

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Introduced	September 2024
Next review	September 2025

DEFINITION:

The term Health and Safety refers to the requirement for the school to ensure that students and staff, contractors, subcontractors, relevant stakeholders, and visitors are kept safe and healthy in school and school-related activities.

PURPOSE:

To safeguard all students and staff, by detailing the school's health and safety policy and procedures, based on good and up-to-date practices, and setting high standards for health, safety, and environment to ensure that students and staff are not exposed to any danger or disease.

- To lay out how the school shall meet the council's clearly defined conditions regarding how the school shall meet the health, safety, and environmental requirements of the Council and all relevant government entities.
- To build a culture where everyone in the school's operations and activities accepts responsibility and accountability for protecting the environment and the health and safety of all individuals and the community.
- To ensure that the school provides access to high-quality school health services for all students through a school-based clinic, without any additional cost to students, while complying with all regulations and mandatory requirements set out by the Council and HAAD.

AIMS:

Grace Valley Indian School intends to provide a healthy and safe environment for learning and working, for the whole school community including students, employees, parents, and all other people who come onto the premises.

To ensure that all school community members understand and are aware of their responsibilities in maintaining a healthy and safe environment.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the school community work towards the policy aims by

- Fully familiarizing themselves with the school's Health and Safety Policy and their responsibilities.
- Being familiar with and adhering to instructions and guidance of safety within the school.
- Using common sense at all times and taking responsible care for their safety and that of others.
- Reporting unidentified potential hazards without delay.
- Ensuring that access and egress routes are clear, emergency equipment is not tampered with and that clear signage exists giving instructions in the event of an evacuation.
- Taking an active role in promoting a positive Health and Safety culture throughout the school.
- Being vigilant and good role models

POLICY:

1.1 School Health and Safety policy:

Grace Valley Indian School developed and implemented a Health and Safety Policy that is aligned with ADEK's regulations and requirements.

The school also ensured the Health and Safety Policy is also available on the school website. This policy shall set out the following:

- The Principal and the Governing Board are primarily responsible for ensuring the health and safety of all school operations and related activities, both on and off-campus, overseeing the implementation and continuous review of health and safety measures, ensuring compliance with relevant regulations, and fostering a culture of safety throughout the school.
- The school ensures that all staff members understand and accept principles enshrined in the staff code of conduct and uphold ethical and professional behavior in their work and at all times.
- The school distributes an undertaking to all employees of a professional code of conduct which includes all mandatory principles
- All Employees are accountable to the Government of Abu Dhabi and the community at large for the effective education of students and the efficient use of school resources entrusted to the delivery of education.

- The school provides training to staff in first aid and fire safety based on the school's risk assessment and as per Abu Dhabi and UAE regulations.
- Schools shall educate all students on health and safety, including teaching road safety, fire safety, using PPE, emergency evacuation procedures, basic first aid training, and personal physical awareness.
- The school has developed proper procedures for preventing injury and ill health.
- School provides induction in risk assessments, maintenance of the risk register, implementation of control measures, and monitoring and review of systems.

1.2 Regulatory compliance:

1. Grace Valley Indian School meets all regulatory requirements and maintains valid contracts to conduct the school's daily operations from ADEK, ADPHC/DOH, Department of Municipalities Transport (DMT), Integrated Transport Centre (ITC), Monitoring & Control Centre (MCC) and/or any other relevant government or regulatory entity regulating areas related to health and safety. This includes:
 - a. Submission of Periodic Reports: Regular submission of periodic reports, audits, and action plans to the relevant authorities.
 - b. Incident Reporting: Submission of relevant forms, including incident reports and management systems, promptly.
 - c. Compliance with Deadlines: Adherence to the timeframes set by regulatory authorities for all required submissions.
 - d. Policy Accessibility: Displaying the Health and Safety Policy in prominent locations throughout the school and ensuring it is readily accessible to all stakeholders, including staff, students, and visitors.
2. Licensing and Permits:

The school meets all requirements for obtaining the necessary licenses and permits to conduct its operations. This includes maintaining valid contracts and compliance with regulations set by ADEK, ADPHC/DoH, Department of Municipalities and Transport (DMT), Integrated Transport Centre (ITC), Monitoring & Control Center (MCC), CDA, and any other relevant government or regulatory entities related to health and safety.

3. Maintenance of Inspection Records:

The school maintains inspection records, observations, and notifications provided by relevant authorities. These records will be kept by the ADEK Records Policy, ensuring that all applicable compliance requirements are met.

4. The school also developed a technology policy in line with ADEK Digital policy to ensure the safe and secure use of technology by students and staff across the school.

5. School Transportation and Traffic Management:

The school adheres to appropriate school transportation and traffic management practices in line with the ADEK Transportation Policy. At a minimum

- a. Traffic Management Plan: Develop, maintain, and update a traffic management plan that details the internal and external traffic flow, ensuring the safety of the school community, particularly during peak hours (drop-off and pick-up times).
- b. Task Force Deployment: Deploy a trained task force composed of sufficient numbers of current staff to manage traffic flow during pick-up and drop-off times, effectively overseeing daily traffic operations on or near school grounds.
- c. Bus Inspection Records: Maintain detailed school bus inspection records and ensure that relevant licenses for school buses, bus drivers, and bus supervisors are acquired and up to date.
- d. Emergency and Communication Plan: Develop and maintain an updated transport emergency and communication plan, ensuring it is appropriately communicated to all stakeholders.

1.3 Health and Safety Officer Recruitment and Resources Policy

1. Mandatory Appointment of a Health and Safety Officer:

The school has appointed a dedicated Health and Safety Officer to effectively implement, oversee, manage, and monitor the school's Health and Safety Policy.

a. Dedicated Full-Time Role: The Health and Safety Officer position is a full-time role. They may be assigned other relevant roles, such as facilities manager, provided that health and safety remain their primary responsibility. A deputy may be appointed by the members of the Health and Safety Committee to cover shorter leave periods.

b. On-Site Presence: The Health and Safety Officer is required to remain on the school premises at all times during the school day.

ADPHC/DoH and other relevant authorities, based on the school's risk classification.

b. Leadership Structure: Establish a clearly defined leadership structure for health and safety matters within the school, including delegation mechanisms and coordination with external stakeholder requirements.

c. Staff Training: Ensure that relevant staff receive appropriate training, including handover and induction training for new employees and contractors, to maintain a high standard of health and safety.

d. Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment: Conduct hazard identification, and risk assessments, and implement control measures to mitigate risks in critical areas such as school bus services, parent pick-up and drop-off, and traffic flow management.

e. Emergency Response and Occupational Injuries: Develop, maintain, and periodically update an Emergency Response Plan and an Occupational Injuries Register to ensure preparedness and proper documentation of incidents.

f. School Health and Safety Committee: Establish a School Health and Safety Committee to address all related matters and ensure continuous improvement in health and safety practices.

g. Incident Reporting and Record Keeping: Maintain records of incident investigations as part of an incident register, and report incidents promptly through the ADEK and ADPHC electronic OSH reporting systems.

h. Safeguarding Collaboration: Collaborate with the school's Safeguarding Committee or Lead, in line with the ADEK Safeguarding Policy, to ensure sufficient supervision and monitoring of students, with full visual coverage, to prevent and respond to incidents effectively.

4. Compliance with Risk Classification Requirements:

For detailed responsibilities and requirements based on the school's risk classification, the Health and Safety Officer shall refer to the OSHAD-SF and its latest system framework updates.

5. Resource Allocation:

The school allocates adequate resources, including financial resources and necessary infrastructure, to effectively implement this policy and ensure the ongoing health and safety of the school community.

2. Education and Training:

2.1 Student Education: Grace Valley Indian School educates all students on health and safety, including teaching road safety, risk management, fire safety, , using personal protection equipment, emergency and evacuation procedures, basic first aid training, and personal physical awareness.

The school conducts a minimum of four mock emergency evacuations in a year to ensure that students, staff, and faculty know how to respond quickly and safely in case of an actual emergency, such as a fire, earthquake, or other hazardous situations.

2.2 Staff Training: The school also provides induction and training to all staff to equip them with foundational knowledge including reporting hazardous and health and safety-related incidents, first aid, firefighting, and practical skills to safeguard student health and safety, in line with the ADPHC/DOH and OSHAD-SF guidelines.

3. Health and Safety Requirements

1. Secure Storage and Safe Use of Hazardous Materials:

Our school has a clear procedure for the secure storage and safe use of hazardous substances like laboratory chemicals and cleaning substances as per ADEK, OSH, and DOH requirements

2. Equipment Maintenance and Testing:

All equipment used by the school is regularly tested and maintained to ensure it remains in safe working condition, following both regulatory requirements and manufacturer recommendations.

3. Regular Safety Assessments:

The school conducts regular safety assessments, including fire safety systems/equipment, emergency evacuation plans, emergency lighting, and emergency response equipment, as required by ADEK, ADPHC/DoH, and all other relevant authorities.

4. Site Security and Surveillance:

The school site is equipped with fully functioning and effective security systems to prevent and detect crime, vandalism, unlawful behavior, and inappropriate conduct. Surveillance provisions shall be in place per the ADEK Digital Policy and the Manual of Surveillance Devices (MCC, 2022).

5. Fire Prevention and Detection Systems:

The school equips its premises with integrated and effective fixed and portable fire prevention and detection systems, including fire detection systems, fire suppression systems, and fire sprinkler systems, ensuring full compliance with the specifications set by the CDA. Necessary licenses for such systems shall be obtained and maintained.

6. School Bag Weight Limits:

The school adheres to maximum weight limits for students' school bags and ensures that this policy is communicated to parents. The weight of a student's school bag shall not exceed 5-10% of the child's body weight when packed, considering individual factors such as the student's overall health, physical strength, and any existing health conditions. Specific weight limits per grade are as follows:

Table 1. Maximum Backpack Weight Limit per Grade

Grade/Year	Max. Backpack Weight*
KG1 / FS2	Not exceed 2 kgs
KG2 / Year 1	
Gr 1 / Year 2	
Gr 2 / Year 3	
Gr 3 / Year 4	Not exceed 3 to 4.5 kgs
Gr4/ Year 5	
Gr 5 / Year 6	
Gr 6 / Year 7	Not exceed 6 to 8 kgs
Gr 7 / Year 8	
Gr 8 / Year 9	
Gr 9 / Year 10	Not exceed 10 kgs
Gr 10 / Year 11	
Gr 11 / Year 12	
Gr 12 / Year 13	

*Maximum school bag weight was calculated based on the American Chiropractic Association (ACA) recommendations.

7. Smoke-Free Campus:

The school maintains a smoke-free environment within the school premises and the perimeter outside the school premises, enforcing a strict no-smoking policy (including e-cigarettes and vaping) for all students, staff, and visitors, in line with ADPHC/DoH regulations.

8. Fire Protection Systems:

The school has equipped its premises with integrated and effective fire protection and detection systems, both fixed and mobile. These systems must comply with CDA specifications, and the school must maintain valid licenses for these systems. Inspection records and notifications related to these systems shall be kept in line with the ADEK Records Policy. If directed by the CDA or relevant authorities, the school shall install the HASSANTUK system to ensure a timely response to fire and life safety emergencies.

9. Emergency Planning:

The school shall prioritize student safety in emergencies. The principal is responsible for developing a School Emergency Plan that outlines the circumstances defining an emergency and the safeguarding and evacuation procedures to be followed. The school shall conduct emergency drills at least annually (or as required by civil defence) to maintain preparedness and identify potential weaknesses or gaps. Observations from these drills shall be documented and logged. The school shall also have a notification system in place to quickly communicate information to parents in the event of an emergency, using methods such as text messages, public address systems, or mobile apps.

10. Mental Health Support in Emergencies:

The school will provide mental health support to students and staff following any serious whole-school emergencies, in line with the ADEK Student Mental Health Policy and the ADEK Staff Wellbeing Policy.

Health System

Provision of Medical Services:

- The school provided a clinic for regular and emergency medical services within the school buildings.
- It is equipped with qualified and licensed School nurse, as well as the resources and equipment needed to work full time during School working hours, and in full compliance with the requirements and standards of HAAD.
- The school has a valid license and maintains all the necessary inspection records as required.
- The school also uses the AL ADAA system to report the incidents if any
- Inclusion: our school provides in school specialist services for students with additional learning needs where appropriate, in line with the ADEK Inclusion Policy.
- Health Screening: The school conduct regular health screening program to the targeted group as per the guidelines of DOH.
- Immunization: School also allows access to DOH-appointed health providers and facilitate their task of conducting the school-based immunization program for students as per DoH's guidelines.

Student Records: The School is fully responsible to ensure that all medical care provided at school including health screening, immunization, and the outcomes of any medical interventions are recorded with confidentiality in line with the *ADEK Records Policy*.