



MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

2025/26 Academic Year



Dear Middle School Students and Parents,

Welcome to Dubai American Academy Middle School!

The middle school years are an exciting and challenging time of life as students are growing and developing in many ways. As we bridge the gap between childhood and adolescence, students will experience both an opportunity and a need for greater independence. With greater independence comes an increase in responsibility. It is the goal of the Middle School staff to develop student agency in order to achieve future success.

Our diverse school community serves to enrich the learning environment and promote an understanding and acceptance of cultural differences. The Middle School team at DAA works together to create an enriched American curriculum that will challenge and support students.

In the Middle School, we believe that students must develop academically, emotionally, and socially. We strive to maintain a positive school climate by celebrating the achievement and success of each student. All members of our community are committed to nurturing the whole child.

We look forward to getting to know students and parents in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Dr. Justin Reynolds
Principal



Sean Mc Garvey
Assistant Principal



Regan Moore
Assistant Principal



Tanya Boudakian
Dean of Students



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1.0 DAA MISSION/BELIEFS/PHILOSOPHY





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 VISION

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

A skills-based education founded on the GEMS Core Values

GEMS Core Values	DAA prepares its students to be:	DAA's vision
 Global Citizenship <small>Make an active contribution to the community</small>	Engaged	Our students are active planners and participants in various school, community, and international initiatives.
	Empathetic	Our students care about their communities and the people within them, demonstrating compassion by helping others.
 Pursuing Excellence <small>Work to continually exceed expectations</small>	Reflective	Our students are independent, critical thinkers prepared to take on social, academic, and personal challenges.
	Multi-faceted	Our students thrive in varied domains, including athletics, fine arts, and academics.
 Growing by Learning <small>Strive to develop your potential</small>	Inquisitive	Our students are curious about the world around them, always questioning and seeking greater understanding.
	Adaptive	Our students have the ability to succeed in today's rapidly changing world and can adjust their thinking in different contexts.
 Leading Through Innovation <small>Find the courage to challenge convention</small>	Innovative	Our students apply new ideas, new ways of thinking, and new approaches to problems.
	Collaborative	Our students come together to share ideas and to build from others' strengths.

1.3 MIDDLE SCHOOL BELIEFS

DAA Middle school is built upon a culture of belonging, trust, collaboration, and reflection; Supporting growth in all areas of middle school life and inspiring local and global community engagement.



2.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 DAA 2025/26 SCHOOL CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT
AUGUST 25, 2025	NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION DAY
AUGUST 26, 2025	FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL
AUGUST 28, 2025	EMIRATI WOMEN'S DAY
SEPTEMBER 4, 2025	THE PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY (PBUH)(EXPECTED ISLAMIC/NATIONAL HOLIDAY AND SUBJECT TO LUNAR CALENDAR AND GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT)*
SEPTEMBER 9, 2025	MIDDLE SCHOOL BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT
OCTOBER 13 - 15, 2025	NO SCHOOL (MID-TERM HOLIDAY)
OCTOBER 20, 2025	DIWALI (CELEBRATING IN SCHOOL)
OCTOBER 27, 2025	PROFESSIONAL LEARNING DAY (NO SCHOOL FOR MS STUDENTS)

OCTOBER 30 - NOVEMBER 3, 2025	MESAC SEASON ONE
NOVEMBER 3, 2025	UAE FLAG DAY (<i>CELEBRATING IN SCHOOL</i>)
NOVEMBER 7, 2025	QUARTER 1 MS PROGRESS REPORTS ISSUED
NOVEMBER 24, 2025	STUDENT- LED CONFERENCES (<i>NO SCHOOL FOR MS STUDENTS</i>)
NOVEMBER 27, 2025	THANKSGIVING (<i>CELEBRATING IN SCHOOL</i>)
DECEMBER 1, 2025	COMMEMORATION DAY (<i>CELEBRATING IN SCHOOL</i>)
DECEMBER 2 - 3, 2025	NATIONAL DAY (<i>EXPECTED NATIONAL HOLIDAY AND SUBJECT TO GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT</i>)*
DECEMBER 8, 2025 - JANUARY 2, 2026	WINTER BREAK
JANUARY 1 - 2, 2026	PUBLIC HOLIDAY
JANUARY 5, 2026	FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL RETURNING FROM WINTER BREAK
JANUARY 30, 2026	END OF SEMESTER 1
FEBRUARY 2, 2026	MIDDLE SCHOOL SEMESTER 1 REPORT CARDS ISSUED
FEBRUARY 4 - 9, 2026	MESAC SEASON TWO
FEBRUARY 19 - 20, 2026	NO SCHOOL (MID-TERM HOLIDAY)
FEBRUARY 19, 2026	START OF RAMADAN (<i>EXPECTED ISLAMIC/NATIONAL HOLIDAY AND SUBJECT TO LUNAR CALENDAR AND GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT</i>)*
MARCH 16 - 27, 2026	SPRING BREAK
MARCH 19 - MARCH 20, 2026	EID AL FITR (<i>EXPECTED ISLAMIC/NATIONAL HOLIDAY AND SUBJECT TO LUNAR CALENDAR AND GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT</i>)*
MARCH 30, 2026	PROFESSIONAL LEARNING DAY (<i>NO SCHOOL FOR MS STUDENTS</i>)
APRIL 16 - 20, 2026	MESAC SEASON THREE
APRIL 17, 2026	END OF QUARTER THREE
APRIL 20, 2026	STUDENT- LED CONFERENCES (<i>NO SCHOOL FOR MS STUDENTS</i>)
MAY 26 - 29, 2026	EID AL ADHA (<i>EXPECTED ISLAMIC/NATIONAL HOLIDAY AND SUBJECT TO LUNAR CALENDAR AND GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT</i>)*
JUNE 8-12, 2026	MIDDLE SCHOOL WEEK WITHOUT WALLS (WWW)
JUNE 16, 2026	ISLAMIC NEW YEAR (<i>EXPECTED ISLAMIC/NATIONAL HOLIDAY AND SUBJECT TO LUNAR CALENDAR AND GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT</i>)*
JUNE 26, 2026	MS GRADE 8 COMPLETION CEREMONY MS SEMESTER 2 REPORT CARDS ISSUED
JULY 3, 2026	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL BEFORE SUMMER BREAK

2.2 CAMPUS SECURITY

DAA guidelines for safety and security are detailed in a security manual that is used by all DAA staff to ensure uniform, orderly and timely responses to emergencies. Teachers teach emergency procedures for building evacuation and relocation to a safer area of the school during CREW time. Drills are practiced so that students know the appropriate responses in emergency scenarios such as a fire at school. Staff, students and families are given I.D. cards that give them access to the school. **These lanyards must be worn at all times while on campus for all staff, students and family members. Students who do not have their appropriate school ID's will be required to purchase a new ID.**

2.3 SCHOOL HOURS & SCHEDULE

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 07:40 - 14:55.

Friday: 07:40 - 12:00.

Dismissal - if a student is not participating in an afterschool activity, they are expected to leave the school campus immediately at the end of the school day. Once a student leaves campus, he or she will not be able to return unless they are attending an approved after school activity or program.

Middle School Timetable					
Monday - Thursday			Friday		
Block 1	80 mins	07:40 - 09:00	Block 1	45 mins	07:40 - 08:25
Passing	5 mins	09:00 - 09:05	Transition	5 mins	08:25 - 08:30
CREW/Moral Ed.	40 mins	09:05 - 09:45	Block 2	45 mins	08:30 - 09:15
Break	10 mins	09:45 - 09:55	Transition	5 mins	09:15 - 9:20
Passing	5 mins	09:55 - 10:00	MSC/UAE SS	45 mins	9:20 - 10:05
Block 2	80 mins	10:00 - 11:20	Break	15 mins	10:05 - 10:20
Passing	5 mins	11:20 - 11:25	Transition	5 mins	10:20 - 10:25
Block 3 & Lunch	125 mins	11:25 - 1:30	Block 3	45 mins	10:25 - 11:10
Lunch Grade 6 11:20 - 12:00 Grade 7 12:05 - 12:45 Grade 8 12:50 - 1:30			Passing	5 mins	11:10 - 11:15
			Block 4	45 mins	11:15 - 12:00
G6	Block 3	85 mins			
G7	Block 3 i	40 mins			
G7	Block 3 ii	40 mins			
G8	Block 3	85 mins			
Passing	5 mins	1:30 - 1:35			
Block 4	80 mins	1:35 - 2:55			

2.4 SUPERVISION BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

2.4.1 MORNING

Students are able to enter the Middle School after 7:00 am. Before 7:15 am, students can sit on the outdoor bleachers, in the middle school lobby area, or in the cafeteria. After 7:15 am students can move to the Commons Areas around the school or go to their classroom when their teacher arrives.

Middle School students can enter the DAA campus through the main pedestrian crossing at Gate 3 or Gate 6 and walk to the Middle School. Alternatively, there is a Middle School car drop off area in the car park with limited parking space. Students then may access the Middle School via the door nearest the field, or the door nearest the DAA tennis courts.

2.4.2 AFTERNOON

Upon completion of their scheduled classes, students are expected to leave the campus **at 3:15 PM MONDAY through THURSDAY and 12:20 PM on Friday**. Students who are waiting for pick-up after the times above will move to the main building atrium to wait for their transport. Students not participating in an after-school activity must exit campus directly after school. Once a student leaves campus, he or she will not be allowed to return unless they are participating in an approved after school activity. **Students are not allowed to wait inside the school for siblings participating in after-school activities.** In the event that further use of school facilities is necessary a student must be supervised by a teacher or obtain permission from the Principal.

The campus is closed on Tuesdays after school to all students for staff professional development as well as Saturdays and Sundays with the exception of special events.

2.4.3 EARLY RELEASE

Students are permitted to leave the school campus during the school day **only when written permission from parents/guardians** is provided to the Middle School secretary in advance. Parents/Guardians are respectfully asked not to request early dismissal slips beyond 2:30 pm Monday - Thursday. If permission to leave campus has been granted, students must obtain an early dismissal slip from the Middle School Office and be escorted by a parent or guardian. **Students cannot leave campus without an early dismissal slip.**

3.0 ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The Middle School academic program aims to promote a culture of kindness within a structure in which learning is personalized. Our Middle School Program ensures the following characteristics are at the heart of all learning experiences:

Student-Centered

The importance of individual student voice and choice are prioritized throughout the learning process. Personalized pathways are available to all students.

Challenging

Ensuring that every student learns and every member of the learning community is held to high expectations.

Empowering

Providing all students with the knowledge and skills they need to take responsibility for their lives, to address life's challenges, to function successfully at all levels of society, and to be creators of knowledge.

Equitable

Advocating for and ensuring every student's right to learn and providing appropriately challenging and relevant learning opportunities for every student.

3.1 CURRICULUM

The Middle School curriculum consists of both core subjects and electives. The core subject areas include English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Physical Education/Health, Arabic and Islamic Education (for Muslim students). Electives offered include Art, Sculpture, Photography & Digital Art, Coding & Robotics, Innovation in Media, Drama, Music Appreciation, Band, French, Spanish, Sports Leadership, Strength & Conditioning, Mindful Movement & Wellness, and Dance. For the 2025/26 academic year all students registered with Arab passports must take the mandatory subjects of UAE Social studies and Moral Education. All other students must take Moral, Social & Cultural studies. Each of the above is taken once per week.

DAA Middle School also provides tailored support for individual students upon recommendation, including English Language Development, Academic Support class, and a Modified Curriculum pathway. The Middle School learning program strives to provide meaningful learning experiences for students enriched with opportunities for students to be thinkers, inquirers, innovators and responsible digital citizens.

DAA also has a strong advisory program called CREW Through this program, students work on developing themselves as learners and community members. The focus of the program is on building **Community**, showing **Respect**, striving for **Excellence** and cultivating positive **Wellbeing**. The advisory program also offers opportunities for students to work on personal projects aligned with our Approaches to Learning (ATL) standards. Please see 3.4.2 below for more detailed information about ATL.



3.1.1 MIDDLE SCHOOL STRUCTURE

The Middle School has a well-defined structure in place to address students' various needs through designated individuals. The classroom teacher takes charge of academic matters related to their subject and actively strives to establish a positive rapport with each student under their supervision. In CREW classes, students can delve into their interests within a smaller group, guided by their CREW teacher, who helps navigate them through different parts of the curriculum. To enhance student well-being and handle behavioral issues within specific year groups, two Heads of Grade are assigned to each grade level. In tandem with the Heads of Grade, our Dean of Students collaborates on matters of student well-being and behavior management. The Assistant Principals bear the responsibility of tailoring the curriculum to suit our students' needs while ensuring a proactive and appropriate approach to managing well-being and behavioral requirements. Ultimately, the Principal oversees the overall efficient operation of the school.

3.1.2 CREW: COMMUNITY, RESPECT, EXCELLENCE & WELLBEING (HOMEROOM)

Students are enrolled in a dynamic and enriching advisory program called CREW. Beyond traditional classroom settings, this program is designed to cultivate essential life skills that extend far beyond textbooks. Each letter in CREW stands for a learning target for this advisory program, Community, Respect, Excellence, and Wellbeing. Students will meet with their CREW classes four times per week for 35 minutes each lesson.

At the heart of our advisory program is the commitment to building a tight-knit and inclusive **Community**. Through interactive group activities, team-building exercises, and open discussions, students forge deep connections with CREW peers and teachers.

This sense of belonging fosters an atmosphere of **Respect** for the whole community. In CREW, students practice building skills that allow for empathy and understanding and in which diversity is celebrated and every voice matters.

Students practice executive functioning skills as another pillar of the CREW program in order to achieve their personal **Excellence**. Students will learn about time management, organization, goal setting and problem-solving. Through this study they will acquire tools that lay a strong foundation for academic success and beyond.

Fostering a positive **Wellbeing** in a young person's life is also another tenant of our CREW program. At DAA we place a significant emphasis on mental and emotional health. By engaging in mindfulness activities, self-reflection exercises, and open dialogues about emotional awareness, students learn to manage stress, build resilience, and nurture their overall mental wellness.

In collaboration with the Middle School's Heads of Grade and Assistant Principals, CREW time will also integrate many of the essential themes related to the social, emotional and academic development of the students. To support this learning, the UAE Moral Education Standards reinforce the CREW by developing students' knowledge and skills in the areas of character and morality, individuality and community, civics studies and cultural studies.

3.2 COMMUNITY BUILDING

Each CREW class is placed in a color-house team. These multi-age houses include the Tigers, Lions, Cheetahs, Panthers, Cougars and Jaguars. Throughout the year the students participate in community building and extra-curricular activities that strengthen team spirit and both within and across the grade levels.

3.3 BLOCK SCHEDULING

DAA uses an 80-minute block schedule Monday through Thursday and a 45-minute schedule on Fridays. This structure enhances active learning and encourages student responsibility. By utilizing these extended periods effectively, classrooms foster student dialogues, problem-based and project-based learning, authentic task performance, and cooperative work. Teachers employ diverse strategies to help students meet their personalized learning goals.

A/B Day Schedule

Students will follow an A/B schedule, meaning they will have four classes on “A” days and four different classes on “B” days. This schedule enables them to engage in up to eight academic classes over the course of the semester. The A/B arrangement is designed to offer students the chance to explore various special classes that may span a semester or an entire year, all while allowing for 80-minute academic blocks. On an "A" day, students will adhere to their designated "A" day schedule, and there will be no "B" day classes on that day. The subsequent day will be a "B" day, during which students will follow their "B" day class lineup.

Week 1 & Week 2 Schedule

Students will also follow a Week 1 and Week 2 schedule. The difference between the two weeks is a switch between first and fourth blocks each day. Week 2 also begins with a “B” day ensuring that each A/B day is represented five times over a two week period. Implementing this type of schedule is crucial for optimizing a student’s learning experience. Research shows that students' cognitive functions and focus can vary throughout the day, with many performing better in the morning. By alternating the timing of classes, we ensure that all students benefit from peak cognitive periods and reduce the risk of fatigue affecting their afternoon learning. This schedule variation not only helps in balancing the academic load but also promotes equitable learning opportunities, allowing each student to engage with their subjects at their most alert and receptive times.

It's important to note that teachers and staff will keep students well-informed about their daily schedules. Although the new schedule might seem confusing at first, students will quickly get the hang of it with the support of their classmates and teachers. We are committed to helping every student understand and adapt to the schedule smoothly.

WEEK 1		WEEK 2	
A Day	B Day	B Day	A Day
Block 1A	Block 1B	Block 4B	Block 4A
Block 2A	Block 2B	Block 2B	Block 2A
Block 3A	Block 3B	Block 3B	Block 3A

Block 4A	Block 4B	Block 1B	Block 1A
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	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	A	B	A	B	A
Week 2	B	A	B	A	B

3.4 STANDARDS-BASED GRADING AND REPORTING

The DAA Middle School is a standards-based school. Each subject has a set of standards which teachers report on throughout the year. Grading procedures are related directly to stated learning goals, i.e. the relevant curriculum standards or any other learning goal communicated by the teacher at the start of the course/unit.

Students are assessed on their progress towards meeting the curriculum standards. Students should always know what they have to complete to achieve the respective grade for an assignment.

Behaviors are assessed separately from curricular standards. At DAA, these are called Approaches to Learning - ATLs (see 3.4.2 below).

3.4.1 ASSESSMENT AND ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about student achievement undertaken for the purpose of improving learning and development. In simple terms, assessment is the measurement of progress towards learning goals.

The purpose of assessment is to provide information about student achievement to students, teachers, administrators, and parents.

Specifically, assessments provide feedback to:

- Students about their achievement of learning objectives so they know how to improve.
- Teachers about student progress so they can identify strengths and needs and modify teaching activities to help students achieve learning objectives.
- School administrators about student achievement so they can make administrative or curricular decisions that will help students better achieve long-term learning goals; and so they can provide staff with targeted professional development.
- Parents about their child's achievement of learning objectives and identify areas in which their child needs support, encouragement, and positive reinforcement.

The two types of classroom assessments are...

- **Minor (formative)** also called Assessment for Learning (AfL).
Formative/Minor assessment refers to all those activities undertaken by teachers and/or by students, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they engage.

- **Major (summative)** also called Assessment of Learning (AoL).
Summative/Major assessment is provided to evaluate student learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of a defined instructional period.

Each subject uses reporting standards to report student progress towards proficiency in the curricular standard (s) using the 4 point scale (grades) as follows:

Level	Descriptor
MASTERING 4-MST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibits a deep and comprehensive understanding of the standard. <input type="checkbox"/> Consistently and independently applies knowledge and skills in diverse and complex situations. <input type="checkbox"/> Shows exceptional performance and insight. <input type="checkbox"/> Often helps peers or provides advanced applications of concepts. <input type="checkbox"/> Provides compelling evidence to support the transfer of knowledge and skills across curriculum and into novel scenarios. <input type="checkbox"/> Observable evidence at this level will include skills such as evaluating, justifying, synthesizing, proposing, and defending.
ACHIEVING 3-ACH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets the standards with a solid grasp of key concepts and skills. <input type="checkbox"/> Independently applies knowledge effectively in various contexts. <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates clear understanding with minimal errors. <input type="checkbox"/> Effectively addresses tasks related to the standard. <input type="checkbox"/> Observable evidence of this level will include skills such as applying, analyzing, explaining, comparing, contrasting, organizing, and connecting.
APPROACHING 2-APP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Shows a partial understanding of the standard. <input type="checkbox"/> Applies concepts with some guidance. <input type="checkbox"/> Can perform some tasks related to the standard but may make frequent errors. <input type="checkbox"/> Requires support to complete more complex tasks required in the standard. <input type="checkbox"/> Observable evidence of this level will include skills such as identifying, using/employing, classifying, completing, re-phrasing, summarizing, and describing.
DEVELOPING 1-DEV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates a lack of understanding of the standard (in part or full). <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibits significant gaps in knowledge and application. <input type="checkbox"/> Struggles with core concepts and requires substantial support. <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal evidence of progress towards mastery. <input type="checkbox"/> Needs further targeted instruction and practice. <input type="checkbox"/> Observable evidence of this level will include skills such as recalling, identifying and repeating.

Additional Codes

NTA	Not taught or assessed during the semester
EX	Exempt (individual assignments)
L	Late (individual assignments)
IE	Insufficient evidence

Student progress will be updated regularly and can be monitored through the web-based program called PowerSchool. Each parent and student are given a password to access PowerSchool where students' grades are posted and updated regularly. Grade Reports are issued twice per academic year. If you have not received your PowerSchool Parent Username and access ID for your child, please email Helpdeskforstudent@gemsdaa.net.

3.4.2 APPROACHES TO LEARNING

At DAA, the focus is on learning how to learn. Students cultivate adaptable Approaches to Learning (ATL) attitudes, mindsets, and skills that prepare them for success in various situations. When teachers create lesson plans, they pinpoint the specific ATL skills that students must acquire alongside subject objectives to excel. These ATL skills fall into four primary categories: Self-Management, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, and Communication. These categories equip students with a versatile toolkit to thrive across different contexts.

Approach To Learning	Descriptor
Self-Management	The Self-Management ATL skill teaches students to set goals, stay organized, and take responsibility for their learning and growth. Within this domain, students will focus on time management, organization and behaviors.
Critical Thinking	The Critical Thinking ATL skill teaches students to think smartly, consider different views, and make wise choices. With activities that encourage questioning and problem-solving, students become better at understanding the world, coming up with ideas, and making good decisions in various situations.
Collaboration	The Collaboration ATL skill teaches students to work together, communicate effectively, and understand different viewpoints. Through teamwork and problem-solving, students learn to succeed both in school and in a world that values cooperation and diverse perspectives.
Communication	The Communication ATL skill teaches students to talk and write clearly, listen attentively, and share ideas effectively. Through activities like discussions and presentations, students become skilled at expressing themselves and understanding others. This skill is not only valuable for school but also for building relationships, exchanging information, and succeeding in various aspects of life.

3.5 GRADE ELIGIBILITY

If, due to legitimate extenuating circumstances, a student cannot complete the required work for a specific marking period, the teacher may enter a “1” or an “IE” as the level on the report card. In this case, the student has a reasonable amount of time (determined by the department) to make up the work. Teachers will communicate with parents if there is a concern regarding grades. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers if there is a significant or ongoing concern regarding their child’s progress.

3.6 REPORTS

All students and parents will have access to their grades via PowerSchool throughout the semester. At the end of the 1st semester and 2nd semester, an official DAA Report Card will be generated and made available online to parents and students through PowerSchool. A progress report for Approaches to Learning will also be generated and made available midway for each semester. Throughout the year, teachers will communicate with parents as needed. **If there is concern at any time in regards to student progress, we encourage parents to schedule an appointment with the relevant teacher(s) concerned.**

3.7 INDIVIDUALIZED PLANS

We enroll students who demonstrate the ability and willingness to succeed in a highly academic environment and accept the responsibilities inherent in being a good community member.

A student may be put on an Individualized Plan (academic/behavioral/attendance) if they are not finding success in their classes. During this period a student is expected to meet the growth expectations.

If a student continually performs below expectations, s/he will be placed on an improvement plan until such time as her/his performance improves. After consultation with teachers and parents, the Principal may decide that the student may not participate in extracurricular activities or school social events until the results are meeting expectations. Failure to improve may result in further consequences.

3.8 PROMOTION / RETENTION

Students failing to meet the academic expectations of DAA may be required to repeat the grade level. This decision will be made after initial consultation with the student, family, concerned teachers, HOG and/or counselors. The ultimate decision will be made by the Principal.

3.9 HOMEWORK PHILOSOPHY

When homework is an engaging and relevant learning activity that is purposefully designed and connected to learning expectations, it can positively influence student learning. High quality homework assignments can:

- improve speed and accuracy with important skills and processes,
- activate prior knowledge, and/or
- introduce, extend, or elaborate on new learning.

Such assignments provide students with deliberate practice, which can be tailored to the needs of individual students. Effective homework assignments cultivate positive, open school-home partnerships between teachers and parents, while providing students with opportunities to create authentic products and rehearse important academic skills. Finally, time spent on homework should be appropriately balanced with the importance of personal and family wellness.

3.9.1 HOMEWORK RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

In the Middle School we follow Marzano's 10 minute rule, which states that students should be assigned no more than 10 minutes of homework per grade level. So, following that rule, a 6th grade student should have no more than 60 minutes of homework per night. Please note that this does not include reading, time for which is in addition to Marzano guidelines.

Teachers are encouraged to use the flipped classroom homework strategy, which involves inverting Bloom's Taxonomy. This approach allows students to spend more class time on challenging cognitive tasks, such as application and analysis, while dedicating less class time to simpler tasks like remembering and understanding.

RECOMMENDED HOMEWORK MINUTES PER NIGHT

Recommended Homework Minutes per night	Types of Homework
Grade 6 - approximately 60 minutes Grade 7 - approximately 70 minutes Grade 8 - approximately 80 minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> Practice/Review/Preparation <input type="checkbox"/> Skill Integration <input type="checkbox"/> Extension/Enrichment

Teachers are responsible for:

- Designing homework assignments that clearly articulate their purpose and expected outcome;
- Sharing expectations for homework with students and parents early in the school year;
- Timely and regular communication that outlines the practices that will help families support their children;
- Providing meaningful feedback;
- Depending on the subject and the developmental needs, assigning homework that is appropriate to the student's age, learning style, skills and individual needs;
- Teaching the skills necessary for the student to complete the homework independently and successfully; and
- Choosing activities that promote a discussion between students and parents, when appropriate.

Students are responsible for:

- Ensuring they clearly understand homework, including assignments, criteria, and timelines;
- Asking for clarification and/or help when homework assignments or the expectations are unclear; and
- Regularly completing assigned homework in a timely manner to the best of their abilities.

The family is responsible for:

- Providing an environment, including uninterrupted time and a workplace, for homework to be done;
- Providing encouragement and appropriate support without doing the homework for their child;
- Providing a healthy balance between homework, co-curricular activities and family commitments;
- Using discretion to determine an appropriate amount of time spent on homework (based on grade level guidelines);
- Contacting the classroom teacher if their child is not consistently able to do the homework by him/herself or in a reasonable amount of time; and
- Encouraging their child to develop a positive work ethic and a sense of responsibility.

******At GEMS Dubai American Academy, we use the [GEMS Home Learning Policy](#) as our foundational document regarding homework expectations.

3.10 GOOGLE CLASSROOM

Students should regularly use Google Classroom to stay updated on assignments and due dates. All class assignments are automatically collated in a Google Calendar, giving students a clear overview of their workload. Students are encouraged to add any additional tasks or important dates to this calendar. To ensure they are comfortable with this process, students will practice adding assignments to their Google Calendar during CREW sessions.

Parents can also stay informed about their children's assignments and due dates by accessing Google Classroom. They have two options: they can sign up as a parent using their own email address to receive regular updates on class activities and upcoming deadlines, or they can ask their child to sign in to Google Classroom and view it from the student's perspective. This access allows parents to monitor their child's progress and support them in staying organized and on top of their schoolwork.

Many teachers will grade both major and minor assessments directly within Google Classroom. Because of this, Google Classroom often provides the quickest turnaround for students to review their grades. While final grades will eventually be entered into PowerSchool, students and parents can typically see the most up-to-date grades sooner on Google Classroom. This makes it an essential tool for keeping track of academic progress in real-time.

3.11 ACADEMIC REWARDS

The Middle School strives to recognize our students' accomplishments throughout the year. These achievements are acknowledged and celebrated in a variety of ways, including during assemblies. Additionally, student successes are highlighted in school newsletter write-ups, displayed on TV screens around the school, and featured in grade-level bulletins, ensuring that students receive the recognition they deserve for their hard work and dedication.

4.0 STUDENT GUIDELINES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 BEHAVIORAL PHILOSOPHY

The Middle School behavioral philosophy aligns with our DAA [Behavior for Learning](#) policy. The Middle School believes that all students should have the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential. We believe our school must guide students as they become progressively more self-disciplined, responsible learners, cooperative and able to work independently.

The Middle School will provide a positive learning environment that is developmentally responsive to the social and academic needs of students. This environment, both in and out of the classroom, encourages a wide range of learning experiences while emphasizing basic skills.

Finally, the Middle School encourages close collaboration and partnerships with students, parents, and faculty. It is these partnerships which will facilitate successful transition of students from the Middle School through to the High School.

4.2 RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following is a statement of responsibilities and rights at DAA Middle School. It is through mutual acceptance of responsibilities that rights exist and that guidelines are followed.

EVERY STUDENT HAS A RIGHT:

- to an appropriate education.
- to a positive learning environment.
- to a safe and secure school environment.
- to expect reasonable and socially responsible behavior from others.
- to be part of a school of which they can be proud.

EVERY STUDENT HAS A RESPONSIBILITY:

- to respect the safety of others and to deal with conflict in an appropriate manner.
- to treat themselves and others with respect by speaking and acting in a socially responsible manner.
- to take pride in the school by helping maintain the campus, buildings and related equipment.
- to follow class rules.
- to be prepared to learn.
- to respect the reputation and good names of others.
- to abide by all the expectations and regulations set out in the 'Student Handbook'.

4.3 MIDDLE SCHOOL BEHAVIOR AND STUDENT MANAGEMENT

Students are expected to conduct themselves, both on and off campus, in a manner which reflects well on themselves, their school, their families, and their countries. The Superintendent and/or the Principal reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary action in the case of violation of these standards.

Our Middle School philosophy is underpinned by a restorative approach to discipline. Restorative practices in school brings persons harmed by misbehavior and the person who harmed them, along

with affected community members, together in dialogue that aims to build understanding, explore how the actions have impacted those involved, including the community, and develop agreements for what will be done to make things right. This results in truly meaningful justice for all involved.

Restorative practices in schools are based on restorative justice principles instead of punishment. They aim first to build classroom communities that are supported by clear agreements, authentic communication, and specific tools to bring issues and conflicts forward in a helpful way. They provide specific pathways to repair harms by bringing together those who are affected by misbehavior in a dialogue to address concerns, achieve understanding, and come to an agreement about setting things right. In addition to serving the cause of fairness and justice, restorative approaches make safer schools and contribute to social and emotional learning.

Source: <http://restorativeresources.org/>

With cooperation from students, staff and community, the Middle School will follow a **Progressive Scale of Behavior Management** meant to allow students an opportunity to learn the appropriate mannerisms as set out by the Middle School Handbook.

The school expects parents to support its authority and to direct any questions regarding an action taken by the school to the particular teacher or SLT member involved without delay.

The Principal reserves the right, where in their opinion sufficient cause exists, to suspend students from school. In extreme circumstances the Principal, in discussion with the Superintendent, may review a child's placement at DAA.

Mutual respect and consideration, whether inside or outside the classrooms, guides all of our interactions with others. To help maintain and foster the aforementioned respect, all students, teachers and parents are expected to model the following behaviors:

- Treat people and property with dignity and respect
- Participate actively in the learning process
- Complete assignments within the agreed time frame
- Exhibit a positive attitude
- Act responsibly and honestly
- Arrive at school punctually and prepared to learn
- Use appropriate language

There are a few specific expectations that will also help community life. Students should not:

- Disrupt classes with unacceptable behavior
- Be absent from class without the permission of a teacher
- Leave school grounds without permission
- Bring weapons to school (real or any resemblance or toy).

Please note that violations of the standards of basic conduct can result in immediate suspension from school, specifically:

- Violence or bullying
- Discrimination or racism
- Stealing
- Purposeful destruction of property
- Bringing illicit or banned substances to school

- Harassment

We believe that a positive academic and social climate is necessary for student success in school. We also believe that responsibility for establishing this climate must be shared by each student, parent and faculty member.

We promote students following reasonable rules; it assists students to understand their purpose in the school community. In doing so, our students are expected to make the appropriate decisions necessary which demonstrate maturity and productivity.

We encourage our students to share any concerns they may have, with the understanding that any information shared is done so in confidence, within appropriate limits.

4.3.1 DETENTION/SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

Disregard of rules and regulations in this handbook may result in detention, suspension and/or expulsion. All infractions are referred to the Middle School Leadership Team and are recorded.

- **Detention** may be during break, lunch or after school hours. Teachers, Head of Department, Head of Grade, or member of the Middle School Senior Leadership team will perscribe detentions as appropriate in a designated location. Parents will be notified in advance when after school detentions are assigned.
- **Suspensions** will be either in school or out of school and may vary in length. The student is given the opportunity and responsibility during the period of suspension to make up class work and assessments given during the period of absence from classes. A suspension can only be assigned by a member of the Middle School Leadership Team (Dean of Students, Assistant Principals, Principal). External suspensions are a maximum of 3 school days per term.
- **Expulsion** is the consequence for serious and/or repeated infractions and will be dealt with as per individual case. A recommendation for expulsion will be in consultation with the Principal and Superintendent.

Note: Any behavior or activity undertaken while representing DAA, or outside DAA, that is illegal or brings disrepute to DAA, may result in **suspension** or **expulsion** from school. Consequences of the actions are shared with the family of the student who violated the code of conduct.

4.3.2.1 BEHAVIOR LEVELS AND CONSEQUENCES

Respect for Self, Respect for School and Respect of Others

Level 1 - These behaviors are minor breaches of DAA behavior expectations and are typically managed by the classroom teacher and the Head of Grade. These incidents are addressed through immediate, logical consequences to promote positive change.

These examples of behaviors merely serve as an illustrative guide and are not limited to the list below:

Examples of Level 1 Behaviors	Examples of Level 1 Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption of learning or school environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Talking out of turn, interrupting lessons, distracting peers, disrupting hallway, or school functions • Failure to follow classroom/school expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Poor sportsmanship, chewing gum, not following instructions, neglecting parent signature requests, inappropriate display of affection, congregating in unauthorized common areas or bathrooms • Dress code / uniform violation (minor) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ First-time dress code violation, wearing non-uniform items, incorrect PE kit • Off-task / unauthorized tech use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Messaging during class, viewing non-class websites, gaming, inappropriate device use • Minor inappropriate language or teasing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Low-level teasing, casual inappropriate language not directed with malice • Disrespect to self or others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Mild rudeness, lack of courtesy toward peers or staff • Homework or minor academic infractions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Late or incomplete homework, not bringing required materials • Minor misbehavior in shared spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Littering, loitering, causing minor disruptions in hallways, cafeteria, or playground • Unexcused tardies to class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Arriving late without a valid excuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative conversation with the teacher to reflect on the incident and repair relationships. • Verbal warning clearly outlining the inappropriate behavior and expectations for improvement. • Reminder of the school's behavior agreement with guidance on how to meet expectations moving forward. • Use of restorative questioning to promote self-reflection and ownership of behavior. • Loss of specific privileges (e.g., free time, participation in certain activities) as appropriate. • Written or verbal reflection on the incident, including strategies for making better choices in the future. • Escalation for repeated behaviors, which may include parent contact, detention, or other restorative interventions. • Monitoring and follow-up by the teacher to reinforce positive changes.

Level 2 - These behaviors are moderately serious breaches of DAA behavior expectations and/or repeated Level 1 offenses. These incidents are typically managed by the Head of Grade or Dean of Students, in consultation with the classroom teacher. A formal record will be added to the student's file. Appropriate consequences will be determined in collaboration with the staff involved. Parents will be notified by the Head of Grade, Dean of Students, or Assistant Principal, as appropriate.

These examples of behaviors merely serve as an illustrative guide and are not limited to the list below:

Examples of Level 2 Behaviors	Examples of Level 2 Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated Level 1 behaviors • Academic dishonesty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Plagiarism or copying ◦ Inappropriate use of Artificial Intelligence tools • Continued dress code / uniform violation • Aggressive or repeated teasing • Disrespect toward faculty or staff • Technology violation (moderate) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Downloading programs or games that interfere with learning or violate AUP ◦ Sending unwanted/offensive emails or chat messages • Dishonesty / intentional deception • Disrespect of property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Minor vandalism or careless damage to school or personal items • Unauthorized area access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Entering restricted rooms or areas without permission ◦ Being far from class without a valid reason • Minor inappropriate physical contact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Unwanted touching, pushing, or tripping that is not aggressive in nature • Bus misconduct • Violation of facility expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Misbehavior in spaces such as libraries, labs, or the cafeteria • Horseplay or rough housing of any kind <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Wrestling, chasing, or other physical play in inappropriate settings • Disrespect of prayer room facilities • Unaccounted missed time in lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Leaving class without permission or arriving excessively late without reason • Unauthorized deliveries (food, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative conversation with the teacher or administrator to reflect on the incident and identify ways to repair harm. • Parent contact or conference to collaborate on strategies for improvement. • Mediation session to resolve conflict and restore relationships. • Development of an individual behavior plan or monitoring chart to support positive change. • Counseling or targeted support sessions to address underlying issues. • Completion of missed work during lunch, after school, or at home to reinforce accountability. • Loss of specific privileges or participation in activities as appropriate. • School-based community service as a restorative action. • Detention during lunch, after school, or other designated times to reflect and reset expectations. • Confiscation of prohibited or inappropriate items when necessary. • Restorative actions designed to repair harm and positively contribute to the school community.

a - Level 3 behaviors are serious breaches of DAA behavior expectations and/or repeated Level 2 offenses. These incidents are typically managed by the Dean of Students, in consultation with the Assistant Principal and Principal. A formal record may be added to the student's file. The Middle School Senior Leadership Team (Dean of Students, Assistant Principal, or Principal) will follow up with the student - often in coordination with the classroom or duty teacher - to determine appropriate consequences. Parents will be notified by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

These examples of behaviors merely serve as an illustrative guide and are not limited to the list below:

Examples of Level 3 Behaviors	Examples of Level 3 Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Repeated Level 2 behaviors ● Defiance of staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Refusal to follow direct instructions, walking away from a staff member, or openly challenging authority. ● Theft or deliberate damage to property ● Skipping class / unaccounted absences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leaving class without permission; being absent from an assigned location without a valid reason. ● Harassment, bullying, or discriminatory remarks ● Serious technology violation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hacking, sharing/taking unauthorized photos or recordings, or accessing offensive/explicit content. ● Possession of prohibited or imitation weapons ● Encouraging/provoking unlawful behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pressuring others to break school rules or local laws; promoting unsafe or illegal activities. ● Buying/selling goods on campus ● Compromising the health and safety of self and/or others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tampering with safety equipment, unsafe physical actions, or encouraging dangerous stunts. ● Tampering with school records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Changing grades, altering attendance data, or accessing confidential school information. ● Unwanted/inappropriate physical contact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grabbing, shoving, or other physical contact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent contact to discuss the incident and collaborate on next steps. ● Formal KHDA Warning outlining the behavior, its impact, and required changes. ● Individual counseling with ongoing support focused on personal and social development. ● Mediation sessions to resolve conflicts and rebuild relationships. ● Three-way conference between administrator, student, and parent to develop an action plan. ● Creation of an individual behavior plan or chart, with regular monitoring. ● Home-school reporting system (via email, behavior plan, or hard copy) in consultation with the counselor. ● Behavior contract signed by student, parent, and administration to formalize expectations. ● School-based community service as a restorative action. ● Restitution for damaged or stolen property (repair, replacement, or repayment). ● Restriction or suspension of privileges, participation in activities, or representation in school teams/events. ● Internal or external suspension based on severity. ● All disciplinary actions determined in consultation with the Middle School Leadership Team, ensuring consistency with the school's Behavioral Protocols and expectations.

Level 4 - Level 4 behaviors are the most serious breaches of DAA behavior expectations and/or repeated Level 3 offenses. These incidents are managed by the Assistant Principal or Principal, in consultation with the Dean of Students. A formal record will be added to the student's file. The Middle School Senior Leadership Team (Dean of Students, Assistant Principal, or Principal) will follow up with the student—often in coordination with the classroom or duty teacher—to determine appropriate consequences. Parents will be notified by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

These examples of behaviors merely serve as an illustrative guide and are not limited to the list below:

Examples of Level 4 Behaviors	Examples of Level 4 Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated Level 3 behaviors • Possession/use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Smoking or vaping on campus. ◦ Possession or use of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, alcohol, or illegal substances. • Fighting / assault <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Physical altercations causing harm to others. ◦ Aggressive acts intended to injure another student or staff member. • Intimidation or verbal abuse toward student/staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Threatening physical harm or using abusive language toward others. • Possession of weapons or illegal items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Carrying dangerous items, imitation or toy weapons, or prohibited materials. • Tampering with school records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Altering grades, falsifying information, or manipulating official documents. • Gross violation of school guidelines or UAE law <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Behavior that endangers the safety, wellbeing, or reputation of the school or community. • Severe technology misuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Gross violation of Acceptable Use Policy, such as hacking or sharing explicit/offensive digital content. • Leaving campus without permission (major) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Departing school grounds without authorization in situations posing significant safety concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate parent contact to inform and address the severity of the incident. • Formal KHDA Warning outlining the behavior, its impact, and required changes. • Individual counseling with ongoing support for personal and social development. • Mediation sessions to repair harm and rebuild relationships where appropriate. • Three-way conference between administrator, student, and parent to establish next steps. • Individual behavior plan or chart with close monitoring, in consultation with the school counselor. • Home-school reporting system (via email, behavior plan, or student planner) to ensure consistent communication. • Formal behavior contract outlining expectations, supports, and consequences for future violations. • School-based community service as a restorative measure. • Restitution through repair or replacement of damaged property. • Restriction or suspension of privileges, activities, or participation in school events/teams. • Internal or external suspension depending on the nature and severity of the offense. • Referral to the Principal for consideration of dismissal or nonrenewal of enrollment. • Notification to the Superintendent as required by policy. • All actions are determined by the Middle School Leadership Team in accordance with the school's Behavioral Management Procedures.

In accordance with KHDA direction, the school may suspend a student for up to three days in case of a serious behavioral issue. In addition, DAA has the right to issue warning letters to a student for any behavioral issue, including bullying. In accordance with GEMS and DAA philosophy, consequences are progressive based on the frequency and severity of violations. In cases of severe or repeated violations, the school may block the re-enrollment of students for the following academic year. This will be documented through the issuance of dated warning letters and supporting evidence. Disciplinary consequences and progression through the behavior levels are outlined below. Administrators retain discretion to address unique circumstances of misconduct, including the increase of consequences across the four levels.

4.4 SCHOOL GENERAL GUIDELINES AND RULES

4.4.1 UNIFORM

The Dubai American Academy uniform is available at Threads.

Core Uniform



PE Uniform



- Regulation light blue tailored shirt fully buttoned or unisex polo for boys.
- Regulation fitted navy slacks for boys.
- Regulation light blue blouse fully buttoned or unisex polo for girls.
- Regulation dark blue skort or slacks for girls. **(Skirts are not permitted.)**
- School-appropriate footwear that is secure, protective, and features non-marking soles, ensuring safety and support for all activities.
- Appropriate belts for slacks.
- Regulation or school sanctioned sweatshirt/hoodie or sweater with school logo. (Seasonal Wear)
- DAA hats are suggested for students who are outside during PE or breaks.
- Appropriately worn team polo on game day for team members ONLY.
- If a student has PE, Dance, Lifetime Fitness or Strength & Conditioning on a given day, they can remain in their PE uniform for the day.
- Students are welcome to change out of their PE kit and into their regular uniform after their PE lesson.

- Regulation DAA leggings are permitted during days that a student has PE, Dance, Lifetime Fitness or Strength & Conditioning only.

(PE) UNIFORM

The DAA Color House shirt is available at the Leopard's Den.

Note: All students must participate in swim units.

- Regulation DAA athletics shirt
- Regulation blue shorts (Shorts should not be rolled.)
- Regulation DAA yoga pants for girls
- Athletic footwear that is secure, protective, and features non-marking soles, ensuring safety and support for all activities.
 - Students must wear activity-appropriate footwear to participate in PE, Dance, Lifetime Fitness, or Strength & Conditioning activities. Without appropriate footwear, participation will not be permitted.
- Refillable water bottle
- Swimming suit (One piece tank type suit for girls is acceptable.)
- Swimming caps are required for all students.

COLOR HOUSE DAY UNIFORM

- We will have Color House days every Friday.
- Color House day uniform expectations:
 - House Color shirt
 - Regulation DAA pants or skort
 - Leggings are not permitted unless a student has PE, Dance, Lifetime Fitness or Strength & Conditioning on the Color House day.
 - School-appropriate footwear that is secure, protective, and features non-marking soles, ensuring safety and support for all activities.
 - Students must be in their regular school uniform if they do not wear their Color House shirt.

DRESS CODE/ACCESSORIES

During school hours, and while in school uniform, the following rules apply:

- Makeup, if worn, **MUST** be subtle and complement the School Dress Code.
- Jewelry and accessories must be appropriate and align with DAA's commitment to kindness and inclusivity.
- Non-regulation outerwear, such as sweatshirts or sweatpants, may not be worn at school.
- Headphones, AirPods, or earbuds should not be visible during passing periods.

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

These rules will apply:

- Skirts are not permitted.
- No tight or ripped clothing.
- No spaghetti strap shirts or exposed shoulders.
- No exposed midriff.
- No low frontal cut shirts.

- No shirts that expose the back.
- No shorts unless specified on sporting activity days.
- No offensive logos or expressions on clothing.

School administration may request a student to return home for the purpose of changing clothing if deemed unacceptable. Our policy is: **Wear clothing that is respectful to you as well as the learning community.**

4.4.2 LEAVING CAMPUS OR MISSING CLASS

Students are to remain on campus at all times during the school day unless given approval by a member of the Middle School Leadership team (Dean of Students, Assistant Principal, or Principal) or the Middle School Office to leave. If students must leave due to illness, the school nurse and/or school administration will contact the parents. If students must leave campus prior to dismissal time, parents are requested to notify the MS Attendance Secretary about this via email in advance. In all cases, students must obtain an early release slip in order to leave the school campus.

Students are expected to be in class for the duration of their lesson unless otherwise agreed with a staff member and with the knowledge of their teacher. Students who are out of class for an extended period without permission may receive consequences.

4.4.3 DANCES

The dress code for social dances are proposed by staff and approved by the school administration. A chaperone is authorized to remove any student from a DAA dance social if they deem that a student's behavior and/or dress are inappropriate. No students from outside DAA are permitted to attend school dances. Outside events organized by DAAPA are not the responsibility of DAA.

4.4.4 OUTSIDE DELIVERIES

Students are not permitted to receive outside food deliveries during the school day. As a school, we must manage the needs of many here at school, including dietary restrictions and allergies.

4.4.5 BULLYING

DAA has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying in all its forms. Bullying is the intentional and deliberate intimidation of another person through emotional, physical, psychological, and/or cyber means. Instances of proven and intentional and repeated bullying may result in immediate suspension of the aggressor from the school.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior is often aggressive and includes a series of malicious behavior with the intent to hurt or harm others.

Bullying is associated with behaviors causing an imbalance of power whereby kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same or different people. Some bullies target individuals while others target a variety of people.

In order to be considered bullying, unwanted or unwelcome behavior typically occurs more than once. A single, unkind act does not usually constitute bullying, however incidents of harm and wrongdoing will still be addressed according to the school's behavior protocols.

DAA does not tolerate any form of bullying (verbal, physical, social, or cyber). Offenses will be addressed by the classroom teacher, Head of Grade, the Dean of Students, the Middle School Assistant Principals, the Middle School Counselors, and, where appropriate, the Middle School administrators for follow up and consequences. Offenses may result in student suspension and/or expulsion.

Bullying that occurs outside of school is the responsibility of parents/guardians. However, any behavior or activity undertaken outside of DAA, that brings disrepute to DAA, may result in **suspension** or **expulsion** from school. Parents and guardians are reminded that students must be of legal age to use social media.

4.4.6 HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

At DAA, we are committed to creating a safe and welcoming environment for all students, regardless of their race, ethnicity, or cultural background. Our antiracism policy stands as a testament to our dedication to promoting diversity, inclusion, and equity within our school community.

Harassment refers to a pattern of unwanted, persistent, and offensive behavior directed towards an individual or a group, causing discomfort, fear, or distress. This behavior can take various forms, including verbal, written, physical, or digital actions, and often involves actions that demean, discriminate, or create a hostile environment for the target. Harassment violates personal boundaries and often targets attributes such as race, gender, religion, or other protected characteristics.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following unwelcome actions:

- Whistling, catcalling, or making offensive noises
- Staring or making obscene gestures
- Making suggestive remarks, inappropriate jokes, or using derogatory/inappropriate terms
- Displaying offensive photographs, images, or illustrations
- Blocking a person's movements
- Touching, brushing, pinching, slapping, or patting
- Pulling or lifting of clothing
- Pressuring a person for information
- Transmitting harassing remarks or pictures on the Internet, through a cell phone, or by other electronic means

Discrimination is the unfair or prejudiced treatment of individuals or groups based on their inherent or perceived characteristics, such as race, gender, age, religion, or other protected traits. This treatment can manifest in various forms, including exclusion, unequal opportunities, biased decision-making, or negative stereotypes. Discrimination infringes upon the rights and dignity of individuals, perpetuates inequality, and undermines the principles of fairness and justice.

Discrimination includes, but is not limited to, the following actions:

- Using racial slurs
- Displaying intimidating symbols or words such as swastikas
- Making generalizations
- Using stereotypes
- Telling racial or ethnic jokes
- Making derogatory comments about peoples' size, weight, height, or disability
- Making derogatory comments about peoples' perceived intelligence or ability

Any student found to have engaged in discrimination or harassment will be subject to school-imposed discipline and/or potential legal action. Consequences imposed on any student found to have engaged in discrimination or harassment may include, but are not limited to, parent/guardian conference, written or verbal statement of apology, counseling sessions, suspension, expulsion, and/or mandatory external counseling sessions.

4.4.7 POOL/GYMNASIUM SAFETY

Students are expected to abide by all pool and gym safety procedures outlined by their teachers and/or administration. All students are required to participate in pool and gym class periods as part of the enriched American curriculum.

4.4.8 DAMAGE TO SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students will be individually charged and expected to replace or reimburse the school, as appropriate, for any damage they cause to school property.

4.4.9 GUM, CARBONATED DRINKS, ENERGY DRINKS & COFFEE

In an effort to maintain our facilities, DAA is a gum-free campus. Furthermore, coffee, carbonated drinks, and energy drinks are not permitted by practice unless organized for a special occasion planned by the school. Candy is not considered part of a healthy and balanced diet, please avoid it as part of lunch and snack.

4.4.10 LITTERING

DAA is a clean, GREEN campus and requires students to help maintain its beauty. Students found littering will be required to assist with any cleanup duties resulting from their actions. The common rule is, 'If you are near it, then you own it.'

4.4.11 DRUGS / ALCOHOL VIOLATION

The use of drugs and alcohol is injurious to student health and to a healthy school environment. The possession, use, sale, or distribution of drugs or alcohol on school property, school-provided transportation, or at school-sponsored or chaperoned functions is prohibited and is a grave infraction against the school and UAE Law, and thus it will not be tolerated.

- The UAE Government has a zero-tolerance policy regarding drug use or possession of drugs.
- DAA has a zero-tolerance policy in regard to student possession or use of drugs.

- Potential consequences include suspension from school and indefinitely from all school activities until due process is finalized with probable expulsion from school.

4.4.12 TOBACCO/VAPING

The possession, use, sale, or distribution of tobacco and any vaping devices is prohibited and will result in suspension. Repeated offenses will result in expulsion.

4.4.13 ACADEMIC HONESTY

Honesty in schoolwork requires that students do their own work. Students are expected to give credit to ideas, language, or thoughts that are not their own. To take ideas, writing, or thoughts from someone else and pass them off as one's own is PLAGIARISM and is a violation of academic honesty. This can occur with print or non-print sources, such as the Internet. DAA regards acts of academic dishonesty as a serious violation of the community's trust. There are levels of consequences for students who engage in academic dishonesty.

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications (i.e., Chat GPT) to complete academic work is considered academic dishonesty. Teachers have access to technology that determines the authenticity of student work as compared with AI support or assistance. Students may be required to provide evidence of their academic work and revisions if there are concerns about the validity and authenticity of their academic work.

A superficial change of wording, structure, or conclusion is insufficient to turn aside the charge of plagiarism. The majority of plagiarism is dealt with at the teacher and department level. Repeated offenses are then brought to SLT.

4.4.14 GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Regarding Homework

Most homework assignments are given as learning experiences and so getting help from others may be considered appropriate. However, a student who copies another person's assignment, which may make a teacher think that the student has completed the work, is considered to be cheating and violates academic integrity.

Examples of homework activities that DO NOT violate the Guidelines of Academic Integrity include:

- Working with another person on a cooperative study assignment when both names are affixed to the final submission for grade attribution.
- Review of a question or problem by another person for the purpose of getting suggestions for a strategy for solutions, as long as the solution is entirely worked out by the student.
- Work that is assigned and announced by the teacher as work that will not be graded and which the student completes with another person, or persons, with the knowledge of the teacher.

Examples of homework activities that DO violate the Guidelines of Academic Integrity include, but are not limited to:

- Solving problems or answering questions for which another student will receive a grade.

- Copying or paraphrasing another student's work, or the work of an author, in whole or in part, and claiming it as one's own.
- Turning in someone else's work as the student's own.
- Allowing/encouraging another student to copy all or part of one's own work and claim it as their own.
- Taking information directly from the Internet and presenting it as one's own.
- Receiving help from someone else such as a parent, tutor, or sibling and presenting it as one's own.

Regarding Major and Minor Assessments

Obtaining unfair help with major and/or minor assessments is a violation of the guidelines for academic integrity. The following are examples of unacceptable assessment behavior and are provided to give an idea of common mistakes:

- Discussing (in detail) a major/minor assessment that the student has not yet taken with a person who has already taken it.
- Bringing hidden notes or using unauthorized notes during a major or a minor assessment. The mere possession of such "cheat notes" indicates an intent to use them and, as such, would be considered a violation of the DAA guidelines for academic integrity.
- Looking at another person's work during a major or minor assessment.
- Talking to another person during a major or minor assessment unless specifically permitted to do so by the teacher.
- Allowing another person to look at work during a major or minor assessment.
- Assisting another person during a major or minor assessment through noises, silent signals, or electronic means.
- Possessing, in ANY form, a copy of the major or minor assessment before it is administered.
- Taking another person's major or minor assessment for them at their request.

4.4.15 ABSENCES

Students are expected to attend school every school day. Attendance is taken at the beginning of every block. Good attendance is essential if the student is to be successful. Faculty can best help educate when students meet this expectation. Absenteeism can adversely affect not only the progress of the offender but the progress of the rest of the class as well. Parental excuses are required for absences from school.

Parents need to report by email both planned and unplanned absences, including sicknesses, to our attendance secretary as soon as possible. The attendance secretary's email is MSAttendance_daa@Gemsedu.com, and the middle school office phone number is **04-704-9728**.

If a student plans to be away for some reason, the Middle School office should be provided with a written notice from the parent or guardian at least one (1) day before the absence. It is the student's responsibility to complete any missing assignments by the agreed deadline and communicate with the teacher if they need support.

DAA Middle School students are not permitted to participate in or attend a Middle School activity on a day they are absent from school.

The KHDA uses the following ratings for attendance

Outstanding	98%	+/- 4 days
Good	96%	+/- 7 days

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Acceptable	92%	+/-14 days
Unsatisfactory	<92%	+/-15 days

Please note attendance data is recorded on your child's school report.

If students are absent 14 consecutive days or 21 non-consecutive days, the KHDA guideline says that the school should consider if the student is academically able to progress into the next grade. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

According to KHDA guidelines, if students are absent 20 consecutive days or 25 non-consecutive days, they are subject to disciplinary actions that could result in expulsion from school.

4.4.16 TARDIES

Students are expected to be on time, whether in class or online. If a student arrives to class after 07:45 am, they must report to the Middle School Office prior to attending class to receive an attendance slip. Tardies may result in detentions or attendance probation. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their non-bus students are punctual to school to ensure their child is prepared for Learning Block 1. **Please note: tardies are recorded on the student's report. Parents of students with persistent tardiness over a two-week period will be notified that their child may be serving lunchtime or after school detention, depending on recurrence. Continued tardiness may result in the loss of lunchtime privileges, and involvement in activities up to and including Week Without Walls.**

4.4.17 TEXTBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS, AND SUPPLIES

Textbooks, when required, are provided to all students on a loan basis. Students are held responsible for books checked out and must pay for lost or damaged books; including deliberate damage (i.e. writing and graffiti). Students must provide their own stationery supplies including notebooks, paper, pencils, pens and other related needs.

Lost textbooks or library books should be reported to the Middle School Librarian as soon as possible. The student will be charged the cost of the book plus 50% shipping, processing and handling costs. Once a receipt for payment from the accountant is handed to the TRC Clerk, the book will then be replaced. **Report cards are withheld for outstanding or lost textbooks.**

4.4.18 LOCKERS

This year, students will have access to day-use lockers around the school. Instead of being assigned specific locks and lockers, students can use any available locker as needed. It is important that students keep these lockers in good condition, as they are responsible for maintaining them. Vandalism of any lockers will result in consequences in accordance with our behavior policy. Students are reminded not to share locker combinations with others to protect their belongings. **Please note that DAA does NOT take responsibility for lost or stolen items, including money, mobile phones, other electronic devices, textbooks, or clothing.**

4.4.19 ELECTRONICS

Certain electronic items (smartwatches, tablets, etc.) may distract from the learning environment and are not to be seen during school hours at DAA unless a teacher has requested a student to use their personal device for a learning activity. Items may be confiscated if seen. **In addition, DAA**

assumes no responsibility for these items if they are broken, lost, or stolen. Use of CCTV footage to locate missing items violates DAA privacy expectations and school policy. **We ask that all Apple devices have the “Find my iPhone” App for finding the location of misplaced devices. This is the responsibility of the student to download and sign in to this app.**

4.4.20 MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones may not be audible or visible after students enter the building in the morning until after school (07:15-15:00). Mobile phones heard and/or used without permission during school hours will be confiscated and sent to the Middle School Office for safekeeping. If mobile phones are permitted to be used for educational purposes, the teacher will communicate this with their students. A teacher can request that mobile phones be placed on their desk if a student leaves their lesson for any reason. This is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all of our MS community.

1st Offense & 2nd offense:

The phone is kept with the MS Secretary until the end of the school day.

Repeat offense:

The phone will be kept by the Middle School office, parents will be contacted and asked to collect their child's property, OR the phone will be kept overnight and returned to the student at an agreed time with a parent. If a phone is confiscated on a Friday, it will be safely kept in the school over the weekend.

If parents need to contact their child during the school day they are advised to contact the Middle School Office on 04-704-9777. Equally, students have the option of using the Middle School Office phone to contact their parent(s) during the school day. Alternatively, they may be given permission to use their own phone by a member of the Middle School Leadership Team.

5.0 RESPONSIBLE USE AND POLICY GUIDELINES

5.1 TECHNOLOGY - ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)

In order for students at DAA to use the school's technology resources, they must follow the guidelines set forth in this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). The rules detailed in this agreement are not all-inclusive, and DAA reserves the right to change this agreement when necessary. It is a general agreement that all facilities (hardware, software, Internet, etc.) are to be used in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner. By signing the Acceptable Use Agreement, users acknowledge their understanding of the Acceptable Use Policy as a condition of using DAA's technology resources and Internet access.

Access to the school's resources, network, and the Internet should be considered a privilege, not a right, and can be suspended immediately without notice. Users are reminded that access is available for educational and administrative purposes only.

DAA actively encourages the appropriate use of technology and provides electronic devices and services to promote educational excellence. While each student in Grades 6 through 12 is expected to provide an appropriate laptop, the school has a responsibility to maintain the integrity, operation, and availability of its electronic systems for access and use. DAA makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the school network will be error-free or without

defect. DAA will not be responsible for any damage suffered, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service.

DAA's technology resources are to be used in accordance with this AUP and all users are required to comply with its regulations. Non-compliance will result in disciplinary action. The school may restrict, suspend, or terminate any user's access to the school's computer systems upon violation of the AUP. This policy applies to all technology at DAA, not only the computers and equipment provided in the school's IT labs, but also the personal devices students bring to school in accordance with the school's laptop initiative.

5.2 USER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students can expect a 21st century learning environment at DAA where teachers work to integrate technology thoughtfully and purposefully in learning experiences and assignments. IT resources are intended for educational use and to promote educational excellence. Students can also expect access to appropriate devices and network services that support the educational mission of the school. Finally, students have a right to feel safe while using the school's resources and network. The expectations below are intended to help students understand their responsibilities as technology users at Dubai American Academy.

5.2.1 EXPECTATION 1- APPROPRIATE USE OF THE NETWORK RESOURCES

- Internet access is available to all students and staff at Dubai American Academy. We believe these communication links offer vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and staff.
- Students are expected to access only classroom-related sites and applications during class time.
- All members of the DAA community will respect the values and ethics of the UAE. Users will not access or post inappropriate materials. Inappropriate use, materials and/or access include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, pornography, hate mail, cyberbullying, chain letters, unauthorized access (hacking), and email messages that initiate false alarms, etc.
- The school will use available monitoring and blocking software to filter objectionable materials on the internet.
- It is the user's responsibility to keep all inappropriate materials and files, virus-infected media, or other software dangerous to the integrity of the system away from the school's technology.
- Activities that degrade the performance of the network are strictly prohibited and will result in suspension of network privileges. Such activities include, but are not limited to, peer-to-peer file sharing, downloading software, video or audio files.
- Email is allowed during school hours only in connection with a classroom assignment.
- High School and Middle School – Student photos and/or work may be identified by their full name with parental approval. Group or individual pictures of students with student identification are permitted with parental approval. Parents may elect to have their child assigned to the Elementary School level of use.

5.2.2 EXPECTATION 2 - MAINTAIN INTEGRITY AND LAWFULNESS

- **Students will not plagiarize material found on the Internet.**
- Users are responsible for adhering to the laws for copyrighted materials under United Arab Emirates and international guidelines.
- All software installed on personal technology is expected to adhere to UAE copyright laws (e.g., no pirated software).
- The only software, other than students' projects, to be used on the school's computers are those for which the school owns a valid license or has been approved from an open-source solution.
- Licensed/copyrighted software is not available for borrowing and may only be used at other sites with approval of the IT Coordinator. Any attempts to circumvent the licensing control or the copying of software from the network without the IT Coordinator's permission is prohibited.
- Saving to a school computer's hard disk drive is granted only by permission of the instructor (for students) or IT Coordinator (for staff).
- School-related files are the only files to be saved in a student's personal folder or in their Google Drive.
- Students should not store commercial software, music, and/or games or hidden files on the DAA server.

5.2.3 EXPECTATION 3 - RESPECT AND MAINTAIN THE SCHOOL'S AND YOUR PROPERTY AND DATA

- Student-owned technology used at school is expected to be in good working condition with only properly licensed software installed, and sufficient battery life to operate when required in classrooms.
- Faculty and staff may check laptops at any time to verify ownership.
- Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data, the network, and other network components connected to the network hardware or software will result in cancellation of network privileges.
- Software, hardware and peripherals are provided as tools for student use for educational purposes. Students are not permitted to install software, relocate hardware (except for portable devices), install peripherals or modify settings to equipment without the consent of the district technology department.
- Report equipment problems immediately to instructor / tech assistants / Network Administration / IT Coordinator.
- Leave workstations and peripherals in their designated places.
- Keep work areas neat and clean and free from food and drink.
- Student laptop use is only permitted under teacher supervision in classrooms or designated computer zones.
- Borrowing of school hardware is not permitted unless email authorization has been given from the IT department. If a person checks-out or borrows any IT equipment, they are responsible for replacing it or repairing it if it is lost or damaged.

5.2.4 EXPECTATION 4 - RESPECT FOR OTHER USERS, INCLUDING PRIVACY AND PROPERTY

- Students will be held accountable for Cyber-Bullying or the passing of inappropriate/illegal content, even if it occurs off-campus during the school year and negatively impacts the academic environment at DAA.
- Students will promptly disclose to a teacher or other school employee any message received that is inappropriate or makes the student feel uncomfortable.
- Each user shall respect others' work, files, passwords and property (hardware and software).
- Users shall not misrepresent themselves, others, or DAA in communications and/or online posts.
- Users should respect the rights of others using the school technology resources by: using assigned workstations, if required by the teacher; always logging off workstations; never attempting to disrupt network performance or interfering with the work of another user; and leaving equipment and room in good condition for the next user/class.

5.2.5 EXPECTATION 5 - RESPECT FOR SECURITY

- Accounts on the systems at DAA are considered secure, although absolute security of any data cannot be guaranteed. Teachers can be provided access to student files for instructional or evaluative purposes.
- Use only your account/password (Note: It is a violation to give access to your password to any other user).
- Students must immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if they have identified a possible security problem. Students should not go looking for security problems, this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.
- Students will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to any portion of DAA's electronic network.
- Users will not attempt to access websites blocked by district policy, including the use of proxy services, software, or websites.
- Users will not use sniffing or remote access technology to monitor the network or other user's activity.

5.2.6 EXPECTATION 6 - EXPECT MONITORED USE

- Understand that communication systems and use of DAA's networks should not be considered confidential and may be monitored by the School at any time to ensure reliability, integrity, security and appropriate use. Files stored on the network are treated in the same manner as other school storage areas, such as lockers. Routine maintenance and monitoring of DAA's electronic network may lead to discovery that a student has violated this policy or the law. Students should not expect that files stored on district servers are private.
- Students' right to free speech applies to communication on the Internet. DAA's electronic network is considered a limited forum, similar to the school newspaper, and therefore the school may restrict a student's speech for valid educational reasons.
- An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated this policy or the law. The investigation will be reasonable and related to the suspected violation.

5.2.7 EXPECTATION 7 - PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

- All users must follow all policies even while using their own personal equipment.

- Watching DVDs, movies, TV shows, etcetera while at school is prohibited unless the media has been checked-out from the school library or has been provided by the school's streaming server.
- Private networks are prohibited within the school network unless users get permission from the IT department.
- Playing commercial/online games or using applications not sanctioned by a teacher is not permitted.

5.2.8 REMOTE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

- All students are expected to be on time for all of their lessons, if not they will be marked as tardy.
- If a student misses a significant amount of the online lesson they will be marked as absent. This is up to teacher discretion.
- Students must use their correct name in order to be allowed into a lesson.
- Students that are working remotely are expected to remain in the lesson for the duration of the lesson. If a student leaves a session after a brief period of time and does not return, they will be marked as absent.
- All students' cameras should be turned on for the duration of an online lesson, this is a safeguarding issue. Students not adhering to this expectation may be removed from the lesson.
- The only exception to this is if the student is having genuine issues with accessing the lesson while their camera is turned on. In this instance the following steps must be taken:
 - An email must be sent from a parent or guardian to the student's Head of Grade and CREW teacher informing them of the issue. The student's teachers will then be notified of the issue.
 - At the beginning of the lesson for roll call, the student's camera should be turned on to ensure that they are present for the class.
 - The student may turn off their camera after this, the teacher will check in periodically throughout the lesson to ensure that the student is actively participating in class.
- If a student is having difficulty accessing the lesson, they must email the teacher within the first 15 minutes of class.
- Students must be in their uniform while working remotely.
- Students cannot eat while they are on camera.
- Students should have access to all materials that are needed for class.

5.3 CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATING ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Violations of this policy may result in loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action. Student violation of this policy shall be subject to the consequences as indicated within this policy as well as other appropriate discipline, which may include but is not limited to:

- Use of network only under direct supervision
- Suspension of network privileges
- Revocation of network privileges
- Suspension of computer privileges

- Suspension from school
- Expulsion from school and/or
- Legal action and prosecution by the authorities

The school administrators shall determine the particular consequences for violations of this policy. The Superintendent or designee shall determine when school expulsion and/or legal action or actions by the authorities are the appropriate course of action.

5.4 INTERNET USAGE

The school will use available monitoring and blocking software to filter objectionable materials on the Internet.

Internet access is available to all students and teachers at Dubai American Academy. We believe these communication links offer vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and staff and their availability outweighs any possible access to information that is not consistent with the educational goals of DAA. However, both student and parent are asked to sign an Acceptable Use Policy while their children attend DAA that will be enforced during the student's attendance at the school. Expected standards of conduct include:



- ✓ The acknowledgement that access to the Internet is a privilege and not a right.
- ✓ Respect the use of copyrighted materials.
- ✓ Email is allowed during school hours only in connection with a classroom assignment.
- ✓ Downloading of unauthorized programs is not allowed.
- ✓ All school web pages should reflect the mission of the school and adhere to the DAA Web Page Guidelines.
- ✓ Compromising the security of the school in any manner is unacceptable.
- ✓ Respect the values and ethics of the local host culture.

A violation of the above standards and any others included in the Acceptable Use Policy will result in a denial of access and possible further disciplinary action.

6.0 STUDENT SERVICES

6.1 LIBRARY SERVICES

The Middle School library is located on the first floor of the school. The library provides collections of books, magazines, and online databases. In addition to worldwide newspapers available from online databases, the library subscribes to a local newspaper, a US newspaper, and an international newspaper. Students and teachers can access the library catalog from every computer in the school.

6.2 LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER EXPECTATIONS

Respect others by talking softly.

Eat and drink in the cafeteria, not in the library.

Ask for help to find what you need.

Do be conscientious with library materials and facilities.

6.3 LIBRARY GUIDELINES

- Return or renew books and other items by the due date. Materials that are long overdue will be considered lost, and after several reminders, an invoice will be sent.
- Report cards and transfer certificates will not be issued unless all books and fines are cleared. Students who withdraw early also must return library materials so their clearance form can be signed.
- If a book is damaged or lost, it will be charged to the student.

6.4 COUNSELING SERVICES

At DAA we have a holistic view of the student and value the educational, social, and personal needs of each student. DAA Middle School counselors collaborate with students, parents, teachers, and administrators to support a positive school experience. Other roles of the counselors include leading the Middle School Ambassadors program, leading school-wide pastoral care initiatives, individual counseling, welcoming new students and their families, and advising with course selection.

Initially, concerns about academic performance and behavior should be addressed with any related teachers. After this step, concerns may be referred to the Heads of Grade, Dean of Students, Assistant Principals, or Counselors, depending on the nature of the concern.

The counseling program strives to support the academic, social and emotional development of the students. In addition, DAA has CREW in which character building is a component. This program allows smaller groups of students regular contact time with their teacher-advisor throughout the year. In collaboration with this course, the goal is to help students develop self-insight and an understanding of the worth and dignity of others. We also want each student to gain knowledge of his or her unique mix of interests, talents, and abilities and how to use this information for further educational and career choices. Other topics may include information on bullying and peer relationships, communication and conflict resolution, making constructive choices, and developing core values and life skills.

6.5 SCHOOL NURSE SERVICES

The Health Office's responsibilities include, administering first aid, treating minor ailments, health education, maintaining health records, updating vaccinations and medical information, and liaising with the Dubai Health Authority.

The Department of Health and Medical Services requires that the following completed forms be kept on file to enable us to care for your child effectively. These forms must be completed and returned to the Health Office directly, prior to your child starting school.

- Health Information Form
- Medical Consent Form
- Immunization Record – a copy is required

The school should be informed immediately of any change in telephone numbers to enable us to contact a parent or guardian in the event of sickness or accident. In the event of both parents

being out of the country an alternative contact number **must** be left with the Health Office and with the Registrar.

- **Sickness at home:** A sick child cannot learn effectively and is unable to participate in classes in a meaningful way. Keeping a sick child home prevents the spread of illness in the school community and allows your child the opportunity to rest and recover. If your child is sick and unable to attend school please inform DAA.
- **School Medical Examinations:** The Dubai Health Authority requires that students in selected grades undergo a school medical by our school physician. If you prefer, your private family physician may conduct your child's medical exam and then submit the report to the Health Office for your child's record.
- **Medications:** If your child is taking any regular medications during school hours, (long or short-term basis), kindly give these medications to the Health Office to be administered by our nursing staff to your child. Students are **not permitted** to keep medications with the **exception** of personal inhalers to prevent/treat asthma attacks and Epi-Pens for students with life-threatening allergies.

6.6 CAFETERIA SERVICES

Slices is the company that provides the food service program at DAA. All Middle School students are permitted to go to the cafeteria during lunchtime to purchase meals or bring a packed lunch from home. The cafeteria is closed to students at all other times.

Out of respect for the religious and cultural values of our host nation and in compliance with the UAE law, pork products are not allowed at any in-class or school-wide activities.

6.7 LOST AND FOUND SERVICES

Lost and found items are kept in the Middle School lost-and-found cupboards located around the school. Students are encouraged to check this frequently. Electronics, watches, jewelry, and glasses are usually kept with the Middle School secretary. Any unclaimed items are cleared from our cupboards every other week. We ask that students' personal items be labeled to ensure that if an item is misplaced it can be readily returned to the rightful owner. Items of value that have been found will be kept at security Gate 2 overnight. Use of CCTV footage to locate missing items violates DAA privacy expectations and school policy.

6.8 BUS TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Bus transportation to DAA is available through the GEMS schools bus service. Information about bus services is available from the STS services office on the DAA campus. Students must follow the bus rules outlined by STS. Student infractions and their consequences are at the discretion of the private bus company and/or school administrator, up to and including suspension or expulsion from the bus.

Reservations for bus services remain a contract between the family and that bus service provider, not DAA.

6.9 ACTIVITIES

In a school such as DAA, the faculty and staff attempt to provide students with many opportunities to develop their particular interests and abilities. This association with students who share the same interests allows for camaraderie that fosters an increased sense of purpose and a feeling of belonging outside of the classroom. Athletics, Student Ambassadors, Student Council, class organizations, and special interest clubs provide a hands-on opportunity for students to learn and participate in leadership skills. Student pride and school spirit promote good citizenship that carries over to future community involvement and citizen participation. Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of after-school activities.

DAA Middle School students must be present on the day of the event in order to participate in student activities. Students who are assigned an In School or Out of School Suspension due to a behavior infraction will not be allowed to participate in activities (practice or otherwise) for that day.

6.9.1 ACTIVITIES ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities may include considerations regarding whether a student is involved in academic dishonesty, violates the disciplinary code, is excessively absent from school or has significant academic concerns. The goal is to review each student's case and to make a decision based on input provided by the professional and personal counsel of the student's teacher and parents. The Principal will then make the decision for eligibility.

6.9.2 AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The school offers a wide range of activities outside school hours. These range from athletics to academics. The programs offered vary seasonally, as well as from year to year, depending on supply and demand. A few of the more specialized clubs require a fee, but many are provided within the school framework at no extra charge. The success of each activity depends very much on the enthusiasm and commitment of the students and their parents. Students are encouraged to attend at least one activity per term.

6.9.3 WEEK WITHOUT WALLS (WWW)



This innovative and immersive educational experience transcends traditional classroom boundaries, offering participants a unique opportunity to explore, discover, and connect with the world around them. Our Week Without Walls trips are provisionally planned for the week of June 8th, 2026 this academic year. However, dates will vary depending on the WWW experience.

During 'Week Without Walls,' students break free from the confines of traditional learning environments and venture into the real world. Through hands-on activities, interactive workshops, and engaging field trips, participants are encouraged to step out of their comfort zones, fostering self-discovery and a deeper understanding of themselves and the world.

This transformative week is designed to ignite curiosity and cultivate a sense of wonder. Whether exploring nature's beauty, engaging with local communities, or delving into cultural and historical landmarks, students gain invaluable insights that go beyond textbooks and lectures. By actively participating in experiences that blend education with adventure, they develop essential life skills such as communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and adaptability.

'Week Without Walls' promotes global awareness and empathy by exposing students to diverse perspectives, cultures, and ways of life. Through interactions with different communities and individuals, participants learn to appreciate the rich tapestry of humanity and become more socially conscious global citizens.

As technology continues to shape the world, the need for holistic education becomes ever more important. Our 'Week Without Walls' program aims to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, equipping students with a well-rounded skill set that empowers them to navigate an ever-changing landscape with confidence and enthusiasm.

There will be an additional cost for WWW. More information about WWW will be communicated throughout the year leading up to these trips.

6.9.4 MESAC - MIDDLE EAST SOUTH ASIAN CONFERENCE (MESAC)

Dubai American Academy is a member of MESAC. The MESAC philosophy is dedicated to coordinating a range of superior sporting and fine arts activities through inter-school collaboration. Currently, there are member schools in UAE, India, Oman, and Qatar. Participants in MESAC tournaments benefit in many ways apart from competing in their particular activity. Part of the experience is living with another family.

Students taking part in MESAC events, as with other extra-curricular activities, should realize that it is a commitment. The tournaments are scheduled a year in advance and once committed; students must follow through with a sometimes demanding training program. This is usually over an eight week period, with the possibility of traveling throughout the UAE for warm-up competitions on at least one or two weekends along the way. Experience has shown that MESAC events are very popular and enjoyable. The school has laid down eligibility criteria for students taking part in MESAC events as it is considered a privilege to be selected. Students are required to sign an Activity Code Card outlining the criteria for extracurricular involvement.

6.9.5 EMIRATES COASTAL CONFERENCE (ECC)

Dubai American Academy is a member of ECC. There are member schools in Dubai and Abu Dhabi committed to providing extra curricular sporting activities that run in line with the MESAC seasons and sports.

6.9.6 JUNIOR EMIRATES ATHLETIC CONFERENCE (JEAC)

Dubai American Academy is a member of the JEAC. There are several member schools in Dubai and Abu Dhabi committed to providing extra curricular sporting activities that promote the development of students from Grades 4 through 7.

6.9.7 STUDENT COUNCIL (STUCO)

The Middle School Student Council is dedicated to providing leadership opportunities for students, providing services to the school and community, and making the lives of students more enjoyable. The organization serves as a link between students and teachers, organizes social activities, and assists the greater school community in various events and activities throughout the year. Students from Grades 6-8 are eligible to serve on the Student Council. Students are elected by their peers to serve as class representatives or members of the executive council. Together with the staff and administration, the Student Council has created eligibility requirements for students wishing to serve in student government. It is considered a privilege to be selected, and students involved with the student government are leaders who demonstrate the qualities of exceptional and successful students. Failure to uphold these ideals can lead to dismissal from STUCO.

6.9.8 MIDDLE SCHOOL AMBASSADORS

The Middle School Ambassadors are a team of students who help to welcome new students into the Middle School while developing their own leadership skills. The nomination process to become an ambassador begins when teachers nominate students who show potential leadership skills and have shown a concern for others. Selected students from the nominations are invited to apply by filling out a short written application. Students are selected to join the Ambassador program based on teacher recommendations, the short answer application and interview process.

Throughout the year the Ambassadors lead other Middle School students in community building activities. They lead transition activities for the incoming Grade 6 classes as well as being buddied up with new students entering DAA throughout the year to help ensure they have a smooth transition into our school. The Ambassadors represent our student body at school events and address parents during some Middle School initiatives for parents. In addition to representing the Middle School, the Ambassadors participate in activities which explore aspects of leadership to help them develop their own leadership styles. Being a Middle School Ambassador is a great honor that we take seriously and a failure to uphold the ideals of this position can lead to dismissal from the program.



7.0 HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

7.1 SPOTS NEWSLETTER & GRADE LEVEL NEWSLETTERS

Communication between parents and school is a high priority at DAA. Parents will receive notices throughout the year about school events via email communications as well as biweekly updates to [SPOTS](#). Communication through SPOTS is done by the Principal and Executive Leadership Team.

On alternate weeks, a grade level newsletter will be sent home by our Dean of Students. The grade level newsletters enable parents to be regularly updated as to what is happening within the specific year group and classes. Our Communications Officer will also share information with families throughout the year.

7.2 BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHT (SEPTEMBER 10TH)

In September, a 'Back-to-School Night' is held to introduce parents to classroom expectations, a description of the year's curriculum, and other details describing the functioning of each class.

7.3 POWER SCHOOL

PowerSchool is DAA's electronic student management system where student information will be collected and stored. The parent portal will be a gateway into the system giving parents access to real-time information that may include attendance, grades, behavior reports and detailed assignment descriptions along with school bulletins. Teachers will be able to share information with parents and students, which will allow students to stay on top of their assignments, and ensure parents are engaged in their children's learning and progress.

7.4 HOME / SCHOOL COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

In order to make communications transparent, best-practice procedures are in place to ensure parent questions/concerns are addressed in the most effective way. If a parent has a question/concern regarding a particular class, the first point of contact is the relevant classroom teacher. If, after speaking with the teacher, the parent still has concerns or questions that have not been addressed, they should speak with the relevant Head of Department who has overarching responsibility for the teaching and learning in their subject. For general concerns we recommend parents schedule an appointment with the CREW teacher or their child's Head of Grade in the first instance. Serious or repeat concerns are directed to the Dean of Students or Assistant Principals who will then determine if further appointments are necessary by referral to either a Counselor, the Assistant Principal or Principal.

If you would like to discuss a specific issue it would be advisable to contact the Middle School secretary to schedule appointments with Counselors or any member of the Middle School leadership team to ensure availability.

8.0 PARENT SERVICES

8.1 CONFERENCES

There are two formal student-led parent/teacher conferences scheduled throughout the year which are used to report and discuss each child's academic, social, and emotional progress. Informal conferences, email, and telephone conferences are encouraged whenever teachers or parents have concerns. Members of the Middle School Leadership Team (Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean of Students) and counselors are always available for conferences. Parents may phone or email to schedule an appointment with any member of the middle school staff. We encourage regular communication between home and school. We suggest that parents first reach out to the person most directly involved with the issue, such as the teacher, CREW teacher, or Head of Grade. If needed, parents are also welcome to call or visit the Middle School Office to share suggestions or concerns.

8.2 LEGAL STATUS OF STUDENTS

All students attending DAA are required by the UAE Law and DAA Policy to live with their parent/s or legal guardian throughout the school year.

8.3 EXTENDED PARENT ABSENCES

DAA students should always have proper home supervision by a parent. If, due to an emergency, you will be out of town and your child will not be under your direct supervision, please inform the Middle School Office and let us know who will have guardianship responsibilities.

8.4 DUBAI AMERICAN ACADEMY PARENT ASSOCIATION (DAAPA)

DAAPA supports the development of a sense of unity among parents, faculty, administration, students, and staff by cooperating in different capacities to enrich the students' lives and guide parents toward a better understanding of the aims, policies, and philosophy of Dubai American Academy. The achievement of these aims relies upon the cooperation of every parent. All parents of students enrolled in Dubai American Academy are members of the Parent Association.

8.5 PARENTAL ENGAGEMENTS

Teachers welcome parental expertise on topics related to the curriculum. Parents willing to be guest speakers, or to share collections and artifacts, should inform the classroom teacher of their areas of interest. Parent presentations at assemblies are greatly appreciated. We have a series of WISE (Wellbeing, Inclusion, Safeguarding, Environment) talks throughout the year to share information with parents that will help them support their children.

8.6 WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

1. Parents should notify the Principal and Registrar's office and the student should notify his/her teachers as far in advance as possible (at least a two-week notification is needed) of the withdrawal date.
2. In the case of students in Grades 6-12 the Registrar will issue a withdrawal form. The form will be taken by the student to his/her teachers, library and returned to the Registrar. The Registrar will notify parents in the case of outstanding fees. The Principal is also notified of any outstanding fees. Transfer certificates will be handed to parents once all outstanding fees are settled.
3. Parents who wish to hand carry their children's records may do so. However, they should notify the school of their intentions to do this and ample time must be given to assemble records. Hand carrying of transcripts at the end of the year may be delayed due to grading of exams. In that case, transcripts and/or records will be sent to the new school or to the parents. Parents should leave their forwarding address and a stamped envelope at the earliest possible date. Records cannot be released until all outstanding fees are paid.



8.7 THE MIDDLE SCHOOL STAFF

The DAA faculty and administration serve the needs of the children and parents in all aspects of each child's education. This team, composed of the Superintendent, the Divisional Principal, Assistant Principal, the divisional Student Dean, Head of Inclusion, School Counselors, teachers, teaching assistants, and administrative personnel.

Administration Staff

Superintendent: Helen Pereira Raso
 Deputy Superintendent: Michael Gilmour
 Head of Teaching Learning & Innovation (K-12): Tammy Jochinke
 Principal of MS: Dr. Justin Reynolds
 Assistant Principal of MS: Sean Mc Garvey
 Assistant Principal of MS: Regan Moore
 MS Dean of Students: Tanya Boudakian

MS Counselor: Christina DeMers
 MS Counselor: Mark Gaffney
 MS Counselor: Mira Nasr
 MS Secretary: Yara Masri
 MS Attendance Secretary: Marianne Mañibo

Heads of Grade

Janauri Jones (Grade 6)
 Matt Lunn (Grade 7)
 Amanda Browne (Grade 8)

Kim Murray (Grade 6)
 Doneshia Gordon (Grade 7)
 Sinead Niland (Grade 8)

English Department

Tamzin Partridge (HOD)
 Manahil Ghani
 Jasmin De La Cerda
 Sarah Kelly
 Gemma O'Hara
 Conor Cahill
 Amanda Browne
 Sinead Niland
 Kristian Dior Almazan (EA)

Social Studies Department

Landon Moore (HOD)
 Dorothy Doohan
 Daniel Nicolson
 Juliana Martin
 Conor Cahill
 Maurice Ussher
 Leanna Sayar
 Janine Manalang (EA)

Math Department

Alejandra Velasquez (HOD)
 Doneshia Gordon

Science Department

Nadean Khedr (HOD)
 Paul Debnam
 Laura Garcia

Mary Batui
Arathi Talreja
Samarah Qadir
Janauri Jones
Clarence Jeanny
Muhammad Zeeshan (EA)

Foreign Language Department

Diala Kanawati (French / HOD)
Cyril Durafour (French)
Milagros Cursi (Spanish)
Samirah Banna (Spanish)
Maria Mejia (Spanish)

Islamic Education

Nermin Khalil (HOD Islamic)
Fatima Massad (Islamic Native)

ELL

Lisa Gavigan
Milagros Cursi
Jasmin De La Cerda

The Arts

Melinda Eversteyn (HOD - Art)
Zain Al Madi (Art)
Leela Young (Art)
Mandy Hollingshead (Music)
Joseph Brinkman (Mixed Media)
Ruby Ambrocio (EA Art)
Ulysses Cortez (Innovation Activator)
Riandi Weyers (Drama)

PE Department

Matt Stephens (HOD)
Scott McDougall
Kim Murray
Max Bissell
Alen Kalodjera
Caitlin O'Brien
Matt Lunn

Noha Ibrahim
Clarence Jeanny
Racha Shahine
David Dominguez
Komal Knogiya (EA)
Seema Madhu (Lab technician)

Arabic

Mohsen Abdelhamid (Arabic Native / HOD)
Mohamed Imbaby (Arabic Native)
Miasa Al Najjar (Arabic Non-native)
Ghada Hemdan (Arabic Non-native)
Inas Wagih (Arabic Non-native)
Louai Hassan (Arabic Non-native)
Omnia Kamel (Arabic Non-native)

Inclusion Team

Stephanie Stokes (HOD)
Ashley Ahrens
Elisa Stephens
Ghada Mokhtar
Naome Nkire (EA)
Jill Soquino (EA)

Library

Michelle Ward (Literacy Activator)
Sumita Sunar (EA)