Sharjah American International School

2026 * 2027

EDUCATIONAL RISK

POLICY

Abu Dhabi Branch

1. EDUCATIONAL RISK IN THE CONTEXT OF UAE

Purpose:

The purpose of the Educational Risk Policy in SAIS-Require is to ensure that all students receive the support they need to achieve their full academic potential. This policy mandates that school:
·Develop and implement a clear and effective policy to identify students who are at educational risk.
·Establish structured mechanisms for the timely identification, planning of targeted interventions, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of students requiring additional support.
·Adopt a Tiered Model of Support to guide the development and implementation of interventions, ensuring a graduated and systematic approach that addresses the diverse and escalating needs of students.
This policy aims to promote equity, inclusion, and improved educational outcomes for all students by fostering proactive, evidence-based practices within the school system.
1. Identification of Students at Educational Risk
SAIS-Abu Dhabi is committed to early identification of students at educational risk. The process begins at the admission stage, where any learning concerns are flagged and referred directly to the Inclusion Department for further assessment.
The school uses a variety of data sources, including:

- Academic records
- Diagnostic assessments
- Behavioural reports
- Language proficiency screenings (e.g., for EAL students)

Students with limited English proficiency are enrolled in the EAL Program (Tier 2 Targeted). For more information, please refer to the SAIS-Abu Dhabi EAL Policy.

2. IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS AT EDUCATIONAL RISK

SAIS-Abu Dhabi is committed to early identification of students at educational risk. The process begins at the admission stage, where any learning concerns are flagged and referred directly to the Inclusion Department for further assessment.
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Individual children, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need coordinated help from faculty and staff. This can be done through:

- Raising staff awareness and sense of responsibility for reporting possible cases of child abuse.
- Ensuring effective communication between all staff on child protection issues.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of and follow the correct procedures.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF INTERVENTIONS

SAIS-Abu Dhabi adopts a tiered model of support to meet the academic, behavioural, and emotional needs of students at risk.

Tier 1: Universal Support

·Quality, evidence-based teaching practices for all students
·Positive classroom climate and supportive environment
·Ongoing classroom-based monitoring by teachers
·Explicit Instructional Strategies: Implement evidence-based teaching methods, such as direct instruction, to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
·Mindfulness Practices: Incorporate mindfulness training to help students manage stress and develop self-regulation skills, positively impacting various aspects of their lives.
dated reporters of cases of abuse and/or suspected abuse inside and outside the school.

Tier 2: Targeted Support

- Small group interventions for students struggling with academic or behavioural goals
- Supplemental instruction, such as EAL support

·Continuous progress monitoring to evaluate student response
·Small Group Interventions: Provide small group interventions focusing on specific academic or behavioural goals, such as social skills training or conflict resolution groups.
·Behavioral Contracts: Utilize behavior contracts to set clear expectations and consequences, promoting positive behavior among students.

Tier 3: Intensive Support

- Individualized interventions tailored to specific student needs
- Involvement of external specialists where needed
- Regular monitoring and formal reviews

The Intervention Team, which includes counselors, the Head of Wellbeing, and the Head of Inclusion, is responsible for designing behavior intervention plans for students with behavioral challenges.

· Individualized Intervention Plans: Develop individualized intervention plans tailored to the specific needs of students, incorporating strategies like Aggression Replacement Training (ART) to address aggressive behaviors.

·Functional Behavioral Assessments: Conduct Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) to identify the underlying causes of challenging behaviors and inform the development of targeted interventions.

3. FACTORS THAT INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD OF EDUCATIONAL RISK

At SAIS-Abu Dhabi, we recognize that a range of interrelated factors may increase the likelihood of a student being at educational risk. These risk factors can be categorized into three primary domains: developmental, individual, and environmental.

A. Developmental Factors

- ·Genetic predispositions or family history of learning difficulties
- Neurological or sensory impairments (e.g., vision or hearing loss)
- Chronic medical conditions or poor physical health
- Delays in early developmental milestones (e.g., speech, motor skills)
- Exposure to Environmental Toxins: Students from disadvantaged communities may be exposed to environmental toxins, such as lead or mercury, which have been linked to learning disabilities and could negatively impact their learning and development.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Exposure to ACEs, such as abuse, neglect, or household dysfunction, can lead to difficulties in focusing, self-regulation, and trust, negatively affecting cognitive development and academic performance.

B. Individual Student Factors

- Diagnosed learning disabilities or special educational needs (e.g., ADHD, dyslexia)
- Low academic performance or gaps in foundational skills
- Social or emotional difficulties (e.g., anxiety, trauma history)
- Behavioural challenges or poor self-regulation
- Gender-based disparities in engagement or achievement

- Low cognitive processing or attention difficulties
- Lack of motivation or negative self-perception of learning abilities
- Limited proficiency in the language of instruction (e.g., English as an Additional Language)
- Mental Health Challenges: Students experiencing mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), may struggle with concentration, engagement, and academic performance.
- Substance Use: Engagement in substance use, including tobacco, alcohol, or drugs, is associated with higher rates of truancy, academic underachievement, and behavioral problems.
- Bullying Victimization: Students who are victims of bullying, including verbal or social bullying, are at increased risk of school disengagement, mental health issues, and academic difficulties.

C. Environmental Factors

- Unstable or unsupportive home environment
- High mobility or frequent school transfers.
- Limited parental involvement or educational support at home
- Lack of Community Support Services: Communities with limited access to support services, such as healthcare, mental health resources, or extracurricular activities, can contribute to students' educational risk by not addressing underlying issues.
- Cultural or language barriers
- Neglect, or family stressors
- Inadequate school attendance or frequent absenteeism

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Students identified as at educational risk are closely monitored through the collaboration of multiple stakeholders. The Assessment Team, led by the Head of Assessment and coordinated with the Inclusion Department, ensures proper documentation and support planning.

1-Intervention plans are:

- Reviewed regularly
- Adjusted based on student progress
- Communicated with parents and all relevant staff

2. Data-Driven Decision Making

- Regular Data Collection: Implement systematic and ongoing collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, including academic performance, attendance records, behavioral observations, and feedback from students, parents, and teachers.
- Utilization of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS): Leverage EMIS to aggregate and analyze data, facilitating evidence-based decision-making and timely interventions.

3. Stakeholder Involvement

- Inclusive Feedback Mechanisms: Establish regular channels for feedback from all stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, and external specialists, to ensure comprehensive monitoring and evaluation.
- Participatory Evaluation: Engage students and parents in the evaluation process to gather diverse perspectives and foster a sense of ownership and accountability.

4. Continuous Improvement

- Regular Review Cycles: Conduct quarterly reviews of intervention plans to assess their effectiveness and make necessary adjustments based on data and feedback.
- Professional Development: Provide ongoing training for staff on monitoring and evaluation techniques to enhance their capacity to assess and respond to student needs effectively.

5. Educational Risk Committee

The Educational Risk Committee is responsible for the oversight and strategic decision-making regarding students at educational risk. It includes:

- Head of Inclusion
- Head Of Schools
- Head of Wellbeing
- Counsellors and Social Workers
- Head Of Departments
- Section Supervisors
- Head of Assessment

This team ensures that interventions are appropriate, inclusive, and effectively implemented

Team Responsibilities and ADEK Alignment

The team will:

- Involve students (where appropriate) and their teachers in developing individualized intervention plans
- Use multi-dimensional strategies to strengthen protective factors and reduce risk factors affecting wellbeing and the academic, social, and emotional development of students, in alignment with ADEK's Wellbeing Policies
- Allocate available resources to support individuals or groups of students at educational risk
- Identify the need for specialist services and refer to external agencies with parental consent, following the ADEK In-School Specialist Services Policy and the Student Mental Health Policy
- Ensure teaching staff provide required learning accommodations and manage resources effectively to meet the needs of all learners
- Engage relevant internal and external stakeholders, as applicable, to provide holistic support.

Policy References

- Educational Risk Policy
- ADEK School In-School Specialist Services Policy
- ADEK School Student Mental Health Policy
- ADEK Wellbeing Policy
- ADEK School Student Protection Policy

This policy is due to be reviewed every 4 years or sooner if any related policies are updated.