



Student Behavior policy

Introduction

At **Merryland International**, we are committed to maintaining a positive, inclusive, and safe learning environment where all students feel respected, valued, and empowered to succeed. We recognize our responsibility to actively create a school culture that fosters academic excellence, emotional wellbeing, and responsible citizenship.

By clearly defining behavioral expectations and addressing concerns proactively and constructively, Merryland International cultivates an atmosphere where all members of the school community feel secure and inspired. These efforts are rooted in the cultural values of the United Arab Emirates and reflect our commitment to nurturing globally-minded, ethical, and compassionate individuals.

This policy outlines the school's fully implemented approach to student behavior management. It defines the Student Code of Conduct, describes our systems for promoting and reinforcing positive behavior, and details our responses to misconduct using supportive and staged interventions.

Purpose

At **Merryland International**, this policy serves to:

- **Encourage Positive Behavior:** Implement well-established, proactive strategies to promote kindness, integrity, and responsibility among all students, including regular recognition programs, SEL lessons, and value-based assemblies.
- **Clarify Behavioral Expectations:** Maintain and enforce a clearly communicated Student Code of Conduct, developed in alignment with ADEK's unified behavioral standards, and introduced to students and families through orientation, student handbooks, and classroom agreements.
- **Prevent Bullying:** Enforce a comprehensive Anti-Bullying Policy across all school levels, including prevention campaigns, peer-led initiatives, reporting tools, and swift interventions to ensure a safe and supportive environment.
- **Support Students with Behavioral Needs:** Provide structured interventions such as counseling support, behavior improvement plans, and individualized mentoring for students facing difficulties in meeting behavioral expectations.
- **Apply a Staged Response to Misconduct:** Follow a transparent, consistent, and tiered approach to managing inappropriate behavior, ensuring that all responses are appropriate, restorative, and aligned with ADEK requirements.



1. Policy Overview and Requirement

Merryland International School is committed to ensuring that all students learn and thrive in a safe, respectful, and supportive environment. In line with the ADEK Student Behavior Policy (2021/22), this policy outlines our commitment to promoting student wellbeing, managing student behavior positively, and fostering a culture of respect, inclusion, and academic excellence.

This policy is aligned with:

- The ADEK Private School Policy and Guidance Manual (2021/22 Edition);
- The National Policy for the Prevention of Bullying in Schools;
- The Wellbeing Framework for Private Schools in Abu Dhabi.

The policy is reviewed annually, updated in consultation with stakeholders, and shared with parents and guardians through communication channels including our school website and orientation sessions.

2. Positive Behavior Model

At Merryland International School, we believe that fostering positive student behavior is essential for academic success and personal growth. Our behavior model includes the following components:

School Values We embed the following values in all aspects of our school life:

- Respect for UAE identity, Islamic values, and cultural diversity;
- Inclusivity and equal opportunity for all students;
- Safety and wellbeing for every member of the school community;
- Academic integrity and responsibility;
- Environmental stewardship and digital responsibility.

Promoting and Reinforcing Good Behavior

- Positive reinforcement through rewards, praise, and recognition;
- Student of the Month awards, merit points, and certificates;
- Integration of moral education and character development into the curriculum;
- Opportunities for leadership and community engagement.

Training and Communication

- Regular training sessions for staff on behavior management and student wellbeing;
- Workshops for parents to promote consistent behavioral expectations at home and school;
- Student assemblies and classroom discussions to reinforce positive conduct.



Early Identification and Support

- Early intervention programs for students exhibiting behavioral challenges;
- Counseling services and peer mentorship initiatives;
- Collaboration with parents and external specialists where needed.

3. Student Code of Conduct

Students at Merryland International School are expected to uphold the highest standards of conduct. The Code of Conduct includes:

Expected Behaviors

- Attend school regularly and arrive on time;
- Engage actively in learning and participate in school activities;
- Demonstrate respect for all members of the school community;
- Maintain proper personal hygiene and wear the correct school uniform;
- Respect diversity and treat others with kindness;
- Avoid any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or harmful behavior.

Out-of-School Expectations

- Represent the school positively while wearing the school uniform in public;
- Maintain respectful behavior during school-related transport and events;
- Avoid using the school's name in any inappropriate manner, including on social media.

4. Misconduct Policy and Procedures

Merryland International School categorizes student misconduct into four levels, each with defined consequences and interventions.

Level 1 Misconduct – Minor behavioral infractions such as:

- Lateness, dress code violations, disrupting class. *Interventions: verbal warnings, parent communication, behavior reflection tasks.*

Level 2 Misconduct – Repeated or moderately serious behavior, such as:

- Disrespectful language, use of mobile phones in class, leaving class without permission. *Interventions: behavior contracts, in-school community service, referral to behavior counselor.*



Level 3 Misconduct – Serious or dangerous behaviors, including:

- Vandalism, physical aggression, bullying, possession of prohibited materials. *Actions: suspension, parent meetings, external referrals.*

Level 4 Misconduct – Extremely serious and/or criminal behavior:

- Assault, substance abuse, possession of weapons, threats to safety. *Actions: immediate suspension, referral to ADEK and relevant authorities, possible expulsion.*

4.1 Procedural Requirements Before applying disciplinary measures:

- Investigate and document the incident;
- Identify and address the root cause of the behavior;
- Allow students to reflect and be heard;
- Apply consequences in a fair and consistent manner.

Prohibited Disciplinary Actions

- Corporal punishment;
- Public humiliation;
- Academic penalties unrelated to academic performance.

4.2 Support and Interventions

Merryland International School prioritizes restorative and preventive practices to support students in making better behavioral choices.

Support Structures Include:

- A trained school counselor available for all students;
- Individualized behavior support plans;
- Peer support and conflict resolution programs;
- Partnerships with parents and behavior specialists.

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Level of Misconduct	Occurrence			
	First Time	Second Time	Third Time	More than Three Times
Level 1	<p>Verbal Warning</p> <p>Discuss the expected change in behavior with the student.</p>	<p>Written Warning</p> <p>Notify the parent in writing about the student's misconduct.</p>	<p>Written Warning</p> <p>Notify the parent in writing and hold meeting(s) with them to agree on a reasonable joint home-and-school strategy.</p> <p>The parent is required to sign an undertaking to support the agreed strategy.</p>	<p>Written Warning</p> <p>Notify the parent in writing and summon the parent together with the Behavioral Management Committee to agree on how to implement a set of strategies aiming at reducing the negative behavior.</p>
Level 2	<p>Written Warning</p> <p>Instruct the student to sign an undertaking not to repeat the offense.</p> <p>Summon the parent, who is required to sign an agreement to support their child in reforming their behavior.</p>	<p>Onsite Suspension</p> <p>Temporarily suspend the student up to 2 days and assign the student supervised study assignments inside the school with a notification to the parent.</p> <p>Notify both the student and the parent of a second written warning.</p> <p>Notify the Behavioral Management Committee to agree to a set of strategies for</p>	<p>Onsite Suspension</p> <p>Temporarily suspend the student up to 3 days and assign the student supervised study assignments inside the school.</p> <p>Issue a final warning in writing to the student and the parent.</p> <p>Notify the Behavioral Management Committee to agree to a final set of actions for reforming the student's behavior.</p>	<p>Expulsion</p> <p>Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation for a maximum of 5 days, with a notification to the parent.</p> <p>The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions which may include expulsion.</p> <p>After following the prior steps, if the student continues to repeat the offense, the school is permitted to apply to ADEK to expel</p>

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		<p>reforming the student's behavior.</p> <p>The parent is required to sign an undertaking to support the agreed strategy.</p>	<p>The parent is required to sign an undertaking to support the agreed strategy.</p>	<p>the student. In making an application to ADEK, the school shall include evidence that all the prior stages have been followed, including proof of having provided sufficient support and counselling as per their behavior strategy.</p>
Level 3	<p>Onsite Suspension</p> <p>Immediately suspend the student inside the school.</p> <p>The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and determine disciplinary actions.</p> <p>The school shall summon the parent immediately to inform of the disciplinary action and the requirement to sign an undertaking to support the agreed strategy.</p>	<p>Offsite Suspension</p> <p>Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation for a maximum of 5 days with a notification to the parent.</p> <p>The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions.</p> <p>Provide the student and the parent with a final written warning.</p> <p>Summon the student and the parent to the school to present the Committee's decision.</p>	<p>Expulsion</p> <p>Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation for a maximum of 5 days with a notification to the parent.</p> <p>The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions which may include expulsion.</p> <p>After following the prior steps, if the student continues to repeat the offense, the school is permitted to apply to ADEK to expel the student. In making an application to ADEK, the school shall include evidence that all the prior stages have been followed, including proof of having provided sufficient counselling as per their behavior strategy.</p> <p>The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions which may include expulsion.</p> <p>After following the prior steps, if the student continues to repeat the offense, the school is permitted to apply to ADEK to expel the student. In making an application to ADEK, the school shall include evidence that all the prior stages have been followed, including proof of having provided sufficient support and counselling as per their behavior strategy.</p>	



Level 4	Offsite Suspension	Expulsion
	<p>Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation with a notification to the parent. The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of disciplinary actions and a corrective plan.</p>	<p>Immediately suspend the student offsite until the end of the investigation for a maximum of 5 days with a notification to the parent.</p> <p>The Behavioral Management Committee shall evaluate the evidence and agree on a set of final disciplinary actions which may include expulsion.</p> <p>After following the prior steps, if the student continues to repeat the offense, the school is permitted to apply to ADEK to expel the student. In making an application to ADEK, the school shall include evidence that all the prior stages have been followed, including proof of having provided sufficient counseling as per their behavior strategy.</p>

4.3 Monitoring and Support During Disciplinary Process

Merryland International School is committed to providing comprehensive and ongoing support to students throughout any disciplinary process. The school ensures that every student undergoing disciplinary action receives appropriate support, including counseling from school counselors, intervention from in-school specialists, and, when required, assistance from social workers. All interventions are aimed at promoting student reflection, growth, and behavioral improvement.

Cases of misconduct involving maltreatment, such as physical abuse, bullying, or sexual abuse, are handled with strict adherence to the procedures outlined in the "Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions" document (DAA Child Protection Committee, 2024).

4.4 Involvement of Law Enforcement

In instances where student misconduct constitutes a legal offense under current UAE law, Merryland International School will refer the matter to the appropriate law enforcement authorities in line with national guidelines.



4.5 Students with Additional Learning Needs

Merryland International School acknowledges the importance of ensuring fair and appropriate disciplinary practices for students with additional learning needs. The Head of Inclusion is consulted before any disciplinary measures are taken. The following provisions are in place:

a. The school takes into account any underlying special educational needs that may affect a student's ability to regulate behavior. b. Documented Learning Plans (DLPs) and/or Risk Assessments are developed for students whose behaviors stem from such needs, outlining appropriate management strategies. c. During supervised detention or suspension, students continue to receive academic guidance to support their learning progress.

4.6 Re-enrollment, Expulsion, and Behavioral History

In compliance with the ADEK School Student Administrative Affairs Policy, Merryland International School acknowledges the obligation to re-enroll all students. If a student is not re-enrolled following disciplinary action, this will be classified as expulsion, requiring prior approval from ADEK.

a. Receiving schools may not deny admission based on a student's behavioral history. b. Students have the right to seek advice and receive support during suspension or supervised detention. c. Misconduct by a parent will not be considered a basis for student disciplinary action.

4.7 Appeals Procedure

Merryland International School maintains a transparent appeals process for disciplinary decisions.

1. Timelines for Appeals:

- Parents may appeal a suspension within 1 working day.
- Parents may appeal an expulsion within 10 working days.

2. Modes of Appeal: Appeals can be submitted via email, telephone, or a face-to-face meeting.

3. Appeals Committee: A designated Appeals Committee, separate from the Behavior Management Committee, will review the appeal. This committee will exclude the Principal, Vice Principal, or any staff member with a potential conflict of interest.

4. Decision Timeline:

- For suspensions: a decision will be communicated within 2 working days.
- For expulsions: a decision will be communicated within 7 working days.

5. If the school does not respond to an appeal within 3 working days or if the parent disagrees with the final decision, a complaint may be filed with ADEK within 5 working days.

6. ADEK reserves the right to investigate any complaint related to suspensions or expulsions after the school has issued its final decision or failed to do so within the designated timeframe.



4.8 Positive Handling

Merryland International School authorizes the use of positive handling only as a last resort to ensure the safety of students and staff. Physical intervention may be used in the following situations:

- Preventing students from leaving the premises when it poses a risk to their or others' safety.
- Preventing self-injury or harm to others.
- Preventing damage to school property.

All staff must consider alternative methods before using physical restraint. Interventions should be:

- Reasonable, proportionate, and necessary.
- Implemented with minimal force.
- Carried out with attention to the student's individual vulnerabilities (e.g., disability, health conditions).
- Witnessed by another staff member where possible.
- Ended as soon as the student is no longer a danger.

Use of force as a form of punishment is strictly prohibited in line with ADEK's Student Protection Policy.

4.9 Records and Documentation

Merryland International School maintains confidential and detailed records of all incidents of misconduct and related disciplinary actions, including:

- Root cause analysis
- Stakeholder meeting notes
- Intervention strategies
- Student progress tracking
- Communications (e.g., warnings, appeal correspondence)
- Level 1 misconduct is recorded at the classroom level by the teacher unless recurrent or requiring escalation.
- Levels 2, 3, and 4 are recorded at the school administration level and reported to ADEK.

All information is treated as strictly confidential by school staff, ADEK, and any external support providers.

4.10 Approval for Expulsion

Merryland International School must obtain approval from ADEK for any expulsion. To request approval, the school must demonstrate compliance with internal disciplinary procedures and ensure alignment with the ADEK policy.



At the end of each academic year, a report is submitted to ADEK including:

- Students at risk of expulsion
- Complete behavioral records
- All interventions taken to prevent expulsion

5. Bullying Prevention

Merryland International School enforces a Bullying Prevention Policy that aligns with Ministerial Resolution No. (645) of 2020 and the ADEK Student Protection Policy. This policy includes:

1. Education of staff and students on identifying bullying.
2. Implementation of an anti-bullying program.
3. Clear guidance for students on how to act as a victim, perpetrator, or witness.
4. Procedures for staff to respond to bullying.
5. Provision of support for both victims and perpetrators.
6. Clear disciplinary responses to bullying incidents.

5.2 Monitoring

The school monitors all cases of bullying, recording their frequency and severity to ensure effective intervention and prevention.

6. Absence and Risk Identification

6.1. Merryland International School identifies students as “cause for concern” when absence rates indicate potential educational risk.

6.2. Identified students are assessed for educational risk (in line with ADEK Educational Risk Policy) or potential maltreatment (neglect), as per the Student Protection Policy. Intervention plans are initiated accordingly.

6.3 Support and Interventions

Merryland International School offers tailored, student-centric interventions for students demonstrating concerning behavior, including:

1. A tiered model of support based on needs analysis.
2. Access to professional counseling and collaboration with parents and teachers.
3. Referrals to external specialists for intensive support.

Interventions run concurrently with disciplinary actions as outlined in Section 4.



6.4. Support for behavioral needs does not reduce the entitlement of students with additional learning needs.

6.5. The school has referral pathways in line with the ADEK Student Mental Health Policy, encouraging proactive identification and reporting by teachers and students. Parents are notified unless it is deemed not in the student's best interest.

7. Searching, Screening, and Confiscation

Merryland International School authorizes the principal and delegated staff to search or confiscate student belongings if there is reasonable suspicion of possession of illicit items. Metal detectors and mobile jammers may be used when necessary.

This policy will be reviewed every year.

Principal

Amal

Reviewed on 25 May 2026



Merryland International School is an outstanding, ISO 9001-certified, British Curriculum K-12 school located in Abu Dhabi, U.A.E. providing high quality education to pupils of more than 40 nationalities. Merryland has been a pioneer in education for the last four decades remaining true to its motto 'Changing lives...Nations wide'.

