

School Values and Ethics Policy

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Version 1.0

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1. Overview

This policy sets out the values and ethical standards that guide governance, leadership, decision-making, and daily practice at MRC-NECC. It is grounded in the fundamental values of education and the cultural values and ethics of the United Arab Emirates, and aims to safeguard individual rights while promoting positive, respectful, inclusive, and ethical learning environments.

The policy establishes clear expectations for ethical conduct, integrity, and professionalism among school leaders, staff, students, and the wider school community, ensuring that all decisions, actions, and practices align with ADEK's core values and demonstrate respect for UAE national identity and cultural values.

2. Purpose

- Define the core educational values and ethical principles the Center is required to uphold, in alignment with UAE and Abu Dhabi laws and regulations and ADEK policies.
- Ensure that the Center integrates and promotes these values consistently across all activities, decisions, and interactions within the school community.
- Reinforce respect for UAE national identity, cultural values, and traditions in educational practice.
- Establish expectations for ethical leadership, integrity, accountability, and professional conduct at all levels of the school.
- Promote awareness, compassion, cultural diversity, trust, mutual respect, and tolerance within the school community, in line with the UAE's National Program for Tolerance.

3. Objective

- Embed ADEK's core values into school governance, leadership, teaching, learning, and daily operations.
- Foster inclusive, respectful, and ethically responsible school environments that safeguard the rights and dignity of all individuals.
- Ensure that school leaders and staff model ethical behavior and demonstrate integrity, transparency, and fairness in all professional roles.
- Support ethical decision-making and establish mechanisms to prevent, identify, and address unethical behavior within the school community.
- Strengthen awareness and appreciation of UAE national identity and cultural values through whole school practices and initiatives.
- Encourage a positive school culture that values diversity, inclusion, tolerance, and mutual respect.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the school community, including:

- School owners, governing boards, and school operators
- School leadership and administrative staff
- Teaching and support staff
- Students
- Parents and guardians
- Volunteers, interns, contractors, and visitors engaged in school-related activities.

The policy applies to all school activities, whether academic, extracurricular, administrative, or community-based, and covers conduct, decision-making, communication, leadership practices, and interactions both on and off school premises where these relate to the school environment.

5. Glossary

MRC-NECC	Mohammed bin Rashid Center for Special Education Operated by The New England Center for Children in Abu Dhabi
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is a specialized agency established to build peace through international cooperation in education, science, culture, and communication, fostering dialogue and preserving shared heritage.
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder

6 Applicable Laws and Regulations

- ADEK School Values and Ethics Policy, version 1.1 September 2024.
- ADEK Policies, as applicable, School Professional Code of Ethics Policy, Cultural Consideration.
- Policy Federal Decree Law No. (18) of 2020 on Private Education.
- Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties
- Federal Decree Law No. (33) of 2023 Concerning Combating Cheating and Violation of Examination Systems.
- Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education (MoE, 2022).
- UAE National Program for Tolerance.
- UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001).

7 Responsibilities

7.1 Governing Board, School Owners & Operators:

Hold ultimate accountability for embedding values and ethical standards across the school. They are responsible for:

- Ensuring ADEK's core values and ethical principles are integrated into governance, strategy, policies, and decision-making.
- Providing effective oversight to ensure the school operates in compliance with UAE laws, ADEK regulations, and ethical standards.
- Supporting ethical leadership and ensuring that conflicts of interest are identified, declared, and managed appropriately.
- Establishing mechanisms to hold individuals accountable for breaches of values or unethical behavior.
- Supporting initiatives that promote UAE national identity, cultural values, tolerance, and inclusion within the school community.

7.2 School Leadership:

The Executive Director and the Senior Leadership team are responsible for modeling and enforcing ethical leadership throughout the school. They shall:

- Demonstrate ethical leadership in all decisions, actions, and professional conduct.
- Integrate ADEK's core values into daily school operations, teaching practices, and community engagement.
- Ensure recruitment, appointment, promotion, and evaluation of staff are conducted fairly, transparently, and objectively, without bias or favoritism.
- Promote a positive, inclusive, and respectful school culture that safeguards the rights and dignity of all individuals.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training on ethical conduct, professional behavior, and values-based practice.
- Establish systems to prevent, identify, report, and address unethical behavior, including clear disciplinary procedures.
- Ensure compliance with UAE laws, ADEK policies, and cultural considerations at all times.

7.3 Teaching and Support Staff:

All staff members are expected to uphold the highest ethical and professional standards. Their responsibilities include:

- Demonstrating integrity, honesty, respect, fairness, and accountability in all interactions with students, colleagues, parents, and the wider community.
- Acting in alignment with ADEK's core values, the School Professional Code of Ethics, and UAE cultural values.
- Treating all students equitably, promoting inclusion, and respecting diversity and individual differences.
- Avoiding conflicts of interest and declaring any potential conflicts in accordance with school procedures.

- Refraining from unethical behavior, including discrimination, harassment, favoritism, dishonesty, or abuse of authority.
- Reporting concerns, unethical conduct, or potential violations through designated school channels.
- Contributing to a safe, respectful, and values-driven learning environment.

7.4 Parents and Guardians:

Parents and guardians play a key role in reinforcing values and ethical behavior. They are responsible for:

- Supporting the school in promoting ADEK's core values and ethical standards.
- Engaging respectfully and constructively with the school community.
- Reinforcing positive behavior, respect, and integrity at home.
- Communicating with the school in a manner consistent with professionalism, respect, and cultural sensitivity.
- Collaborating with the school to address concerns related to student behavior and wellbeing.

7.5 Wider School Community:

Volunteers, contractors, outsourced staff, interns, and all individuals engaged with the school are expected to uphold its values. They must:

- Respect the school's policies, values, and UAE cultural norms.
- Conduct themselves in a manner that supports a safe, respectful, and ethical environment.
- Refrain from any behavior that undermines the dignity, safety, or wellbeing of students or staff.
- Comply with relevant school procedures while on school premises or engaged in school activities.

7.6 Whistleblowing and Reporting Responsibilities:

All members of the school community have a shared responsibility to:

- Report illegal, unethical, or inappropriate behavior through approved reporting channels.
- Cooperate with investigations conducted in line with school procedures.
- Respect confidentiality and protect individuals from retaliation in whistleblowing cases.
- The school must ensure safe, confidential, and anonymous reporting mechanisms are in place.

8 Values and Value Framework

8.1 Core Values:

MRC-NECC shall integrate the core values of education in all its activities and shall actively promote these values within the school community.

- The Center shall integrate the core values in all decision-making, planning, development, teaching, policymaking, and administration, and thereby foster inclusive school community and safeguard the rights of all individuals.
- MRC-NECC shall promote the importance of the core values to all members of the school community by:
 - Actively raising awareness and engagement through events (e.g., values days) and communications (e.g., posters, newsletters).
 - Imparting the different aspects of the core values (e.g., traditions, heritage, citizenship, conservation, volunteering) through the school curriculum (where appropriate).
 - Having a mechanism in place to ensure that individuals (i.e., members of staff) are held accountable if they fail to abide by the core values.

9 UAE National Identity and Cultural Values

9.1 Celebrating and Honoring UAE National Identity and Cultural Values:

To promote the UAE national identity and cultural values, MRC-NECC shall ensure the following at a minimum:

- **Whole-School Integration:**
Continuously promote, celebrate, and integrate UAE national identity and cultural values in all aspects of school life (e.g., curriculum, community awareness, visitor experience), in line with the ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy.
- **Public Holidays and National Celebrations:**
Official UAE public holidays and national celebrations are observed in line with ADEK's circulars and policies. (i.e. the Center shall not schedule a working school day on public holidays without prior approval from ADEK).
- **Flags and Portraits:**
The UAE flag is raised and flown as the only flag on the Center's premises, and both the display of the UAE flag and official portraits comply with the ADEK School Buildings and Facilities Policy and the UAE Flag and Official Portraits Guidelines.
- **Assembly and Anthem:**
 - A Daily morning assembly is organized, as appropriate to the student population, in which all students are required to attend and sing the UAE national anthem;
 - MRC-NECC shall convey to staff, students (as appropriate), and visitors the importance of showing respect for the national anthem and the appropriate conduct to practice while it is being sung.
 - A respectful and proper conduct shall be ensured by the Executive Director and their delegate(s).

- **UAE National Identity Committee:** MRC NECC shall promote and support UAE National identity and cultural values through its Parent Teachers Association (PTA). The PTA shall include at least 3 UAE National parents, in addition to a designated MRC-NECC staff representative, to ensure collaborative engagement in initiatives aligned with ADEK requirements.
- **Initiatives:** MRC-NECC shall partake in all government-endorsed initiatives relating to the promotion of UAE national identity and cultural values, in line with the ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy.

9.2 Adhering to UAE Laws: MRC-NECC shall ensure that members of the school community understand, respect, and adhere to the requirements identified in this policy, and all other legislation in the UAE.

10 Ethical Leadership and Culture

10.1 Ethical Leadership:

The Center shall demonstrate a clear commitment to ethical leadership by ensuring that school leaders:

- Adhere to the principles of ethical leadership in all their decision-making processes, actions, and behavior and the Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education (MoE, 2022) in all school activities and procedures.
- Encourage the participation of the wider school community in the process of discussing ideas and making decisions, in line with the approved curriculum.
- Ensure that there is no conflict of interest between their personal, financial, social, or other interests that affect their professional duty to deliver high-quality education in line with this policy.
- Ensure the provision of training to staff on ethical behavior.

10.2 Appointment of Staff:

The recruitment, selection, appointment, and promotion processes shall be conducted fairly, transparently, and objectively, minimizing bias and personal preference.

10.3 Ethical Behavior:

- All staff members and other relevant stakeholders shall uphold the highest standards of ethical behavior at all times. The Center shall establish and maintain systems and procedures to prevent, identify, and address unethical behavior.
- Unethical behavior includes any behavior or action that breaches MRC-NECC's core values, the Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education,

(MoE, 2022), the ADEK School Professional Code of Ethics Policy, and the ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy. This includes but is not limited to, oppression, discrimination, racism, prejudice, favoritism, dishonesty, bullying, and any type of harassment.

- MRC-NECC shall refrain from using ADEK's name to communicate difficult or negative information or decisions to members of the community/staff, unless explicitly stated (e.g., circulars will explicitly state that schools are authorized to communicate school closure due to rain; however, revealing non-approvals for school specific requests made to ADEK is not authorized)
- The Center shall refrain from referring members of the school community to ADEK to seek unauthorized exemptions or to mobilize staff or parents to lobby ADEK to reverse a decision issued to the school (e.g., sending parents to seek exemptions for seats despite the school having full capacity, sending parents to contest an inspection rating).
- The Center shall maintain clear mechanisms and procedures to identify, report, investigate, and respond to instances of unethical behavior, in line with ADEK requirements and applicable laws
- Where a staff member is found to have engaged in unethical behavior, the Center shall act in accordance with the ADEK School Professional Code of Ethics Policy and the Center's internal disciplinary procedures
- Any report of potential violations of the ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy will be investigated and will lead to a determination of non-compliance and may lead to corresponding sanctions
- The Center shall integrate ethical self-evaluation process with the performance evaluation for school leaders and staff.

10.4 Whistleblowing:

In line with Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 and its amendments, and ADEK's Safeguarding Policy, the MRC-NECC has established and maintains a Whistleblowing Policy which provides safe, confidential, and anonymous reporting channels. The policy ensures the protection of individuals from retaliation, discrimination, or stigmatization and supports the reporting and redress of suspected illegal or unethical practices.

10.5 Positive Education Environment:

MRC-NECC shall foster a positive school environment that reflects the core values by:

- Promoting creativity, positivity, and teamwork, including through the involvement of parents and the local community wherever possible and appropriate, in line with the ADEK School Parent Engagement Policy.
- Demonstrating staff wide commitment to fairness, respect and trust.
- Establishment of a clear expectation that staff and students (as appropriate per student ability) embrace diversity, encourage inclusive education, and respect UAE national identity and cultural values.
- The provision of the school's policies and documents in both English and Arabic, to facilitate engagement with the parent community.

11 Policy Compliance & Review

- Adherence to this policy is mandatory.
- Non-Compliance with this policy shall be may result in corrective action in accordance with ADEK regulations and applicable UAE laws.
- The policy will be reviewed and updated annually or as necessary within shorter intervals to ensure continued compliance with UAE regulations.

12 Final Approval

This policy is approved by the Management and is effective as of **16 February 2026**.

End of Policy