Parent & Student Handbook

2026 - 2027

Academic Year

GEMS Dubai American Academy

A Welcome from the Superintendent

Dear DAA Families,

Welcome to DAA, home of the Leopards! It is a privilege to welcome you to our community and to share this Parent and Student Handbook as a guide to the values, expectations, and experiences that shape life at DAA.

At DAA, we believe education is a shared journey. Students, families, educators, and staff each play an important role in creating the culture of our school. Together, we are responsible for building a community grounded in kindness, respect, belonging, and care. One where every person feels known and valued, is challenged to grow, and has the opportunity to thrive.

Our vision is ambitious. We want our students to become purposeful learners and principled leaders. Learners who think deeply, act with integrity, adapt with confidence, and use their learning to make a positive difference in the world. Bringing that vision to life requires more than academic excellence. It requires all of us to model the character, relationships, and sense of responsibility we hope to develop in our students.

This handbook provides important information about how DAA operates and the expectations we share as members of this community. More importantly, it reflects our collective commitment to creating a safe, joyful, inclusive, and inspiring learning environment where every person is treated with dignity and where everyone can flourish.

Thank you for entrusting us with your children and for the partnership you bring to DAA. I look forward to all that we will learn, build, and accomplish together.

Warmest Regards,

Helen Pereira-Raso
Superintendent/CEO

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1. DAA Mission, Identity and Values

1.1 Mission

Dubai American Academy is a vibrant international community, deeply rooted in a Culture of Kindness, that creates and empowers leaders and independent thinkers with integrity, character, and drive.

1.2 Identity

DAA offers an enriched American curriculum to students of all nationalities, culminating in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program and/or an American High School Diploma. Beyond its rigorous academic program, DAA prepares students to lead successful lives through the exceptional diversity of its community and the extra-curricular experiences that contribute to the development of the whole person.

1.3 Vision

Dubai American Academy will be recognized as the model for international enriched American education in the world. DAA will develop the innovators of the future in all fields by understanding individual learning and social/emotional needs and building critical learning skills, competencies, and international mindedness through inquiry and real-world problem solving.

1.4 GEMS Core Educational Values

Value	**How it is lived**
Always Learning	Open-minded curiosity fuels a love for learning; students ask questions, listen, learn, and improve.
Care	Students and adults respect the needs of others and ensure that people feel listened to and cared for.
Excellence	Students set ambitious goals, deliver high-quality work, and aim to be the best they can be.

One Team	Students work collaboratively with the bigger picture in mind and put the needs of the team ahead of their own.

1.5 International-mindedness and the whole child

DAA is an international community in which diversity, respect, tolerance, leadership, global understanding, and the development of the whole person are integral to education. We pride ourselves on being an inclusive community where all members are able to contribute and thrive.

2. Our K–12 Community and Educational Philosophy

2.1 A K–12 community

DAA is a KG1–Grade 12 school. The Elementary School includes KG1–Grade 5; the Middle School comprises Grades 6–8; and the High School comprises Grades 9–12. Across the divisions, faculty, administrators, counselors, inclusion staff, teachers, support staff, and specialist teams work together to support students and families.

2.2 Educational philosophy

DAA offers a challenging and enriched learning experience that inspires students to be curious, think critically, and take an active role in their learning. Through inquiry, real-world problem solving, collaboration, and meaningful opportunities for student agency, we encourage students to develop the knowledge, skills, confidence, and character they need to thrive. Our commitment to social and emotional development ensures that students are supported not only as learners, but as compassionate, responsible, and globally minded members of our community.

2.3 Belonging and community

At DAA, we are committed to creating a positive and inclusive community where every student is known, valued, supported, and celebrated. We foster a culture built on respect, trust, collaboration, and a strong sense of belonging, encouraging students to develop confidence, reflect on their experiences, and embrace opportunities to grow. We value each student as an individual while nurturing leadership, positive self-esteem, and an understanding of their place within our diverse and globally minded community. Our Elementary homeroom communities and Middle/High School CREW/advisory structures are integral to developing students' sense of belonging.

2.4 Campus security

DAA maintains the highest levels of security at all times. Our dedicated, 24-hour security team ensures that at all times our people and facility is secure. As part of our approach to security, all students are taught emergency procedures and participate in drills, including evacuation and relocation procedures. All visitors are expected to adhere to safety procedures while on campus.

Security is everyone's responsibility and families are asked to report suspicious behavior or items to security immediately.

- Students and family members must wear the appropriate school identification/lanyard while on campus.
- Parents should follow campus access and parking procedures communicated by the school's security team.
- Parents may not access learning spaces during instructional time. Parents with scheduled meetings should register with the divisional secretary, who will notify the relevant staff member.
- Students and visitors must follow instructions during emergency drills and other safety procedures.

3. General Information: Hours, Attendance, and Withdrawal

3.1 School hours

Division	**Monday–Thursday**	**Friday**
Elementary School (KG1–G5)	7:40 a.m.–2:50 p.m. Campus Opens: 7:15am Classroom doors Open: 7:25am Marked Tardy: 7:41am	7:40 a.m.–11:30 a.m. Campus Opens: 7:15am Classroom doors Open: 7:25am Marked Tardy: 7:41am

Middle School (G6–G8)	7:40 a.m.–2:55 p.m.	7:40 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
High School (G9–G12)	7:40 a.m.–2:55 p.m.	7:40 a.m.–11:30 a.m.

3.2 Supervision before and after school

Supervision arrangements are age-specific. Elementary students have designated morning and dismissal procedures, with all students requiring adult supervision and handover. Students in the Elementary School require adult supervision and approved handover and collection, with designated arrival and dismissal locations/procedures as communicated by ES.

All students KG1-Grade 2 must be handed over to and collected from the homeroom teacher or educational assistant by a designated adult. All students Grade 3 to Grade 5 must head to a supervised zone before classroom doors open; and must be collected from their allocation dismissal zone (communicated by the teacher) by a designated adult.

Middle and High School students are expected to use campus spaces appropriately before school and to leave campus promptly after classes or approved activities unless they are participating in a supervised program. If a student is required to wait on campus for their sibling, they may only wait in the Main Atrium where there is adult supervision.

3.3 Attendance

Regular attendance is essential to student success. Students learn best when they are present in scheduled lessons and that absence can affect academic progress. Parents are responsible for notifying the school of absences and providing reasons/documentation as required by the relevant division.

3.4 Attendance ratings and escalation

KHDA ratings are identified as Outstanding 98%, Good 96%, Acceptable 92%, Unsatisfactory below 92%. At 14 consecutive or 21 non-consecutive days, progression is considered case-by-case; at 20 consecutive or 25 non-consecutive days, disciplinary action may result.

As an outstanding-rated school we set the highest standards for student attendance and seek to meet the KHDA's outstanding attendance rating.

3.5 Punctuality and Tardiness

Punctuality is the responsibility of the student (and parents, in the case of Elementary School students) and it is essential that all students come to class on time. Late arrival is recorded and may lead to follow-up, detention, attendance probation, or other consequences depending on the division and frequency.

Elementary School: Students are marked tardy after 7:40 a.m.; unexplained absences are followed up with families. Students arriving after 7:40am must report to the divisional secretary so that they can be escorted to their classrooms. Persistent or repeated tardiness may result in further consequences, and may result in suspension, or retention.

Middle School: Lessons begin at 7:40 a.m. each day. Students arriving after 7:40 a.m. will be marked as tardy unexcused if they do not have appropriate documentation. Students arriving after 7:40 a.m. must report to the Middle School Office to obtain a tardy slip. Persistent or repeated tardiness may result in further consequences, including but not limited to time recovery, loss of privileges, and/or an eligibility review for participation in school activities.

High School: Lessons begin at 7:40 a.m. Students arriving after 7:40 a.m. will be marked tardy. Repeated unexcused tardies may lead to letters home, detention, attendance probation, or loss of privileges.

3.6 Planned absences

Attendance in class is a priority. When an absence outside school holidays is unavoidable, parents should notify the relevant attendance office in advance. Students are responsible for completing missed work. Families should not assume that assignments or examinations will always be available in advance.

Attendance Secretaries:

- **Elementary School:**

  Shirley Vas (KG1 - Grade 2): s.vas_daa@gemsedu.com

  04 704 9705

  Lynn-Leigh Mullins (GR.3 - Gr.5): l.mullins_daa@gemsedu.com

  04 704 9724

- **Middle School:**

Marianne Manibo: MSAttendance_daa@Gemsedu.com

04 704 9728

- **High School:**

  Kelvin Sicat: k.silcat_daa@gemsedu.com

  04 704 9747

3.7 Early release and dismissal

Early release and dismissal procedures are designed to protect student safety and minimize disruption to learning. Parents should not go directly to classrooms during instructional time. Rather they should wait in the designated divisional foyer for their child to be brought to them. All students leaving before dismissal require approval and an early release slip to be allowed to leave campus. These slips can be collected from the attendance secretaries. All early releases must be pre-arranged and requested in writing. However, please note that no early release is permitted after 2:15 p.m. Monday–Thursday or 10:45 a.m. Friday.

3.8 Withdrawal procedures

Families planning to withdraw a student should notify the Principal and Registrar's Office as far in advance as possible. Withdrawal and transfer paperwork must be completed and outstanding books, fees, and other requirements cleared before records or transfer certificates are released. Please contact our admissions department at registrar_daa@gemsedu.com for further information.

3.9 Changes during the school day

Parents should notify the appropriate school office/teacher in advance when a student's normal dismissal or collection arrangement changes. Students must follow the school's release procedures and may not independently excuse themselves from campus. Elementary School changes to normal collection/bus arrangements should be communicated to the homeroom teacher/ES office within the specified timeframe and cannot be communicated solely through the child.

4. Academic Program and Student Support

4.1 Elementary School: KG1–Grade 5

The Elementary School provides a nurturing, inclusive, and engaging learning environment where every child is known, valued, and challenged to achieve their personal best. Guided by our Culture of Kindness, students develop curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and independence through an inquiry-based American curriculum that prepares them for future success.

DAA ES identity: Culture of Kindness, student agency, inquiry, explicit instruction where appropriate, collaboration, critical thinking and authentic application of learning.

Core learning includes English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, complemented by specialist programmes in Art, Music, Physical Education, Swimming, Library, Arabic Language, Islamic Education (for Muslim students), Moral Education, and Innovation & Technology. Technology is integrated to enhance learning, creativity, collaboration, and digital citizenship.

4.1.1 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Our programme develops strong literacy, numeracy, scientific thinking, and global citizenship through engaging, authentic learning experiences. Students are encouraged to think critically, solve problems, collaborate, and apply their learning in meaningful contexts.

Assessment is an ongoing part of learning. Teachers use a range of formative and summative assessments to monitor progress, provide feedback, and inform instruction. Student progress is communicated regularly through report cards, conferences, and ongoing home-school communication.

4.1.2 Language Learning, Student Support, Enrichment, and Wellbeing

DAA is committed to ensuring every student is supported, challenged, and empowered to succeed.

English Language Development (EAL): Students developing English proficiency receive differentiated support to access the curriculum and build language skills. This is a comprehensive program with a proven track record of success. Students enrolled in our EAL program are required to pay an additional EAL fee to cover the program costs.

Student Support Services (SEND): Our Inclusion team works collaboratively with teachers and families to provide appropriate accommodations, interventions, and enrichment based on individual student needs.

Gifted and Talented Programme: Formally identified students (Gr.3-5) participate in enriched learning experiences that foster critical thinking, creativity, inquiry, and innovation while extending their strengths and interests.

Counselling and Wellbeing: Elementary counselors promote students' social-emotional wellbeing through classroom lessons, small groups, individual support, and collaboration with teachers and families.All elementary students will have scheduled counseling lessons throughout the term.

4.1.3 Home Learning and Home-School Partnership

Home Learning reinforces classroom learning and gradually develops students' independence, responsibility, and organisational skills. Families are encouraged to provide a supportive environment while allowing students to complete their work independently. Teachers communicate learning expectations and assignments through the school's approved communication platform, Seesaw.

4.1.4 Academic Integrity

Students are encouraged to demonstrate honesty, responsibility, and integrity in all aspects of their learning. They are expected to complete their own work, acknowledge the ideas of others appropriately, and learn to use AI safely, ethically, transparently and in age-appropriate ways, with teacher guidance.

4.1.5 Student Progression

Promotion to the next grade level is based on each student's academic progress, social-emotional development, attendance, and overall readiness. The school works collaboratively with families to provide appropriate support and ensure students are well prepared for continued success.

4.2 Middle School: Grades 6–8

The Middle School years are an exciting and important period of growth as students transition from childhood toward adolescence. As students develop greater independence, they are increasingly encouraged to take ownership of their learning, choices, relationships, and responsibilities. Our goal is to develop confident, capable, and responsible young people who are prepared for future success.

DAA Middle School is built on a culture of belonging, trust, collaboration, and reflection, where students are encouraged to grow, contribute, and become increasingly confident in

who they are and what they can achieve. Our approach is grounded in three key pillars: Care, Consistency, and Community. We believe students thrive when they feel known and valued, experience clear and consistent expectations, and have a strong sense of connection to their peers, their school, and the wider community.

Our diverse school community enriches the learning environment and promotes an understanding and appreciation of different cultures and perspectives. Through a challenging and supportive American curriculum, we strive to nurture the whole child and support students' academic, social, and emotional development.

The Middle School learning programme is designed around four key principles:

- Student-Centred: Student voice, choice, and individual needs are valued throughout the learning process, with opportunities for personalised pathways and increasing ownership of learning.
- Challenging: Students are supported and challenged to achieve high expectations, with a commitment to ensuring that every student makes meaningful progress.
- Empowering: Students develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to take responsibility for their learning and make positive contributions to their communities and wider society.
- Equitable: Every student has the right to learn and is provided with appropriately challenging, relevant, and accessible learning opportunities.

Core learning includes English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education/Health, Arabic, and Islamic Education for Muslim students, complemented by a broad range of elective and exploratory courses. Elective options may include Art, Sculpture, Photography & Digital Art, Coding & Robotics, Innovation in Media, Drama, Music Appreciation, Vocal Arts, Band, French, Spanish, Sports Leadership, Strength & Conditioning, and Dance.

Students may also access additional support based on their individual needs, including English Language Development, Academic Support, and Modified Curriculum pathways.

4.2.1 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Our Middle School programme provides engaging, purposeful, and challenging learning experiences that recognise the developmental needs of young adolescents. Students are encouraged to become thinkers, inquirers, innovators, collaborators, and responsible digital citizens.

Learning is designed to promote increasing independence, responsibility, collaboration, and student agency. While students experience a broad and rigorous curriculum, they are also

provided with opportunities for choice and autonomy through elective and exploratory courses.

DAA Middle School is a standards-based school. Each subject has clearly identified curriculum standards and learning goals, and students are assessed on their progress towards meeting these expectations. Students are provided with clear learning expectations and feedback to help them understand their progress and identify how they can improve.

Assessment is an ongoing part of the learning process. Teachers use a combination of Formative (Assessment for Learning) and Summative (Assessment of Learning) assessments to:

- monitor student progress and achievement;
- provide meaningful feedback;
- identify individual strengths and areas for development;
- adapt teaching and learning to meet student needs; and
- support students in taking greater ownership of their learning.

Assessment information is used by students, teachers, school leaders, and families to support continued academic growth.

In addition to academic standards, students develop and demonstrate Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills. These focus on learning how to learn and include Self-Management, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, and Communication. These skills support students in becoming increasingly independent, reflective, and adaptable learners.

4.2.2 CREW, Community Building and Wellbeing

All Middle School students participate in CREW: Community, Respect, Excellence & Wellbeing, a dedicated advisory programme designed to support students' academic, social, emotional, and personal development.

CREW provides students with a consistent space to build relationships, develop essential life skills, reflect on their learning, and strengthen their connection to the school community. It is an important part of how we put our three pillars of Care, Consistency, and Community into practice across Middle School life.

The four pillars of CREW are:

- Community: Students develop positive relationships, strengthen their sense of belonging, and contribute to an inclusive and respectful community.
- Respect: Students develop empathy, understanding, and appreciation for different perspectives, cultures, and experiences.

- Excellence: Students develop executive functioning and learning skills including organisation, time management, goal setting, problem-solving, and reflection.
- Wellbeing: Students develop strategies to support their wellbeing, including self-awareness, resilience, mindfulness, positive relationships, and healthy approaches to managing challenges.

CREW also provides opportunities for students to develop their Approaches to Learning skills, engage in personal projects, and explore themes related to social, emotional, and academic development.

Community building is an important part of Middle School life. Students participate in a range of activities and events designed to strengthen relationships, develop teamwork, and foster a strong sense of belonging.

Students are placed into multi-age Color House teams, including Tigers, Lions, Cheetahs, Panthers, Cougars, and Jaguars. Throughout the year, students participate in community-building activities and extracurricular events that promote teamwork, school spirit, leadership, and positive relationships both within and across grade levels.

Our commitment to Care, Consistency, and Community is reflected in the way students are supported, the expectations that are established and reinforced, and the opportunities students have to contribute meaningfully to the life of the school.

4.2.3 Homework & Home Learning

Home learning is designed to reinforce, practise, extend, and prepare students for classroom learning. When thoughtfully designed, home learning can help students develop important skills, consolidate understanding, activate prior knowledge, prepare for future learning, and develop greater independence.

Teachers aim to provide home learning that is purposeful, relevant, and appropriate to students' developmental needs. Activities may include:

- Practice, review, and preparation
- Skill development and integration
- Reading
- Extension and enrichment
- Preparation for assessments and future learning

Home learning should be appropriately balanced with students' personal wellbeing, family commitments, extracurricular activities, and opportunities for rest.

DAA follows the Marzano 10-minute guideline, which recommends approximately 10 minutes of homework per grade level per night. As a guide, this equates to approximately:

- Grade 6: 60 minutes per night
- Grade 7: 70 minutes per night
- Grade 8: 80 minutes per night

Reading may be assigned in addition to these guidelines.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that home learning is purposeful, clearly communicated, appropriately challenging, and suitable for the age and individual needs of students. Students are expected to understand their assignments, seek clarification when needed, and complete their work independently and to the best of their ability.

Families play an important role in supporting positive home-learning habits. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to provide an appropriate space and time for learning, encourage independence, and maintain a healthy balance between academic responsibilities, extracurricular activities, family life, and wellbeing.

If a student is regularly unable to complete home learning independently or within a reasonable amount of time, families are encouraged to communicate with the classroom teacher so that appropriate support can be provided.

The Middle School also encourages students to develop effective study habits, time management, organisation, and independent learning skills as they progress through Grades 6–8. Reading and other forms of independent learning may be assigned regularly throughout the school year.

4.2.4 Language Learning, Student Support and Enrichment

DAA is committed to ensuring that every student is supported, challenged, and empowered to succeed.

- English Language Development: Students developing English proficiency may receive targeted English Language Development support to help them access the curriculum and continue to develop their academic language skills.
- Student Support Services: Our Inclusion and Student Support teams work collaboratively with students, teachers, and families to provide appropriate accommodations, interventions, and support based on individual needs. Where appropriate, students may access Academic Support or a Modified Curriculum pathway.
- Gifted and Talented: Identified students are provided with opportunities for enrichment, extension, and greater depth within and beyond the classroom. The

programme encourages students to develop their strengths, pursue areas of interest, think critically and creatively, and engage in challenging learning experiences that extend their knowledge and skills.

- Enrichment: The Middle School provides opportunities for students to develop their strengths and interests through a wide range of elective, extracurricular, leadership, and enrichment opportunities.

4.2.5 Academic Integrity and Responsible Use of Technology

Students are expected to demonstrate honesty, responsibility, and integrity in all aspects of their learning. Students should complete their own work, appropriately acknowledge the ideas and work of others, and follow teacher guidance regarding collaboration, research, and the use of digital resources.

Technology, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), should be used responsibly and ethically. Students are expected to use AI tools only when permitted and directed by their teacher and should not use AI to misrepresent work as their own.

Students are taught to consider the accuracy, reliability, bias, and appropriate use of information and digital tools as they develop into responsible digital citizens.

4.2.6 Home-School Partnership

Strong partnerships between school and home are an important part of student success during the Middle School years. As students become increasingly independent, families and teachers work together to provide appropriate support while encouraging students to take greater responsibility for their learning, organisation, relationships, and wellbeing.

Our commitment to Care, Consistency, and Community extends to our partnership with families. We believe students are best supported when school and home work together, communicate openly, maintain consistent expectations, and celebrate students' growth and achievements.

Teachers communicate important learning expectations and information with students and families through the school's approved communication platforms. Parents are encouraged to remain informed about their child's progress and to communicate with teachers when additional support or clarification is required.

Our shared goal is to help students develop the confidence, independence, responsibility, and skills needed to succeed throughout Middle School and beyond.

4.3 High School: Grades 9–12

Through an enriched American curriculum combined with the IB Diploma Programme and AP Program, DAA High School provides a diverse and challenging academic and activities program. Students may pursue the American High School Diploma and/or the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, with Advanced Placement opportunities available.

4.3.1 High School Pathways and Programs

American High School Diploma: students follow KHDA's graduation requirements for US Curriculum schools.

International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme: students may complete the IB Diploma Programme or individual IB courses, subject to program requirements.

Advanced Placement (AP) Program: students may pursue AP courses and examinations as offered by DAA, subject to program requirements.

4.3.2 Curriculum

DAA follows the American curriculum using Common Core standards for ELA and Math, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for Science, C3 Framework for Social Studies, Ministry of Education national document for Islamic and Arabic, and the Connecticut State Standards for all other subjects. Students have the option to pursue the IB diploma, IB certificates, and AP courses. General information for the IB can be found here. AP information can be found here. For information on individual course offerings please refer to the DAA High School Program of Studies.

4.3.3 CREW

Student learning encompasses much more than academic grades printed on a report card or transcript. As such, Grade Level Advisors (GLAs) will, in coordination with High School Counselors, Dean of Students and High School Administration, monitor and enrich the social, emotional, and interpersonal growth of all of our students.

High school students are placed in groups under the supervision of a CREW teacher. CREWs meet for 40 minutes each day, Monday through Thursday.CREW provides students with a sense of belonging as well as a sense of community. CREW is also intended to help empower students to develop lifelong leadership skills. The UAE Ministry of Education Moral Education Program is a main component of advisory.

The CREW teacher acts as advocate and first line advisor for his or her students. The primary aim of CREW is to provide students with a caring individual who is readily accessible, who will monitor the student's wellbeing, educational progress, encourage the

student to participate in service opportunities, and serve as a liaison between school and home.

4.3.4 Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

High School reports student progress through online grades, report cards, conferences, and other communication. Student's grades are reported four times per year, including two mid-semester progress reports and two end-of-semester report cards. Student-led conferences are held once per semester.

4.3.5 Homework

In the high school, homework is assigned to prepare students for in-class learning and to help students gain additional understanding. Additionally, homework can be used to: prepare students for future learning, to reinforce concepts learned in class and to provide the basis for in class discussion and follow-up. Students can expect some homework over weekends and holidays, and need to spend extra time on Internal Assessments. In the case of IB diploma students, time outside of the school day must be given to the Extended Essay and CAS program. Any homework assignment should receive timely and focused feedback and be clearly connected to a learning objective.

It is important to note that regardless if homework is formally graded or not, the successful completion of homework leads to academic achievement and scholarship.

4.3.6 Academic Support and Inclusion

DAA is committed to ensuring every student is supported, challenged, and empowered to succeed. DAA provides support for students who learn differently or require additional academic support. Depending on division and individual need, support may include accommodations, individualized plans, counseling, learning support, organization and study skills, homework assistance, exam/project accommodations, and advocacy for external testing requirements. Academic support and inclusion offerings include Special Education Needs (SEN), English Language Development (ELD), and Gifted and Talented (G&T). Testing accommodations for external examinations must be applied for and approved by the relevant exam board. The Head of Inclusion and IB and AP Coordinators assist students with external exam accommodations.

4.3.7 Academic Integrity

DAA expects students to complete their own work and appropriately acknowledge ideas, language, information, and sources that are not their own. Academic dishonesty is treated as a serious breach of community trust.

Students must not submit another person's work as their own.

Students must not copy, paraphrase, or use Internet material without appropriate acknowledgement.

Students must not assist another student in presenting work as their own.

Students must follow teacher directions regarding collaboration, assessment conditions, and approved technology.

4.3.8 Promotion, Retention, and Grade Progression

Students in Grades 9-12 are promoted based upon the completion of a specific number of credits. The number of credits required for promotion is:

From grade	
9 to 10	6 credits
10 to 11	12 credits
11 to 12	18 credits
Graduation	22 credits

According to KHDA, students should pass Arabic (as required) and Islamic (as required) to be promoted to the next grade level, as it is a mandatory subject.

The above guidelines would apply to students enrolled in and failing:

- Arabic
  - All Grade 9 students (enrolled in Arabic).
  - All Native Arabic students in Grade 10, 11 and 12.
- Islamic
  - All Native and Non-Native Islamic students in Grade 9, 10, 11, and 12.

Students may be asked to take part in credit recovery courses if they fail to pass certain subjects that are required for graduation.

4.3.9 ACADEMIC PROBATION

We want to support all students as they strive for academic success. As such, academic probation may be assigned to a student during a quarterly review in order to provide additional support and monitoring. Before a student is placed on Academic Probation they will have a meeting with their parents/guardians and the Dean of Students.

If a student performs below a 2.0 GPA for the first semester, is not on track for graduation after any term, or is flagged by their counselor, s/he will be placed on academic probation and will be monitored by their counselor, teachers, and HS Administration. After a student is placed on academic probation, increased focus will be placed on improving academic performance by all stakeholders. In addition, a student will work with HS Administration and

their counselor to keep an active academic goal progress sheet to ensure growth in all classes is consistent. Students may be asked to withdraw from DAA if they are not on track to fulfill graduation requirements.

If a student earns below a 2.0 for the second semester, they will be placed into an academic support program to begin the school year and will be monitored by their grade level coach, counselor, and teachers.

If a student is placed on academic probation, s/he could be excluded from co-curricular participation (sports, clubs, etc.) as determined by HS Administration.

4.3.10 Graduation

DAA High School graduates fulfill KHDA graduation requirements and UAE Ministry of Education equivalency requirements. Students enroll in courses according to graduation requirements, the student's abilities and interests, and previous educational experience. 0.5 credits are awarded per course per semester. Students must fulfil the specified credit requirements for graduation.

It is strongly recommended that all students in their Junior or Senior year enroll in at least seven courses each semester. Any Junior or Senior wishing to take less than 6 credits per year must have written permission from both their parent, counselor, and the High School Principal. The following subjects must be successfully completed. Counselors review student's academic progress annually to ensure they are on track for graduation.

Subject	DAA & UAE Equivalency Requirements: US Diploma			Recommended Credits for University Application
	Class of 2027	Class of 2028	Class of 2029 Class of 2030	
English	4	4	4	4
Science	3	4	4	3-4 (**Lab Science**)
Math	3	4	4	4
Modern Foreign Language	2	2	2	2 (**Same Language**)
Social Studies/Social Sciences	2	4	4	3-4
Physical Education	2	2	2	2
Visual/Performing Art	0.5	0.5	0.5	1

Electives	5.5	5.5	5.5
Arabic for Arab Nationals	4	4	4
Arabic for Non-Arab Nationals	1 (in Grade 9)	1 (in Grade 9)	1 (in Grade 9)
Islamic & Moral Education for Muslim Students	2	2	2
Social Studies in Arabic for Arab Nationals	N/A	N/A	0.125 (in Grade 9)
Moral, Social and Cultural Studies for Non-Arab Nationals	N/A	N/A	0.125 (in Grade 9)
Moral Education for Non-Muslims Arab Nationals	N/A	N/A	0.5

4.3.11 Withdrawing or Changing Level of Courses

- Course changes are not allowed for student-selected elective courses.
- Students may **request core course or level changes** during the first 10 days of Semester 1.
- After the first 10 days of Semester 1, course change requests **may be considered for AP, IB and any yearlong core course** in response to teacher, counselor, and/or administrator recommendation.
    - Changes are **considered** on a case by case basis in response to well-being concerns, change in graduation pathway, or other factors that significantly impact students' academic success and well-being.
    - For all courses, changes cannot be made after the 12th week of instruction.
    - As per IB guidelines and HL hour requirements, no IB level changes can be made after the 12th week of IB Year 1, Semester 1.
- Withdrawing from a course after the first 10 days of Semester 1 results in a "W" (withdrawal) on the student's transcript.
- The Principal has final authority over exiting students from IB and AP programs.

4.3.12 Academic Honor Roll

The High School strives to recognize students' accomplishments throughout and gives awards for overall scholarship and achievement.

To encourage academic excellence, an Academic Honor Roll is maintained at DAA. A grade point average (GPA) of 3.30 qualifies a student for Academic Honors, 3.70 qualifies a student for High Honors, and 4.00 and above for High Honors with Distinction. Awards are generated and provided to students in certificate form and delivered via email.

4.3.13 Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and DAA Scholar Awards

In recognition of DAA's two distinct graduation pathways, DAA honors a valedictorian and salutatorian for both the US High School Diploma and IB Diploma programs. These distinctions are awarded based on student's cumulative GPA, calculated from courses completed at DAA from Grade 9 through Grade 12, Semester 1. To be eligible, students must be enrolled at DAA during Semester 1 of Grade 11. In the event of a tie, students will be recognized as co-valedictorian or co-salutatorian, as applicable.

Additionally, the **DAA Scholar Award** recognizes graduates who earn a cumulative GPA of 4.0 or higher.

4.3.14 Study Hall

Study Halls are options for all Grade 11 and 12 students as this allows students to focus on their studies while at school and support student wellbeing. Students with a minimum GPA of 3.3, exemplary behavior, and outstanding attendance may be considered for an unsupervised study hall. Unsupervised study hall students must remain in the 2nd or 3rd floor library or atrium hallway seating.

5. Student Guidelines, Behaviour and School Expectations

5.1 Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy

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.

5.3 Behaviour management and consequences

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

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.

5.4 Bullying, harassment and discrimination

DAA does not tolerate bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation, physical aggression, or behavior that creates an unsafe or hostile environment. Bullying is defined as the intentional and repeated intimidation that may be emotional, physical, psychological, social, or cyber. All such allegations will be thoroughly investigated and resolved.

Harassment and discrimination can include verbal, written, physical, or digital behavior directed at protected or distinguishing characteristics. Students are expected to treat others respectfully regardless of gender, ethnicity, ability, religion, cultural background, or other characteristics identified.

5.5 Alcohol, drugs, tobacco and vaping

The possession, use, sale, or distribution of drugs or alcohol on school property, school transportation, school trips, or school-sponsored/chaperoned functions is prohibited. Tobacco and vaping products/devices are also prohibited. Consequences can include suspension, loss of activity privileges, expulsion, and/or action under applicable UAE laws.

5.6 Uniform and dress expectations

A uniform is required at DAA. Divisional uniform details as per DAA Uniform Guide . Students should wear clothing respectfully and appropriately for the UAE context. Uniforms should not be intentionally altered and non-uniform outerwear should not be worn to school during the regular school day. School-appropriate shoes are required. Slides, UGGs, Birkenstocks, and Crocs are strictly prohibited.

At times, DAA may not require uniforms while participating in out of school activities or on designated special dress days. However, students should be properly dressed in a manner that is not offensive to our host country.

These rules will apply for all school related non-uniform days:

- Dress modestly as per local customs. No exposed midriffs, no exposed shoulders, etc.
- No offensive logos or expressions or references to alcohol or drugs on clothing.
- Appropriate footwear - no sandals, slippers, slides or Crocs.

The Principal's judgment will be final. The Principal may request a student to return home for the purpose of changing clothing or the parent may be requested to bring in alternate attire. Students are expected to wear clothing that is respectful to one's self as well as to others.

DAA uniforms can be purchased at https://www.threadsme.com/ . For assistance, parents can reach out on support@threadsme.com or 800-THREADS (8473237).

5.7 School property, lockers and personal belongings

Students are responsible for school property and their own belongings. Lost or damaged school property may result in replacement or reimbursement charges. Students should not keep valuables in lockers or cubbies. DAA does not accept responsibility for lost or stolen personal items.

5.8 Food, gum and drinks

DAA is a gum-free campus. Food deliveries from outside are not permitted in all divisions. Pork products are not permitted at school events in accordance with UAE law and respect for the host nation's religious and cultural values.

5.9 Pool and gymnasium safety

The safety and wellbeing of every student is our top priority whenever they are in DAA's pool and gymnasium spaces. Students are expected to follow all safety instructions given by teachers, supervisors, and administrators — including guidance on equipment use, water safety, and appropriate conduct. These procedures are in place to keep every child safe while they swim, play, and compete.

Detailed safety procedures for specific activities are available on request from the Athletics or Aquatics team.

5.10 Leaving campus

Students must remain on campus during the school day unless they have followed the appropriate divisional authorization and release process. Students may not independently excuse themselves from campus, they require parent/guardian approval.

Senior students in good academic, attendance, and behavior standing are eligible for Senior Privilege. Students with Senior Privilege may leave campus during their study hall period.

6. Responsible Use, Technology and Digital Citizenship

6.1 Acceptable use

DAA technology resources are provided to support learning, communication, creativity, research, and collaboration. Access to school networks and the Internet is a privilege. Students and families are expected to use technology responsibly, lawfully, ethically, and in ways consistent with DAA's educational mission and UAE requirements.

6.2 Core expectations

Use school networks and devices for appropriate educational purposes.

Protect passwords and account information.

Respect copyright and intellectual property.

Respect privacy and the rights of other users.

Do not attempt unauthorized access, compromise security, or damage data.

Do not download unauthorized programs, games, audio, or video files.

Do not use school technology to send offensive, abusive, threatening, or inappropriate content.

Do not access inappropriate, illegal, or harmful content.

Understand that school technology use may be monitored and filtered.

6.3 Cyberbullying and off-campus conduct

Students may be held accountable for cyberbullying or inappropriate digital conduct that occurs outside of school when it negatively impacts the academic environment, the

reputation of DAA, or the safety, wellbeing, or reputation of members of the DAA community. DAA will cooperate with and support relevant external authorities, including Dubai Police and KHDA, in relation to investigations involving DAA students, where required.

6.4 Student information and photographs

DAA's technology guidance emphasizes student privacy and responsible publication of student information. School web content should not disclose unnecessary personal information such as student surnames, personal phone numbers, addresses, family details, or real-time physical locations. Photographs should not identify individual students by name without appropriate permission.

6.5 Devices and mobile phones

The use of mobile phones is prohibited between 7:35am and 3:00pm during the school day for all students. Students who have a mobile phone on them may safely secure it in their school locker during the day. Students may access their mobile phones on campus before 7:35am and after 3pm.

6.6 Consequences

Technology violations may lead to temporary loss of device access, confiscation, parent contact, loss of network privileges, disciplinary action, suspension, or other consequences depending on the seriousness and repetition of the violation.

7. Student Services

7.1 Library and learning resources

DAA libraries provide print and digital resources, research support, technology, and spaces for reading, collaboration, and study. The ES library supports reading engagement, information literacy, research skills, digital citizenship and development of lifelong readers. Middle and High School libraries provide research instruction and digital databases.

7.2 Counseling services

7.2.1 Elementary School

DAA's Elementary Counseling Program supports the social-emotional wellbeing, personal development, belonging, and academic success of all students. Our counselors provide a

comprehensive and developmentally appropriate program that includes classroom-based social-emotional learning, small-group and individual support, responsive services, and school-wide wellbeing initiatives. Counselors work collaboratively with students, teachers, families, Inclusion/SEND, EAL, the school clinic, and leadership to identify needs early and provide appropriate support, while maintaining professional confidentiality and safeguarding requirements. Through a proactive and preventative approach, our counselors help students develop self-awareness, emotional regulation, resilience, positive relationships, problem-solving, and responsible decision-making, ensuring that every child feels safe, known, valued, included, and supported to thrive. Our Counselors are:

Corine Makansi (KG1 & KG2): c.makansi_daa@gemsedu.com

Lama Rawdah (Grades 1&2): l.rawdah_daa@gemsedu.com

Idil Ocakcioglu (Grades 3&4 *(half grade level)*): i.ocakcioglu_daa@gemsedu.com

Lesley Clark (Grades 4 *(half grade level)* &5): l.clark_daa@gemsedu.com

7.2.2 Middle School

Middle School counselors collaborate with students, families, and staff to support academic, social, and emotional development. Counselors provide individual and small-group guidance, help students navigate peer relationships, lead the creation of CREW lessons, and facilitate positive transitions. As part of our school-wide pastoral care, counseling reinforces our commitment to Care, Consistency, and Community, ensuring every student feels known, valued, and connected throughout their Middle School journey.

Middle School counselors

Grade 6 - Salima Musa: s.musa_daa@gemsedu.com

Grade 7 - Mark Gaffney: m.gaffney_daa@gemsedu.com

Grade 8 - Christina DeMers: c.demers_daa@gemsedu.com

7.2.3 High School

The goal of High School Counseling is to create a supportive environment where students develop self-insight, self-understanding, and respect for the worth and dignity of others. Counseling services help students and parents: navigate course and activity selection; explore career and university opportunities; make informed decisions about post-secondary education; participate meaningfully in school life; and build positive interpersonal relationships.

High School Counselors

Please refer to the DAA High School Parent Hub for counselor assignments and appointment booking details.

7.3 School Clinic and Medical services

The Clinic provides first aid, emergency care and management of chronic conditions during school hours.In addition to this the Clinic offers health education, vaccinations in line with the National guidelines ,comprehensive medical screenings for certain grades and referrals to specialists when required.

7.4 Illness and Infection Control Policy

In order to maintain a safe and healthy school environment for all, DAA enforces a strict infection control policy. Students who are unwell are advised to remain at home where indicated. Families should notify the relevant attendance office. Students with fever,vomiting ,diarrhea,conjunctivitis, non allergic rashes,flu-like symptoms or any other contagious conditions must remain at home until fully recovered. Students may only return to school once they are fever free for 24 hours or after completion of an isolation period ,if any and after presenting a medical clearance certificate if advised by the nurse.Final Clearance is granted by School Clinic upon return to School prior to returning to class.

7.5 Medication

Medication required during school hours must be kept in the School Clinic and administered by the Clinic staff only.exceptions may include inhalers and Epipens that are part of a student medical action plan provided by the parents and prepared in conjunction with the treating Physician and Clinic Staff.A prescription must always be provided.

7.6 Medical examinations and health records

Families must fill out the medical consent and information form mandated by the DHA , provide required health and immunization information and update the school when medical circumstances or contact details change. Families should ensure health records are current, particularly before field trips.Students can not take part in any extracurricular activities or field trips without submitting this Health Form to the Clinic.. Student Health Form . Families with students that are suffering from chronic conditions must regularly update the Clinic of changes in treatment plan or condition, if any. They must also provide the necessary documents mandated by the Dubai Health Authority.

7.7 Heat, sun and hydration

Due to the warm climate in the region,the School takes specific measures and sends reminders to ensure our students are protected from dehydration ,sun burn and/or heat exhaustion.. Students must always bring with them a bottle of water that can be refilled at the multiple filling stations that are strategically placed across the school campus.They are also advised to use sun protection with an SPF of 50 and above, and wear a hat for outdoor activities.

All Elementary School students must bring a water bottle and DAA hat daily, with outdoor activity governed by school heat-index procedures. *Please note, the ES strictly reinforces a No Hat - No Play*

Elevator Pass for Students

Students who require elevator access due to an injury or illness must provide a medical certificate from their treating physician. Parents must email the medical certificate to the School Clinic Nurse, copying the Division Attendance Secretary, to request an elevator access card. Once approved by the Clinic, the card can be collected from the Operations Office. The card will automatically deactivate at the end of the approved period and must then be returned to the Operations Office. Lost cards will incur a replacement fee, payable at the Accounts Office.

7.8 Cafeteria and food services

DAA works with external food-service providers and all food-service standards comply with Dubai Municipality guidelines. Families should review menus and ingredient information where allergies or dietary needs are relevant. Families are able to add credit to a student account on the GEMS Connect application. This credit can be used to purchase food and drinks while on campus. Parents are able to monitor each student's expenditure via the application.

7.9 Lost and found

Students should report missing belongings promptly and check divisional lost-and-found locations. Valuables should be handed to the appropriate office. Unclaimed items may be donated to charity according to divisional procedures.

7.10 Bus transportation

DAA provides families with access to school transportation services through its approved transport provider, STS. The service is designed to provide students with a safe, reliable and structured means of travelling to and from school. Families may choose to use other transportation providers or make their own transport arrangements; however, these alternatives are undertaken at the family's own responsibility.

Student safety is the primary expectation while using school transportation. Students are required to wear seatbelts where provided, remain seated while the vehicle is moving, keep aisles and emergency exits clear, and follow all instructions given by the driver and bus monitor. Students are also expected to enter and exit buses in an orderly and safe manner. All elementary school students are supervised by a designated adult to and from the buses at school.

DAA's normal standards of student behaviour continue to apply while students are travelling on school transportation. Students are expected to treat drivers, monitors and fellow students with respect and to avoid disruptive, unsafe or inappropriate behaviour. Behaviour that would not be acceptable on the school campus is similarly not acceptable on a school bus.

DAA works closely with STS in relation to transportation operations, student safety and any concerns that may arise. Where behavioural or safety issues are reported, these may be followed up by the school and managed in accordance with the school's established behaviour and safeguarding procedures.

8 Activities and co-curricular opportunities

DAA provides a broad range of activities to develop students' interests, abilities, leadership, creativity, teamwork, and sense of belonging. Offerings vary by division, season, student demand, staffing, and program availability.

A separate **Parent Handbook for Athletics** is available, covering athletics-specific policies, procedures, and expectations in more detail.

Middle School and High School students must sign a **Code of Conduct** before participating on an athletics team, covering expectations for practice, games, and travel.

8.1 Elementary activities

Elementary after-school activities include a wide range of options such as sports, arts and crafts, dance, coding, drama, and languages, among many others. Sessions generally run for **1 hour**. A full, up-to-date list of activities on offer is available on the **ESM portal**.

8.2 Middle School activities

Middle School activities include athletics, arts, clubs, **Spark Week** (formerly Week Without Walls), EAC and DEAC competitive sport, JEAC, and Middle School Ambassadors. Eligibility may be affected by attendance, academic integrity, behavior, and other school expectations.

8.3 High School activities and leadership

High School offers athletics, clubs (e.g. Model United Nations, GreenPower, TEDx, and others), school government, fine arts, student leadership, service learning, and other opportunities. The **Duke of Edinburgh's International Award** is also available as a separate program. Students are encouraged to participate in activities that develop interests, leadership, collaboration, and community engagement.

High School also runs its own **Spark Week**, offering students travel, service, and internship opportunities.

8.4 MESAC and inter-school activities

DAA participates in the Middle East South Asia Conference (MESAC), coordinating sporting and fine arts activities through inter-school collaboration at the High School level. Participation is considered a commitment and may involve training, travel, hotel accommodation, and signed codes of conduct.

The school has eligibility criteria for students taking part in MESAC events as it is considered a privilege to be selected. Students and parents are required to sign a Code of Conduct and an Activity Handbook outlining the criteria for extra-curricular involvement.

Students travelling for MESAC competition are excused from assessments during the trip and are not required to sit assessments until the **full day after** their return to school. Students remain responsible for ensuring their coursework is up to date before travel.

Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in student activities such as athletics/MESAC, arts festivals, trips, student council, drama, MUN, Duke of Edinburgh, etc., a student must meet the following eligibility requirements:

Attendance Requirement:

- In good standing (not on attendance probation)
- DAA High School students are not permitted to participate in or attend a high school activity on a day they are absent from school. To participate in an activity, high school students must be present or, if late to school, be present by 12:00 pm (noon) on the day of participation. The only exceptions to this procedure will be made by the Principal.

Academic Requirement:

- D or above in all classes. (No Pass, No Play)
- This requirement includes being eligible to be selected for the team and to play in each game.
- If a student is ineligible to play due to a failing grade, they will remain ineligible for three weeks.
- After the three week period, a student can regain eligibility if their grades improve to the required level.

Behavior Requirement:

- No more than two behavior referrals in a semester. All referrals must be below a Level 3.

  **Exceptions may be made in special circumstances with HS Administration approval.*

8.5 Student leadership and voice

Student leadership opportunities include:

- **Elementary School:** Student Council; Wellness Ambassadors; Innovation Leaders; Tribes Captains/Vice Captains/Connectors; Zayed Crew
- **Middle School**: Student Ambassadors, Student Council, Color House initiative leads, Gifted & Talented opportunities, Spark Week experiences
- **High School**: Student Government and the Student Athlete Council; Student Council, house/community activities, and leadership within clubs and service experiences, across divisions

These structures support agency, belonging, responsibility, and contribution to the school community.

9. Home–School Communication

9.1 Communication principles

DAA considers communication between home and school a high priority. Families receive information through divisional and whole-school channels, and regular communication is encouraged whenever academic, behavioral, social, emotional, attendance, or wellbeing concerns arise.

9.2 SPOTS and Divisional Communications

SPOTS is the school-wide newsletter used to share important community news, weekly updates, upcoming events,activities,celebrations and key information with families.

9.3 SeeSaw

Seesaw is the primary learning and home-school communication platform used in the Elementary School. Teachers use Seesaw to share home learning expectations, assignments, learning activities, reminders, and relevant classroom updates. It also provides families with a window into their child's learning, enabling them to view selected work and learning experiences and stay connected with what is happening in the classroom, with a weekly overview (update). Parents are encouraged to check Seesaw regularly to remain informed and support their child's learning at home.

9.4 PowerSchool

PowerSchool is DAA's student information and management system. Through the Powerschool Parent Portal, Middle and High School families can access important information about their child which may include schedules, attendance, grades, behavior reports, assignment descriptions, and school bulletins. Families are encouraged to use the platform to remain informed about their child's progress.

9.5 Google Classroom

Middle School & High school uses Google Classroom to help students and families monitor assignments, due dates, and academic progress. Parents can access updates and use the information to support their child's organization and learning.

9.6 Parent–teacher conferences

Formal parent–teacher conference opportunities are scheduled during the year. In the Elementary School, formal conferences and ongoing communication about academic, social and emotional development is ongoing, along with scheduled Hopes and Dreams, Parent-Teacher, and Student-led Conferences. Middle School conferences are student-led and focus on academic, social, and emotional progress. High School conferences are opportunities to discuss academic progress and student development, with student participation encouraged. Elementary School provides conferences and other opportunities to connect with teachers.

9.7 Student-led conferences and IB Mid-Course Reviews

DAA uses student-led conferences as a key communication structure in both the first and second semester. Information about these formal meetings is shared by each division ahead of time. We encourage all families to actively engage in these meetings. Additionally, High School IB students participate in Mid-Course Reviews at the end of the first year of IB courses; these are student-led conversations focused on progress and transition into the second year.

9.8 Back-to-School Night

Back-to-School Night provides families with an opportunity to learn about classroom expectations, curriculum, grade-level policies, routines, and how each division operates.

9.9 Communication pathway

Parents are encouraged to begin with the person closest to the concern. For classroom-related matters, the classroom teacher is normally the first point of contact. In the Elementary School, the communication pathway includes Homeroom/Subject Teacher → Assistant Principal → Principal, with Counselor/Inclusion/EAL/G&T as appropriate. In the Middle and High School, if the concern remains unresolved, families may contact the appropriate Head of Department, Head of Grade, CREW Teacher, divisional administrator, counselor, or other relevant leader. Serious or ongoing concerns may be escalated to the Dean of Students, Assistant Principal, or Principal, as appropriate.

9.10 Appointments

Parents are welcome to contact DAA, but appointments are recommended for discussions with leadership and counselors so that the appropriate staff member is available and prepared to assist.

10. Parent Partnership and Family Responsibilities

10.1 Working in partnership

DAA's handbooks emphasize that school success is strengthened through a cooperative partnership among students, parents, and school. Families are encouraged to engage actively in their children's learning, support attendance and punctuality, reinforce behavior expectations, and communicate openly with teachers and school leaders.

10.2 Parent support at home

- Establish routines that support attendance, punctuality, sleep, healthy nutrition, and readiness to learn.
- Provide an appropriate place and uninterrupted time for home learning.
- Encourage students to complete their own work rather than doing work for them.
- Monitor school communications and relevant digital platforms.
- Discuss responsible technology use, online behavior, and academic integrity.
- Encourage participation in activities, leadership, reading, service, and community life.

10.3 DAAPA

All parents and guardians of DAA students are members of the Dubai American Academy Parent Association (DAAPA). DAAPA helps foster a strong sense of community and partnership among families, students, faculty, administration, and staff. It also provides opportunities for parents to engage with the school community and contribute to the aims, values, and philosophy of DAA

Key Functions:.

- Community Building: Facilitates integration and connection among parents, teachers, and school leadership through social initiatives and dedicated Homeroom Parent networks.
- Event Organization: Plans and hosts school-wide cultural and social events.
- Spirit Shop Operations: Operates the Leopard's Den, the on-campus spirit store that sells school athletic gear, house-color shirts, and sweatshirts.
- New Family Support: Assists with welcoming new students and families to help ease their transition into the school community.

10.4 Sharing family expertise

Parents are invited to share relevant expertise, collections, artifacts, professional knowledge, or other experiences with students and the school. Families interested in participating as guest speakers or contributors should contact the relevant teacher or division.

10.5 Legal status and guardianship

Students attending DAA are required by UAE law and DAA policy to live with their parent(s) or legal guardian throughout the school year. If a parent must be away and the student will not be under direct parental supervision, families should inform the school and provide the details of the person assuming guardianship responsibilities.

11. Points of Contact

Department	Name and Designation	Contact Info
Front of House	Main Reception	receptionist_daa@gemsedu.com 04 704 9777
	Mrs. Melisa Lee Parents Relations	m.lee_daa@gemsedu.com 04 704 9710
	Admissions	registrar_daa@gemsedu.com
Executive Office	Mrs. Helen Pereira-Raso Superintendent/CEO	superintendent_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mr. Michael Gilmour Deputy Superintendent	m.gilmour_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Julliana Dias Executive Assistant	j.dias_daa@gemsedu.com 04 704 9730
High School	Mrs. Ashley Szar HS Principal	a.szar_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Rama Khalid HS Assistant Principal	r.khalid_daa@gemsedu.com
	Dr. Sarah Verdoia HS Assistant Principal	s.verdoia_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mr. Omar Ghosn HS Dean of Students	o.ghosn_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mr. Matthew Henman HS Dean of Students	m.henman_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Nashmia Saleem HS Divisional Secretary	n.saleem1_daa@gemsedu.com 04 704 9723
	Mr. Kelvin Sicat	k.silcat_daa@gemsedu.com 04 704 9747

	HS Attendance Secretary	
Middle School	Mr. Sean Mc Garvey MS Principal	s.mcgarvey_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Regan Moore MS Assistant Principal	r.moore_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mr. Mike MacFarlane MS Assistant Principal	m.macfarlane_daa@gemsdaa.net
	Mrs. Tanya Boudakian MS Dean of Students	t.boudakian1_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Yara Masri MS Divisional Secretary	middleschool_daa@gemsedu.com 04 704 9722
	Ms. Marianne Mañibo MS Attendance Secretary	MSAttendance_daa@gemsedu.com 04 704 9728
Elementary School	Mrs. Tooshna Gandhi ES Principal	t.gandhi_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Annalise Mcneill ES Assistant Principal KG1 - Grade 1	a.mcneill_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Noha Bishara ES Assistant Principal Grade 2 - 3	n.bishara_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Nathalie Salameh Assistant Principal Grade 5 - 6	n.salameh_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Shirley Vas ES Divisional Secretary KG1 - Grade 2	s.vas_daa@gemsedu.com 04 704 9705
	Mrs. Lynn Mullins ES Divisional Secretary Grade 3 - 5	l.mullins_daa@gemsedu.com 04 704 9724

Inclusion Team	Ms. Ebtisam Damra Head of Inclusion K-12	e.damra_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Onaolapo Adegabi ES Inclusion (KG-G5):	o.adegabi_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Stephanie Stokes MS Inclusion (G6-G8)	s.stokes_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Jessica Lee HS Inclusion	j.lee_daa@gemsedu.com
EAL Team	Mrs. Rashmi Dansinghani Head of EAL (K-12) and HS EAL	r.dansinghani_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Antonia Psycharis ES EAL	a.psycharis_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Lisa Gavigan MS EAL	l.gavigan_daa@gemsedu.com
Safeguarding Team	Mrs. Regan Moore Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	r.moore_daa@gemsedu.com
	Mrs. Jennifer Gaffney Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: (DDSL)	j.gaffney_daa@gemsedu.com
DAAPA	DAA Parents Association	daaparentconnect@gmail.com
Operations	Mr. Shane Murray Manager of School Operations	s.murray_daa@gemsedu.com 04 704 9751
	Mr. Anish Thomas Facilities Manager	a.thomas2_daa@gemsedu.com 04 704 9750
IT	IT Support Team	helpdeskforstudents_daa@gemsdaa.net
Bus Service	Vilina Wilson	sde-daa@sts-group.com

		04 704 9755
Finance	Finance Team	finance_daa@gemsedu.com 04 704 9740
Slices	Catering Service	customersupport@slices.ae

*Please note: Our team responds to all email inquiries within 24 business hours, Monday through Friday.

Need	**First point of contact**	**Escalation / next step**
Academic concern about a specific class	Classroom/subject teacher	Head of Grade/ Head of Department/ Assistant Principals
Wellbeing concern	Homeroom/CREW Teacher or Counselor	Divisional Leaders
General Information	Divisional Secretary	Classroom Teacher / CREW Teacher / Dean of Students
Attendance or absence	Divisional attendance secretary/ Homeroom Teacher	Divisional leadership if concern persists
Health concern	School Health Office / Nurse	Parent/guardian and relevant school leadership as required
SEND / learning support	Relevant teacher / Inclusion team	Counselor / divisional leadership / Director of Inclusion
Safeguarding concern	Divisional Safeguarding Team	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) / Principal
Withdrawal / transfer	Registrar's Office	Principal / divisional leadership
Transport concern	Transport provider / relevant school office	Dean of Students / Divisional leadership as appropriate
DAAPA / parent engagement	DAAPA / divisional communication	School leadership as appropriate