

GEMS DAA: Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy

Purpose and Guiding Principles

Creating a safe, respectful, caring and inclusive school community grounded in academic excellence.

Dubai American Academy is committed to nurturing a community grounded in wellbeing, safety, respect and responsibility. Our Code of Conduct is anchored in the vision of the UAE and the Emirate of Dubai to build a society that is safe, kind, tolerant, disciplined and values-driven.

Guided by the leadership vision of H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, and aligned with Dubai Social Agenda 33, Education Strategy 33, and KHDA expectations for school communities. This framework establishes the standards of behaviour and partnership that ensure every student, staff member, and family can flourish.

At DAA, conduct is not simply about rules. It is about cultivating character, safeguarding wellbeing, and ensuring that our school reflects the values of the nation in which we live. We believe that when a community is grounded in respect, order, kindness and accountability, it creates the conditions for excellence in learning and in life.

Our conduct/behavior expectations are rooted in:

- **Respect** for self, others, and the school environment
- **Integrity** in words and actions
- **Responsibility** for behaviour and learning
- **Kindness** in all relationships

These values guide all expectations, decisions, actions, and interventions. This Code supports KHDA's mandate that schools provide safe, respectful environments and maintain written, transparent behavioural and disciplinary procedures that prohibit severe unethical punishment or humiliation.

DAA Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct applies staff, students and parents/guardians,

- On school property
- On school buses
- During school-sponsored events (on or off campus)
- During online learning or school-related digital communication (WhatsApp chats, etc.)
- In any context where behaviour affects the school climate, safety, or well-being of others
- Any instances where the actions bring risk to the school's reputation on or off campus

Partnership and Accountability

The strength of our school depends on partnership.

We commit to:

- open communication
- mutual respect
- shared responsibility
- constructive problem-solving
- alignment with KHDA expectations

When concerns arise, they will be addressed:

- respectfully
- collaboratively
- in line with school and KHDA processes

This Code of Conduct reflects our role in contributing to Dubai's future as envisioned by its leadership.

We aim to graduate students who are:

- respectful and responsible
- compassionate and disciplined
- globally minded and locally grounded
- committed to the wellbeing of others
- prepared to contribute to a safe and thriving society

At DAA, we recognise that schools play a vital role in shaping character and creating safe, caring and inclusive environments. Through our shared commitment to conduct, wellbeing and partnership, we honour the vision of the UAE and contribute to a community where every individual can flourish and contribute responsibly and respectfully.

Standards of Behaviour



Respect, Civility, and Responsible Citizenship

All members of the DAA community must:

- Demonstrate honesty, integrity, and kindness towards others.
- Respect for the diversity of all people
- Treat others with dignity in all interactions in person and online.
- Maintain respectful digital citizenship.
- Use non-violent means to resolve conflicts.
- Support community members in need and seek support when necessary.

Safety Expectations

All members of the DAA community **MUST NOT**:

- Engage in bullying, harassment, discrimination, violence or intimidation (physical, verbal, written, social, or cyber).
- Possess or use weapons, sharp objects, or dangerous items.
- Use, possess, distribute, or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, vapes, or cigarettes/tobacco products..
- Engage in any form of harassment, misconduct, or inappropriate public displays of affection.
- Commit vandalism or damage school property.
- Engage in hate-based behaviours or speech.
- Engage and lead or create a negative and toxic environment online or in person

- Engage in dangerous pranks or “jokes,” including senior pranks, that damage property or harm individuals.

These behaviours are considered serious and may lead to suspension or removal from DAA, as per KHDA ratification requirements.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students must:

- Arrive in proper school uniform, on time, prepared and ready to learn.
- Follow classroom and school rules.
- Treat peers, staff, guests, and community members with respect and kindness.
- Use school technology responsibly and in compliance with DAA’s Acceptable Use Policy.
- Take responsibility for their own actions.
- Report disrespectful, unsafe, violent, or bullying behaviour to a trusted adult to protect the well-being of others

Parents & Guardians must:

- Communicate with kindness and respect with all staff at DAA
- Ensure children attend school regularly and on time (aligned with KHDA attendance requirements).
- Work in partnership with the school to support their child(ren)’s learning.
- Review and support all school policies and hold their child(ren) to act responsibly and respectfully at school.
- Participate in meetings and interventions when required.
- Inform the school of concerns related to behaviour, safety, or well-being.

Staff at DAA must:

- Model respectful and kind behaviour.
- Apply discipline consistently and fairly.
- Respond immediately to inappropriate behaviour if safe to do so.
- Report serious incidents to the Principal the same day.
- Support student growth through teaching, coaching, and restorative practices.
- Be proactive and support parents when inquiries are made about their child’s learning.

School Leaders must:

- Be a role model in the community for respectful and kind behaviour
- Ensure this Code of Conduct is communicated clearly.
- Maintain and monitor intervention records.
- Ensure all actions follow KHDA regulations, including documentation and parent appeal rights.
- Lead training in classroom management, bullying prevention, and progressive discipline.

Bullying Prevention & Intervention



Definition of Bullying

Bullying is aggressive, repeated behaviour that:

- Intends or is reasonably expected to cause harm, fear, or distress;
- Creates a negative school environment;
- Involves a real or perceived power imbalance (e.g., age, social status, ability, group dynamics).

Includes:

- Physical aggression
- Verbal insults, threats, slurs
- Social exclusion, gossip, humiliation
- Communication to the school that is disrespectful
- Cyberbullying (messages, impersonation, A.I generated images or videos, posting harmful content, negative and inappropriate group chats, etc.)

Reporting

Students, staff, and parents are encouraged to report bullying through:

- Direct reporting to staff or school leader
- Anonymous reporting tools (Speak Up)

DAA ensures no retaliation for reporting and that investigations follow KHDA expectations for documentation and fairness.

Support & Intervention

DAA provides:

- Emotional and academic support for students who are bullied
- Behavioural and restorative intervention for students who engaged in bullying
- Mandatory parent involvement
- Referral to external counselling if required

Progressive Discipline at DAA

Progressive Discipline means:

- Responses match severity, frequency, intent, and impact.
- Student history and mitigating factors are considered.
- The goal is to teach, not simply to punish.
- Behaviour improvement is supported through opportunities to learn new skills.

Mitigating Factors Considered when setting consequences

- Age and developmental stage
- Different needs and supports for Students of Determination
- Intent and understanding
- Impact of behaviour on others or the community
- History of incidents

- Level of risk or threat to others
- Student's response and willingness to participate in restoring positive behaviors

Students are expected to understand that actions have consequences and that discipline is intended to guide growth and responsibility. Serious or repeated breaches of conduct may result in:

- restorative measures
- behavioural interventions
- formal disciplinary action
- involvement of KHDA or other authorities where required

All responses will be proportionate, respectful and aligned with KHDA regulations.

Behavior Categories & Consequences

DAA maintains **five levels of behavioural violations**, each with prescribed and progressive consequences. Consequences may escalate depending on age of student, severity or frequency/repetition of behaviours.

LEVEL 1: Minor Misconduct

Examples: • Unprepared for class • Dress code/uniform violations • Minor disrespect • Off-task behaviour • Late assignments • Minor inappropriate digital use	Possible Responses: • Verbal reminder • Reteaching expectations • Teacher-student conference • Parent notification • Reflection task or written apology • Minor loss of privileges • Detention
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LEVEL 2: Repeated or Moderate Misconduct

Examples: • Repeated Level 1 behaviours • Skipping class • Inappropriate language • Unsafe behaviour (not harmful) • Misuse of technology (non-harmful) • Disruptive conduct affecting peers	Possible Responses: • Behaviour contract • Restorative conversation • Detention • Parent meeting • Loss of privileges (clubs, athletics, or activities) • Referral to counselling
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LEVEL 3: Serious Misconduct

Examples: • Bullying (non-violent) • Vandalism or property damage • Plagiarism or academic dishonesty • Harassment or intimidation • Reckless behaviour with risk of harm • Defiance of school authority (Teachers, EA, Bus Guardians, Leaders)	Possible Responses: • In-school suspension • Formal behaviour contract • Mandatory counselling sessions • Community service (up to five days per KHDA guidance) • Financial restitution for property damage • Block Re-enrolment
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LEVEL 4: Major Violations

Examples: • Fighting or physical aggression • Severe bullying or cyberbullying • Stealing • Smoking/vaping or being present with others smoking • Possession of prohibited materials • Dangerous pranks causing harm or property damage	Possible Responses: • Suspension up to 3 days can be issued in consecutive intervals • Intensified counselling interventions • Community service • Behaviour panel review • Conditions for return (on Probation behaviour plan) • Blocked from re-enrolment
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LEVEL 5: Critical / Criminal Behaviours

Examples: • Possession or distribution of drugs/alcohol • Possession of weapons • Sexual harassment or misconduct • Hate-motivated incidents • Serious physical assault • Criminal acts requiring police involvement	Possible Responses: • Immediate suspension until investigation is complete and Referral to KHDA investigation authority (as required) • Request for student transfer or removal from DAA, subject to KHDA review and ratification • Mandatory external intervention or legal processes • Blocked from Re-enrolment
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Supporting Student Learning at DAA

DAA prioritizes restorative approaches in continuing to support student learning when they are suspended from school due to Level 4 and 5 misconducts. Options include:

- Providing students with access to their learning virtually and their teachers.
- Peer mediation where appropriate through our guidance counsellors
- Repairing harm (socially or materially)
- Community service
- Reflective learning assignments

Students are supported in repairing relationships, restoring trust, and learning better strategies for future situations.

Attendance & Punctuality Expectations

- Attendance is mandatory.
- Chronic lateness or absenteeism results in escalating interventions that may result in academic penalty or blocked re-enrolment.

Consequences:

1. Warning and parent notification
2. Meeting with Superintendent and/or Deputy Superintendent
3. Behaviour contract
4. Detention or community service
5. If absenteeism exceeds **20 consecutive or 25 non-consecutive days**, KHDA disciplinary action may apply, and enrollment may be impacted as well as their ability meet their instructional hours to achieve their credit

Technology & Digital Citizenship Expectations

Severe misuse and repeated misuse may lead to suspension or higher-level consequences in line with DAA's School policies, and KHDA regulations.

Students must:

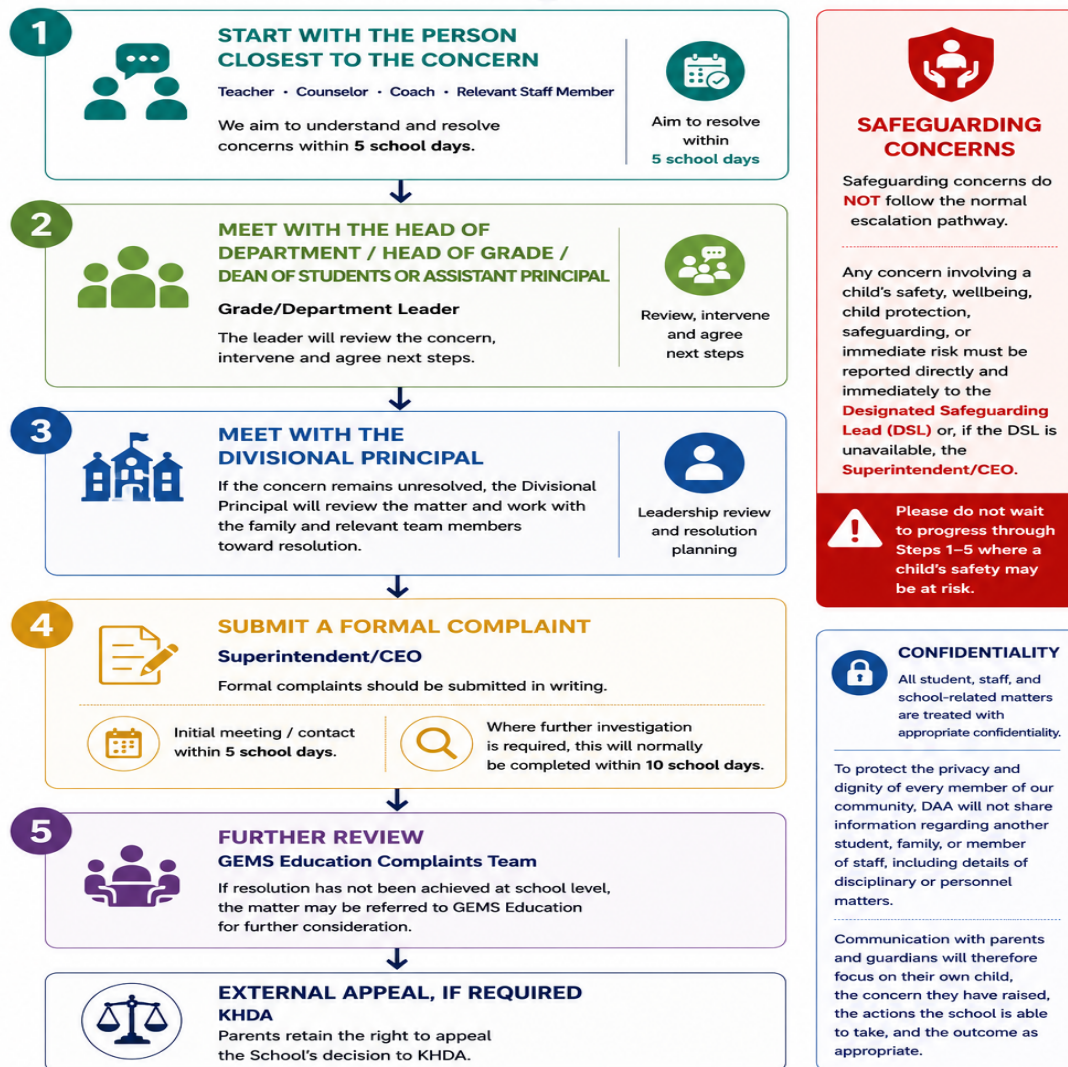
- Not use phones during the school day. Phones will be confiscated and parents must pick them up from the school.
- Use devices responsibly and only when allowed.
- Never record, photograph, or post images of others without consent
- Not engage in cyberbullying, impersonation, or harmful online behaviour.
- Follow school and KHDA rules related to digital conduct.
- Always uphold the UAE laws in digital spaces and protect people's privacy

Concern Escalation Pathway



PARENT CONCERN & COMPLAINT PATHWAY

Our aim is to resolve concerns early, respectfully and as close to the source as possible.



For academic matters related to student learning, parents, students, and teachers will meet together to discuss any concerns regarding the student's progress.

All decisions made by the KHDA are final and binding as are decisions made by the complaints escalated to GEMS corporate office Education Senior Vice President.

Annual Review: DAA will review this Code of Conduct and KHDA expectations annually with staff, students and families

Student, Staff & Parent Acknowledgement

DAA requires yearly confirmation that:

- Students and Parents have read and understood the Code of Conduct and our regulations within the school contract.
- Students and Parents understand their role in creating a safe, caring, respectful and inclusive learning environment and will act in a way that honours the school community.
- Students and Parents will uphold our values; Respect, Integrity, Responsibility, and Kindness in person and online in all their interactions with members of the DAA community.
- Students and Parents accept responsibility for supporting a positive school climate in and out of the school. This includes and is not limited to their behavior and interactions in the school as well as in online communities and spaces, such as What'sApp.
- They understand the discipline framework and possible consequences as outlined within the Code of Conduct, KHDA regulations and the laws within the UAE.
- Students and Parents understand that DAA holds the right to refuse admission to any student or parent not acting in accordance with the school's expectations as outlined in our Code of Conduct
- Using forms of social media, such as WhatsApp and others, to insult, defame, speak negatively, or bully another person, teacher or the school is a crime in the UAE and can lead to being removed from the school.

Together, as students, staff and families, we commit to upholding the values and expectations outlined herein. By doing so, we ensure that GEMS Dubai American Academy remains a place of excellence, belonging and respect are the core of our identity and purpose.

SIGNATURES:

Student Signature, Grade and Date

Parent/ Guardian Signature and Date

Homeroom/CREW Teacher Signature and Date

****RETURN THIS FORM SIGNED BY ALL PARTIES TO HOMEROOM/CREW TEACHER****