollment, tuition fees, uniform, daily schedule, attendance and punctuality, behavior, academics, curriculum, assessment, communication protocols, nutrition, student protection and welfare, and transportation, as per the relevant ADEK policies.
  2. A blank copy of the parent-school agreement.

## 3. Parent Engagement

- 3.1 Engaging Parents in Their Child's Learning: Schools shall promote parent engagement in the learning and development of their children by facilitating access to information, staff, resources, and support.

1. **Interaction and Communication with Staff:** Schools shall enable courteous, respectful, and professional parent-staff interactions and communication channels.
  - a. Schools shall grant parents direct access to their child's teacher(s) to follow up on their child's progress.
  - b. Schools shall grant parents direct access to all members of staff who are planning for or providing additional support for their child (e.g., Inclusion Assistant, Counselor, Social Worker).
  - c. Schools shall ensure teachers and educators contact and notify parents when necessary to discuss any student's academic or behavioral issues, as per the [ADEK School Student Administrative Affairs Policy](#), [ADEK School Educational Risk Policy](#), [ADEK School Inclusion Policy](#), and the [ADEK School Student Behavior Policy](#).
  - d. Schools shall emphasize that parents are to abide by the school's code of conduct for parents and interact courteously and respectfully with all staff.
  - e. Schools shall send regular reminders of expected staff response times during the school's working hours, including an alternative contact information for emergencies as per the [ADEK School Student Administrative Affairs Policy](#).
2. **Student Learning and Progress:** Schools shall engage parents in student learning by sharing information on the school's curriculum, their child's expected learning outcomes for the year, and strategies to engage and support their child in their learning process.
  - a. Schools shall equally engage parents in the planning of their child's education when their active engagement is required (e.g., placement decisions, pull-out, and push-in support decisions) and obtain consent where required as per the [ADEK Curriculum Policy](#), [ADEK In-School Specialist Policy](#), [ADEK Inclusion Policy](#) and the [ADEK Student Administrative Affairs Policy](#).
  - b. Where external specialist support is provided, schools shall follow up with parents who are expected to monitor the student's progress and periodically update a school-nominated member of staff as per the [ADEK School Student Behavior Policy](#).
3. **Assessment Guidance:** Schools shall partner with parents in encouraging students to aim to do their best in internal and external assessments. Schools shall support parents in developing an understanding of their child's assessment results and next steps for learning through direct communications, workshops, and/or training sessions as per the [ADEK School Assessment Policy](#).
4. **Curriculum Transfer and Equivalency:** Schools shall provide support and guidance to parents who are seeking to switch curricula, ensuring that they are aware of the impact of changing curricula and the potential challenges that may arise from a break in the continuity and progression of learning. Schools shall additionally inform parents of UAE equivalency requirements and require their signing of an undertaking should they choose not to seek equivalency as per the [ADEK School Curriculum Policy](#) and the [ADEK School Student Administrative Affairs Policy](#).

5. **Student Performance Reports:** Schools shall share student performance reports with parents in digital format and provide opportunities for parents to meet with teachers at least once every term to discuss their child's learning as per the [ADEK School Student Performance Reports Policy](#).
6. **Home Learning Support:** Schools shall encourage home-based learning support to promote parent-student interaction in the home environment for all students, including students with additional learning needs as per the [ADEK School Inclusion Policy](#).

**3.2 Engaging Parents in Their Child's Wellbeing:** Schools shall promote parent engagement in promoting and supporting the wellbeing of their children.

1. **Wellbeing:** Schools shall promote awareness of their wellbeing strategy and associated wellbeing policies to parents. Parents shall also be given the opportunity to provide feedback on improving their child's wellbeing at school by partaking in parental wellbeing surveys as per the [ADEK School Wellbeing Policy](#) and the [ADEK School Quality Assurance Policy](#).
2. **Healthy Eating and Food Safety:** Schools shall encourage parents to pack healthy and balanced meals and snacks for their child, using sustainable practices, and inform them of food restrictions and foods to avoid bringing to school, particularly during events where food is shared. Schools shall inform parents of any food-related concerns for their child on the same day that the concern was noticed and require them to submit information regarding their child's food allergies as per the [ADEK School Food and Nutrition Policy](#).
3. **Mental Health Awareness:** Schools shall communicate their Student Mental Health Policy to all parents, including ensuring school counselors and teachers inform parents of any identified counseling needs for their child, requirements related to confidentiality and parental consent, and implications for parents who refuse to give consent. As per the [ADEK School Student Mental Health Policy](#), schools shall inform parents of the mental health education programs conducted in schools and offer engagement opportunities. Where external support is being provided, parents shall monitor and report progress to the counselor who in turn shall inform the school's Mental Health Committee or Lead, as per the [ADEK School Student Mental Health Policy](#).
4. **Inclusive Provision for Students:** Schools shall inform parents of their inclusive admissions processes, requests for clinical assessment reports, inability to accommodate students (if applicable), and provide regular progress updates on their child's learning, and engage parents in decision-making related to any modified curriculum pathways that may affect equivalency requirements. Parents shall be informed of additional fees for support that is not part of the school's standard inclusive provision, referrals for specialized placement, and/or requirements for Individual Assistants or a dedicated Inclusion Assistant as per the [ADEK School Inclusion Policy](#) and the [ADEK School In-School Specialist Services Policy](#).
5. **Extracurricular Activities (ECAs):** Schools shall encourage parents to support their child's participation in extracurricular activities and facilitate this by sharing the ECA calendar and all other information, documents, and systems

to assist them in registering. Schools shall equally encourage parents to volunteer to lead or assist ECAs, as per the [ADEK School Extracurricular Activities and Events Policy](#).

6. **Digital Practices:** Schools shall engage parents in supporting their child's digital learning and monitoring digital device usage outside of school hours to ensure safety, as per the [ADEK School Digital Policy](#).
  - a. Schools shall communicate to parents responsible digital usage policies for students including what is permitted/prohibited to do on the school's premises, network, and systems.
  - b. Schools shall only take photographs and/or video recordings of students after obtaining written consent from parents.
7. **Sustainable Practices:** Schools shall inform parents of its sustainability strategy, policies, and initiatives, and encourage their involvement and contribution as per the [ADEK School Sustainability Policy](#).
8. **Immunization:** Schools shall allow access to Department of Health (DoH)-appointed health providers and facilitate their task of conducting the school-based immunization program for students and their parents in line with DoH guidelines as per the [ADEK School Health and Safety Policy](#).
9. **Provision of Emergency Medical Services:** In the event of an emergency and absence of parental consent, the school nurse shall inform parents of the requirement for intervention and take necessary measures to ensure the student's wellbeing, as per the [ADEK School Health and Safety Policy](#).
10. **Weight Limits of School Bags:** Schools shall inform parents, with regular reminders, to adhere to maximum weight limits for students' school bags as per the [ADEK School Health and Safety Policy](#).

**3.3 Parent Involvement and Notification:** Schools shall provide clear guidelines for parent involvement in school activities and ensure that they are notified of crucial information.

1. **Visits to School:** Schools shall provide opportunities for parents to visit the school and meet the principal, teachers, and other staff. Schools shall conduct at least one open day event per year where parents can visit their child's learning spaces (e.g., classroom, other facilities).
2. **Volunteering:** Schools shall encourage parent volunteering and inform them of the requirements (e.g., Private Schools Staff Information System (PASS) registration/security clearance, student protection training) as per the [ADEK School Employment Policy](#), [ADEK School Safeguarding Policy](#), and the [ADEK School Student Protection Policy](#). Parents will also need to adhere to the [ADEK School Values and Ethics Policy](#), [ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy](#), [ADEK School Professional Code of Ethics Policy](#), and *Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education* (MoE, 2022) when carrying out their volunteering duties.
3. **Participation in School Events:** Schools shall actively promote parent attendance (e.g., as spectators or volunteers) at school events (e.g., UAE's



National Day celebration, graduation ceremonies, sports competitions) as per the [ADEK School Extracurricular Activities and Events Policy](#).

4. **Governance:** Schools shall have a Governing Board that includes at least one parent representative with voting rights, as per the [ADEK School Governance Policy](#). Parent members are expected to represent the interests of the parent body, and not their own personal interests or the specific interests of their child(ren).
  - a. **Parent representatives:** Schools shall have at least one parent representative per grade/year to serve as a liaison between the teacher(s) and parents.
  - b. **Parent Council:** Schools shall establish a parent committee to represent the parent community in any form the school chooses, such as a high-level parental advisory council (advising the governing board on matters relevant to school strategy and operations), a parent council, or a Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) (liaising between parents and schools and that is responsible for parents' involvement in school). Parents shall also have the opportunity to be involved in the School National Identity Committee, as per the [ADEK School Governance Policy](#).
  - c. **Support to Parent Council:** Schools shall provide support to the parent council (advisory council, social association) and actively partner with it to encourage parent involvement and engagement, as per the [ADEK School Governance Policy](#). Schools that do not have a parent council shall employ strategies to mobilize parents to form one.
5. **Fees:** Schools shall enable parents to pay the ADEK-approved school fees in a timely and convenient manner, without charging Value Added Tax (VAT). Schools shall ensure parents receive information outlining their response to non-payment or late payment of school fees, as per the [ADEK School Fees Policy](#).
6. **Inspection Ratings:** Schools shall ensure that they publish their inspection rating and report on their website and make these available to parents, as per the [ADEK School Quality Assurance Policy](#).
7. **School Records:** In relation to students transferring schools within or outside the UAE, schools shall obtain parent consent before transferring student information to any third party. Schools shall keep student details within the school and ensure that parents receive any copy of any reports on student information submitted to ADEK. Schools are also authorized to allow parents to access their child's school records upon request (particularly those such as medical files that cannot be removed from the clinic) as per the [ADEK School Records Policy](#) and the [ADEK School Reporting Policy](#).
8. **Student Protection:** Schools shall inform parents of their duty of care in the protection of students as mandated reporters and that any suspicious incidents (such as excessive absences or the sudden unexplained withdrawal of a student from school) shall be reported as a maltreatment concern) to relevant authorities. Schools shall conduct related orientation sessions to ensure parent awareness regarding student protection, in particular, that all members of the school community are mandated reporters as per the [ADEK School Student Protection Policy](#).

9. Safeguarding: Schools shall additionally notify parents of all relevant requirements to safeguard students and the school such as the issuance of permanent access passes, authorizations for unaccompanied Cycle 3 students, arrival/departure notifications, pre-registration of guests for school events, protocols to inform the school of changes to pick-up arrangements, and other requirements as per the [ADEK School Safeguarding Policy](#).
10. School Calendar: Schools shall share the school calendar with parents once it has been approved by ADEK as per the [ADEK School Calendar and Public Holidays Policy](#).
11. Transportation: Schools shall inform parents about its bus services and communicate parent obligations and associated information regarding drop-off and pick-up protocols and authorized persons, parking, use of non-school bus transportation (scooters, bicycles, etc.), consent required, and other requirements as per the [ADEK School Transportation Policy](#).
12. Inclusion: Schools shall ensure equitable access for parents of students with additional learning needs and parents who are people of determination to be involved in the above, as per the [ADEK School Inclusion Policy](#).
13. Informing Parents of School Suspension/ Closure: ADEK reserves the right to suspend a school's license as part of the escalation procedure. During license suspensions, reinstatements, or cancellations, schools shall inform parents once a decision has been finalized. In cases of school suspension or closure, schools shall ensure that they fulfill their legal and contractual commitments, return any undeserved fees, and provide any relevant student reports and transfer certificates, as per the [ADEK School Compliance Policy](#), [ADEK School Licensing Policy](#), [ADEK School Records Policy](#), and the [ADEK School Student Administrative Affairs Policy](#).

#### 3.4 Means of Communication: Schools shall communicate with parents using:

1. Various Media (e.g., school newsletters, telephone calls, SMS, e-mails, letters, internet portals, and meetings), and consider the accessibility needs and preferences of parents as per the [ADEK School Digital Policy](#).
2. In emergencies, schools shall have a mass notification system in place to quickly communicate information to parents (e.g., text message system, public address system, or mobile apps), as per the [ADEK School Health and Safety Policy](#).
3. Schools shall keep a record of all written communication with parents, as per the [ADEK School Records Policy](#).

## 4. Compliance

- 4.1 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).
- 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 school is found to be in violation of its obligations.



## References

- Federal Decree Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema).
- Federal Law No. (29) of 2006 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its amendments
- Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties and its amendments

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2025 (November) ADEK\_School\_Parent Engagement Policy\_v.1.2

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:

- 2024 (September) ADEK\_School\_Parent Engagement Policy\_v.1.1  
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- 2024 (January) ADEK\_School\_Parent Engagement Policy\_v.1.0  
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