



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

## SCHOOL POLICY

on

# QUALITY ASSURANCE

### Introduction

In order to provide effective teaching and learning, schools must establish clear standards for education quality assurance, and consistently evaluate and manage teaching delivery against these standards. Ongoing school development planning and school self-evaluation are important components of the overall system of school quality assurance and continuous improvement, alongside school inspections. School inspections are a mechanism for evaluating the quality of education for all educational stakeholders including parents. This policy sets out basic requirements for schools in setting, monitoring, and evaluating teaching quality standards, in developing and implementing evidence-based School Development Plans (SDP), in practicing rigorous self-evaluation, and in utilizing inspection results to effectively continue to improve their quality.

### Purpose

- Outline standards for teachers for promoting and practicing effective methods to improve teaching and learning, leading to enhancements in student educational outcomes.
- Set out the requirement that all schools, through their school leadership teams, create an SDP that makes full use of school inspection and school self-evaluation findings.
- Specify the rigorous and continuous self-evaluation and documentation schools undertake to monitor their quality of education, provide inputs for the SDP, and inform the process of school inspection by providing inspectors with evidence-based judgments related to the criteria of the UAE School Inspection Framework, Early Education (EE) Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework, and the National Identity (NI) Framework.
- Set out ADEK's requirements, guidance on the preparation for, and types of inspections that schools undergo to evaluate the quality of their education and identify areas for improvement, recommendations that schools act upon provided during inspections, and actions to be taken after inspections.

## Definitions

<b>Accreditation</b>	A quality assurance process, based on a time-bound cycle of continuous improvement against rigorous standards. Schools are evaluated and verified by an external body to determine whether defined standards are met.
<b>ADEK Inspections</b>	Regular inspections conducted by ADEK to assess the quality of education provided by a school against the UAE School Inspection Framework.
<b>Early Childhood Development (ECD) Competencies</b>	The knowledge, skills and behaviors required by professionals and practitioners who work with or on behalf of children aged 0-8 years of age and their families (ECA, 2024).
<b>Follow-Through Visit</b>	A visit conducted by ADEK inspectors, at ADEK’s discretion, for the purpose of following up with schools in addressing inspection recommendations.
<b>Governing Board</b>	The governing body of a school, appointed by the school owners, and 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>Inspection Visits</b>	Inspection visits conducted by ADEK to assess the quality of education provided by schools. These comprise monitoring visits, inspections, follow-through visits, and thematic visits.
<b>Inspector</b>	A qualified education expert, appointed by ADEK to conduct school inspections, who understands the UAE School Inspection Framework, the EE Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework, the NI Framework or other relevant evaluation frameworks and the context of education in the Emirate, and is conversant with international education standards, best practices, and the curricula of the school being inspected.
<b>Monitoring Visits</b>	Visits conducted by ADEK inspectors to determine a school's readiness for ADEK Inspections.
<b>Performance Management</b>	A periodic and ongoing process of communication between a supervisor and staff to achieve the strategic objectives of the organization.
<b>School Development Plan (SDP)</b>	A strategic plan for improvement, which outlines time-bound targets and goals linked to school improvement priorities. The SDP details actions a school will take to enhance its overall performance, the measures to raise standards and support students' personal development, the resources dedicated to these goals and includes monitoring, evaluation, and accountability for achieving the targets set. The process of creating an SDP involves a collaborative approach which takes account of stakeholder views, alongside outcomes of self-evaluation and external inspections.

<b>School Self-Evaluation (SSE)</b>	The process by which a school formally and continuously reviews its own performance, including against the criteria of the UAE School Inspection Framework, the EE Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework, the NI Framework, or other relevant evaluation frameworks.
<b>SMART Targets</b>	<p>A description of the kind of targets that schools are required to set within their SDP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific: The target is precise.</li> <li>• Measurable: The target is measurable.</li> <li>• Attainable: While challenging, the target can be met within the time and resources available.</li> <li>• Relevant: The target aligns with the needs of students and other stakeholders.</li> <li>• Time-bound: There is a deadline for when the target shall be achieved.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Priorities</b>	Ranked organizational objectives identified by schools in line with the requirements of this policy. Strategic priorities set the foundation for the SDP, and all planning initiatives and targets are linked to their delivery.
<b>Teaching quality</b>	The effectiveness of both teaching and learning provided by teachers in an engaging learning environment that fosters students' academic, intellectual, and personal growth.
<b>Thematic Visits</b>	Visits conducted at ADEK's discretion to gather data on specific aspects of the education system and inform policymaking. Such visits usually focus on one particular aspect of the school.
<b>UAE School Inspection Framework</b>	The unified school inspection framework for the UAE, which sets out common criteria that inspectors apply to evaluate the quality of education provided by a school, as per Law No. 9 of 2018 Establishing the Department of Education and Knowledge and Federal Decree-Law No. (18) of 2020 on Private Education and its amendments.
<b>Early Education (EE) Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework</b>	The unified school evaluation and inspection framework for ECE settings in Abu Dhabi, which sets out common criteria that inspectors apply to when evaluating the quality of education and care provided by a setting.
<b>National Identity (NI) Evaluation Framework</b>	The unified school evaluation and inspection framework on UAE national identity in Abu Dhabi, which sets out common criteria that inspectors apply when evaluating the quality of provision and outcomes of schools' work towards promoting UAE national identity amongst students.

## Policy

### 1. Teaching Quality

1.1 Teaching Quality Statement: Schools shall develop a statement outlining their teacher standards based on their vision of how teachers are to uphold teaching quality in their schools and align them with the following guiding standards and frameworks:

1. Ministry of Education (MoE) Standards
2. UAE School Inspection Framework
3. EE Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework
4. NI Evaluation Framework
5. School Accreditation/ Authorization/ Affiliation standards
6. National standards of the school's chosen curriculum
7. Any other international standards

1.2 Schools shall commit to the highest standards in teaching and learning and ensure that their teaching quality standards incorporate the following guiding principles, at a minimum, so that educators:

1. Are committed to exemplifying high standards and to meeting the outcomes of an accurate and well-documented curriculum.
2. Are committed to embodying the core values of education, demonstrate ethical leadership as per the [ADEK School Values and Ethics Policy](#), and abide by the Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education (MoE, 2022), [ADEK School Professional Code of Ethics Policy](#), and [ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy](#).
3. Are committed to embodying and adhering to the standards stipulated in the NI Evaluation Framework and ensuring their practices promote national identity among students.
4. Are committed to embodying and continuously developing their competencies, in line with the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Competencies (ECA, 2024).
5. Are committed to adhering to the EE Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework, ensuring the provision of high-quality early childhood education and care (ADEK, 2024).
6. Are suitably qualified and have excellent subject knowledge and instructional skills, incorporating the use of technologies as tools with which to teach and learn while covering curriculum components.
7. Have a range of effective skills and approaches to classroom management through reinforcing the ethos of mutual respect and trust.

8. Use their own creativity and self-reflection to enhance their teaching methods.
9. Actively engage with all students, including students with additional learning needs, multilingual learners, and gifted and talented students.
10. Have the capacity to inspire and stimulate intellectual curiosity.
11. Have a variety of well-chosen methods to adapt teaching to cater to diverse student learning styles and individual needs.
12. Are skilled in the effective deployment of varied resources for investigative and inquiry-based learning beyond the textbook, including the use of digital tools.
13. Show a willingness to embrace change and harness curricula, instruction methods, assessments, and innovations to enrich their work within a subject.
14. Employ rigorous assessment methods that measure students' progress and are used to identify and respond effectively to individual and collective needs.

1.3 Enhanced Ratios for Early Years Teaching: Each early years class/ teacher up until the end of Grade 2/Year 3 shall be supported by a Teaching Assistant or Inclusion Assistant and maintain a minimum student-adult ratio of 12.5:1 for KG and 15:1 for lower Cycle 1 classes, as per the [ADEK School Staff Eligibility Policy](#) and the [ADEK School Employment Policy](#). All schools shall meet this policy requirement by the start of the Academic Year 2026/27 (Fall term).

1.4 Teacher Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and Performance Management: Schools shall provide CPD and performance management opportunities for all teachers, based on the school's teaching quality standards, as per the [ADEK School Employment Policy](#).

1. Compulsory Hours of CPD: Schools shall ensure that teachers complete a minimum of 75 hours of planned CPD per year at no cost to staff.
  - a. CPD shall be conducted with minimum interruption to classroom instruction.
  - b. Schools shall monitor compliance with the compulsory CPD hours of teachers as a part of educator performance management.
2. Link to Teaching Quality: Schools shall develop, implement, and annually review a CPD plan for teachers as a part of their SDP.
  - a. CPD opportunities shall be aligned with the strategic internal and external recommendations derived from the SDP, feedback from performance management on overall staff development needs, specific CPD requests from individual staff members, ADEK policies, and other requirements as announced.
  - b. CPD training shall include training that maintains or reinforces knowledge around ECD Competencies (ECA, 2024).
  - c. CPD training shall include training that maintains or reinforces knowledge around UAE National Identity.
  - d. The CPD plan shall include the following components:

- 1) List of topics (suggested and mandatory) to be covered for different types of staff, including a balance of subject-specific and pedagogy-related CPD for teachers.
  - 2) School CPD calendar and development days.
  - 3) Details on the provision of CPD via in-house or third-party providers.
  - 4) Strategies to share and safeguard best practices and learnings of staff in the CPD conducted.
- e. The CPD plan shall incorporate the following types of CPD:
- 1) Induction for staff members on academic, legal, social, and other school-related aspects (e.g., buddy program for new staff members to get acquainted with school practices and policies, etc.).
  - 2) Training for staff in acting roles.
  - 3) ADEK mandated training as announced (such as student protection, inclusion, etc.).
  - 4) Others at the school's discretion.
3. Schools shall ensure the teaching staff are provided at least 5 development days in their school calendar and such days shall be counted towards their compulsory CPD hours.
  4. Schools are authorized to provide teaching staff the opportunity to develop individual CPD plans along with their individual performance and development objectives during every performance management cycle and discuss progress from the previous year.
  5. Schools shall ensure that ECD Competencies (ECA, 2024) and the promotion UAE national identity are set as key metrics for assessing staff performance.
  6. Schools shall develop an internal framework and mechanisms to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of CPD and ensure documents of all CPD programs are accurately stored and maintained, as per the [ADEK School Records Policy](#).

**1.5 Internal Monitoring:** Schools shall develop and implement internal mechanisms to monitor and improve their teaching quality by ensuring that learning occurs through:

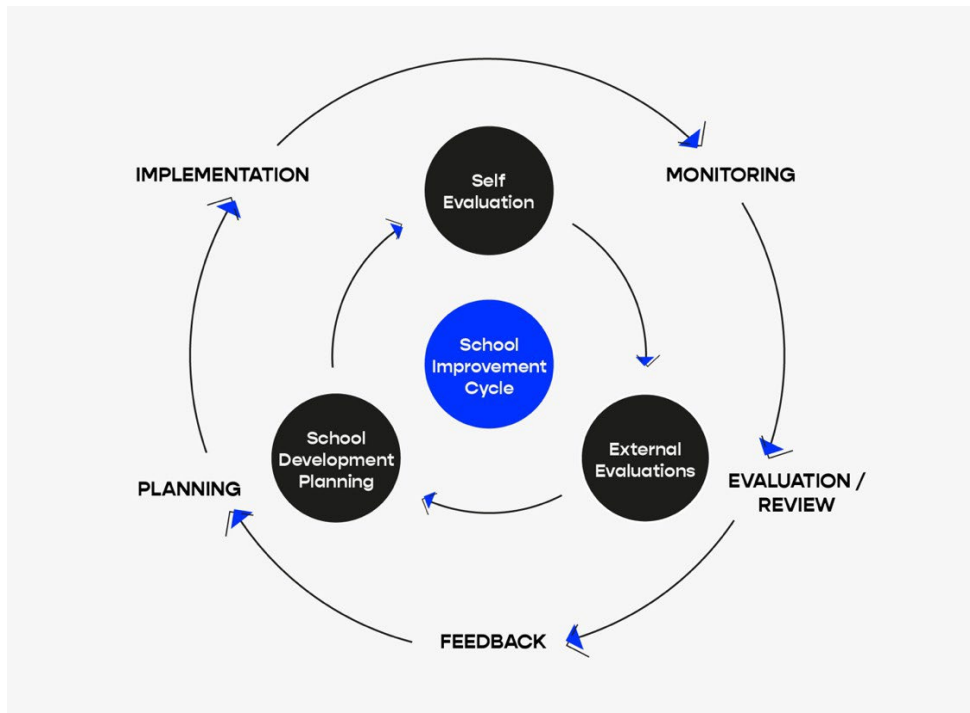
1. Equitable educational and developmental opportunities for all students.
2. Documented high standards of learning and achievement that will enable all students to reach their full potential.
3. A fostered development of diverse skills in addition to the academic curriculum content, aligned with the standards and frameworks (see [Section 1.1 Teaching Quality Statements](#)).
4. A focus on preparing students for success in the workplace and for contributing to society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
5. A sense of shared responsibility for learning and maintaining a positive school ethos.
6. High expectations for students so that they in turn embrace high expectations for appropriate behavior, self-discipline, and motivation.

7. A strong commitment among all students to do their very best to learn and to develop as effective, responsible citizens.

## 2. School Quality

- 2.1 Continuous Improvement Cycle: Schools shall develop internal quality assurance mechanisms (encompassing school self-evaluation, external evaluations, and school development planning to support their continuous improvement as per Figure 1: The Continuous Improvement Cycle.

Figure 1: The Continuous Improvement Cycle



### 2.2 School Development Planning

1. Schools shall develop and update a SDP as a means for improvement in line with the requirements stipulated in this chapter, as per Figure 1. The Continuous Improvement Cycle.
2. Schools shall review and submit their SDP to ADEK (Education Improvement) within 30 working days of the start of their academic year.
3. Schools shall implement measures to monitor and review progress made on targets set in the SDP and continuously update their SDPs in line with these observations.
4. Schools shall submit an updated SDP to ADEK's (Education Improvement) in line with inspection and/or evaluation results within 30 working days of receipt of the School Performance Report (see [Section 2.4 Inspections](#)).

5. The Governing Board shall review, update (where required), and approve the SDP prior to submission to ADEK.
6. Schools shall submit their SDP as part of their applications for temporary and general licenses and license renewal, as per the [ADEK School Licensing Policy](#).
7. School Development Committee: Schools shall establish a School Development Committee to oversee the creation, implementation, and monitoring of their SDP as per the [ADEK School Governance Policy](#). The committee shall incorporate the views of key stakeholders such as staff, students, and parents.
8. Communication and Engagement: Schools shall publish a summary version of their SDP on their website and share it with parents. Schools shall make translated copies (English or Arabic) and the full report available to parents on request.
9. Contents of the SDP: SDPs shall serve as the foundation for schools' strategic direction and improvement initiatives. In this regard, schools shall include the following in their SDP, at a minimum:
  - a. A limited number of clearly defined strategic priorities identified in line with:
    - 1) Areas of improvement highlighted by the School Self-Evaluation (SSE) (see [Section 2.3 School Self-Evaluation](#)) and inspections conducted by ADEK (see [Section 2.4 Inspections](#)) and other accrediting bodies.
    - 2) Improving the quality of the school leadership.
    - 3) Improving the quality of teaching and learning at the school.
    - 4) Performance of the student body as a whole and any significant variations in the performance of different student groups specified in the UAE School Inspection Framework.
    - 5) Improvement in student attainment and progress on standardized benchmarks and national and international assessments, in line with the [ADEK School Assessment Policy](#).
    - 6) Promotion of student and staff wellbeing, in line with ADEK wellbeing policies.
    - 7) Aims of the UAE national agenda.
    - 8) Priorities identified in previous SDPs and progress made on them.
  - b. SMART targets in relation to the strategic priorities, including targets related to the improvement of student achievements.
  - c. Implementation actions and success criteria to measure impact.
  - d. Clearly defined timelines, milestones, responsibilities, and budget requirements in relation to the targets.
  - e. Measures and schedule for monitoring and review of progress made on the targets.
  - f. CPD activities, if any, to support the achievement of the targets.
10. Schools shall consult the [ADEK School Development Planning Policy Guide](#) and the sample ADEK School Development Plan Template for further information on the requirements for completing the SDP. Schools are authorized to use their own SDP template, as long as it is aligned with the requirements of the above documents and criteria (see [Section 2.2.9 Contents of the SDP](#)).



**2.3 School Self-Evaluation (SSE):** Schools shall conduct self-evaluations and update the template available on the SIMS Portal in accordance with this. The school leadership is responsible for leading and completing the process of self-evaluation.

- 1. Continuous Evaluation:** Schools shall ensure the SSE is a continuous exercise by incorporating information on progress made and targets achieved and new sources of evidence (e.g., receipt of external assessment results). Schools shall ensure that relevant documentation is updated in line with this.
- 2. SDP Integration:** Schools shall identify priorities from the SSE for incorporation into the SDP.
- 3. Parameters for SSE:** Schools shall include the following in the SSE:
  - a. Based on the type of inspection and/or evaluation, an evaluation of their performance against the criteria of the UAE School Inspection Framework, the EE Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework, and the NI Framework (see [Section 2.4 Inspections](#)).
  - b. An evaluation of progress made against targets set in the School Development Plan (see [Section 2.2 School Development Planning](#)) and recommendations specified in the School Performance Report, the School Inspection Report, the EE Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Report, and the NI Evaluation Mark (see [Section 2.4.4 Inspections](#)).
- 4.** Schools shall ensure that the SSE is based on accurate, reliable, and valid evidence that is supported by clear documentation, including analysis of assessment data.
- 5. Stakeholder Opinions:** Schools shall consider the views of key stakeholders including students, parents, teachers, and staff as part of their evaluation process.
- 6. Submission:** Schools shall maintain an up-to-date version internally of the SSE on the SIMS portal and submit it to ADEK on request.
  - a. Schools shall update their SSE on the SIMS Portal upon being notified of an inspection and/or evaluation (see [Section 2.4 Inspections](#)).

**2.4 Inspections:** Schools shall undergo inspections as determined by ADEK, conducted by ADEK-appointed inspectors in line with the UAE School Inspection Framework, the EE Evaluation Standards and Quality Assurance Framework, and the NI Evaluation Framework, to evaluate the quality of education provided by them and to determine areas for improvement.

- 1.** Schools shall engage fully in inspections commissioned by ADEK. In line with the [ADEK School Compliance Policy](#), schools shall provide inspectors with access to school facilities and resources, and facilitate their monitoring of and interaction with staff, students, and parents.
- 2.** Schools seeking an accreditation linked to their curriculum are authorized to apply to ADEK to undergo joint inspections, i.e., inspections conducted jointly by teams from ADEK and the accrediting body, subject to ADEK's discretion.
- 3. Types of Inspections:** Schools shall be subject to the various types of

inspections outlined in this section. The typical inspection cycle for a School is 2 years. ADEK reserves the right to conduct any type of inspection or visit at its discretion.

- a. Monitoring Visits: Schools shall be subject to monitoring visits to assess their readiness for ADEK inspections in the circumstances outlined below.
  - 1) Visits for New Schools: New schools shall be subject to monitoring visits in their second year of operation.
  - 2) Established Schools: Established schools shall be subject to monitoring visits if ADEK believes the visit will support the school in its next ADEK inspection.
- b. ADEK Inspections: Schools shall be subject to ADEK inspections in their third year of operations and every 2 years thereafter.
- c. Thematic Visits: Schools shall be subject to thematic visits at ADEK's discretion.
- d. Follow-Through Visits: Schools shall be subject to a follow-through visit at ADEK's discretion, after an inspection to follow up on the school's work in addressing inspection recommendations.

**4. Feedback and School Performance Report:**

- a. Oral Feedback: Schools shall receive detailed oral feedback on all performance standards after an inspection.
- b. Draft Inspection Report: Schools shall receive a draft inspection report after inspections to check for factual inaccuracies.
- c. School Performance Report: Schools shall receive a finalized School Performance Report specifying their inspection rating and recommendations for improvement and have 10 working days to appeal the result.
  - 1) Schools shall publish their inspection rating on their website and make these available to parents of all students studying at the school.
  - 2) ADEK reserves the right to publish inspection ratings and/or reports on its website and other relevant government websites.

**5. Post-Inspection Actions and Implementation of Recommendations:**

- a. Schools shall update their SDP in line with the inspection recommendations (see [Section 2.2 School Development Planning](#)).
- b. Changes to Leadership: ADEK reserves the right to instruct the Governing Board to make leadership changes in case of significant concerns related to educational quality or health, safety, and student protection.
  - 1) ADEK reserves the right to appoint interim leadership in the case that the Governing Board is unable to implement the required changes.
- c. Changes to the Governing Board: ADEK reserves the right to instruct school owner(s) to make changes to the Governing Board in case of significant concerns related to educational quality or health and safety of students.
  - 1) ADEK reserves the right to appoint an interim Governing Board in the case that the owner(s) is unable to implement the required changes.

**6. Grievances and Appeals**

- a. Grievances During Inspections: Schools are authorized to raise grievances to the Lead Inspector during an inspection in case of any concerns regarding:
  - 1) The conduct of a member of the inspection team.

- 2) The integrity, impartiality, or fairness of an inspector.
  - 3) The adequacy of the evidence base.
  - 4) Non-compliance with the procedures of the *ADEK Irtiqā'a Inspection Methodology* or the UAE School Inspection Framework.
- b. Appeals to ADEK: Schools are authorized to raise an appeal to ADEK in cases of:
- 1) Unsatisfactory resolution of grievances by the Lead Inspector.
  - 2) Disagreement with their inspection ratings.
- c. Schools shall raise grievances and appeals in line with the procedure outlined in the *ADEK Irtiqā'a Inspection Methodology*.

### 3. External Quality Assurance

- 3.1 Accreditation/Authorization/Affiliation (AAA): Schools shall seek AAA based on the type of curriculum or learning framework/program offered as per the [ADEK School Curriculum Policy](#).
- 3.2 Other External Quality Assurance Through Accreditations/Certifications: Schools are authorized and encouraged to obtain any other accreditations or certifications, (e.g., non-mandated AAAs, ISO Accreditation) of their choice to improve the quality of organizational practices and enhance student learning outcomes.

### 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 penalties 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 where the school is found to be in violation of its obligations.



## References

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- Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK). (latest version). *School Development Planning Policy Guide*.
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- Dubai Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA), Abu Dhabi Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ACTVET), Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), and Ministry of Education (MoE). (latest version). *United Arab Emirates School Inspection Framework*.
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- Ministry of Education (MoE). (2022). *Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education*.

### Publication

2024 (September) ADEK\_School\_Quality Assurance Policy v.1.1

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.

Past version:

2024 (January) ADEK\_School\_Quality Assurance Policy\_v.1.0

