Sen/Students of Determination

Admission & Enrolment Policy

Session 2026-27

Reviewed in April 2026

Next review April 2027

Reviewed by Principal, SENCO



DOCUMENT CONTROL

School	Al-Amaal English High School (Pvt.), Sharjah
Policy title	SEN / Students of Determination Admission & Enrolment Policy
Academic session	2026–2027
Policy owner	Principal and SENCO / Inclusion Lead
Review date	January 2026
Next review	January 2027, or earlier if required
Approval	Approval by the Principal / Senior Leadership Team

1. Policy Statement and Purpose

Al-Amaal English High School (Pvt.) Sharjah is committed to providing fair access to education and an inclusive, respectful and supportive learning environment for all learners, including students with special educational needs (SEN) and students of determination (SoD). The school recognises that learners have different strengths, needs, experiences and ways of accessing learning.

This policy sets out a clear and consistent process for receiving applications, gathering information, understanding a learner's needs, planning appropriate support, making admission decisions and arranging a supported transition into school. It is intended to guide school leaders, the SENCO, teachers, support staff, parents and guardians.

Admission decisions will be individualised, evidence-informed and consistent with applicable UAE legislation and Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA) requirements. A disability, diagnosis or identified learning need must not, by itself, be treated as an automatic reason to refuse an application.

2. Scope and Definitions

This policy applies to applicants to Al-Amaal English High School, including applicants who may require additional learning, communication, physical, sensory, behavioural, medical, social or emotional support. It should be read alongside the school's Inclusion Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Behaviour Policy, Assessment Policy and relevant student wellbeing procedures.

Special Educational Needs (SEN): learning needs or barriers that may require additional or different provision to enable a learner to access education and make progress.

Students of Determination (SoD): the term used in the UAE for people with disabilities. The school uses this term respectfully in line with UAE terminology while recognising that not every learner receiving SEN support will have a formal disability diagnosis.

Reasonable adjustments: appropriate changes to the environment, teaching, communication, assessment or school routines that help remove barriers to participation, subject to applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

IEP: an Individual Education Plan that records a learner's identified strengths and needs, baseline information, measurable targets, provision, responsibilities and review arrangements. The school may use other individual support plans where appropriate.

3. Regulatory and Policy Framework

The school will implement this policy in accordance with applicable UAE federal legislation, relevant Ministry of Education guidance and the requirements and directions of SPEA. The framework includes:

- Federal Law No. 29 of 2006 concerning the rights of people with special needs, as amended by Federal Law No. 14 of 2009.
- UAE Ministry of Education Inclusive Education Policy, Ministerial Resolution No. 647 of 2020, where applicable to the school's curriculum and regulatory requirements.
- UAE Ministry of Education guidance on inclusive education and the General Rules for the Provision of Special Education Programmes and Services (School for All), as applicable.

- SPEA policies and guidance, including the Policy on Admission of Learners to Private Schools and any current requirements relating to student admission, inclusion, safeguarding and school operations.
- If a provision in this school policy conflicts with a current legal requirement or direction from the competent authority, the applicable law or authority direction will take precedence. The Principal will ensure that the policy is checked against the latest SPEA requirements before approval and whenever relevant requirements change.

4. Principles of Admission

Admissions involving a learner with SEN or a disability will be guided by the following principles:

- Equal access, dignity, respect and non-discrimination.
- Decisions based on the individual learner's strengths, needs, age, developmental profile, learning history and support requirements.
- Meaningful consultation with the learner, where appropriate, and their parents or legal guardians.
- Early identification of barriers and timely planning of reasonable adjustments and support.
- Confidential handling of personal, educational and health information.
- The learner's best interests, safety, wellbeing, participation and access to a suitable educational programme.
- Transparent communication with families and a clear record of the reasons for admission-related decisions.

5. Admission and Enrolment Procedure

Stage 1 – Initial enquiry and application. Parents or guardians may contact the Admissions Office to enquire about a place. The school will explain the application process and invite the family to disclose any known learning, communication, physical, sensory, behavioural, medical or other support needs that may affect access to school. Families will be encouraged to share relevant information so that support can be planned; disclosure will be handled sensitively.

Stage 2 – Information gathering. With the parent's or guardian's knowledge and consent, the school may request relevant documents, where available, such as previous school reports, existing IEPs or support plans, educational or psychological assessments, speech and language reports, medical information relevant to safe participation, and details of strategies that have worked well. A formal diagnosis should not be treated as the only way to identify a need for support.

Stage 3 – Parent meeting. The SENCO or designated inclusion representative will arrange a discussion with the parents or guardians to understand the learner's strengths, interests, communication, independence, learning profile, health or safety considerations, successful strategies, and the family's priorities. The learner should be involved in an age- and developmentally appropriate way.

Stage 4 – Initial educational review. The SENCO will review the information available and, where appropriate, consult the Principal, Vice Principal, class or subject teachers, school nurse, counsellor, wellbeing staff and other relevant professionals. The school may undertake age-appropriate observations or baseline activities to understand learning access and support needs. Any assessment will be explained to the family and conducted respectfully.

Stage 5 – Provision and access planning. The school will identify the reasonable adjustments, teaching approaches, accessibility arrangements, staffing, resources, assistive technology, health or personal-care arrangements and specialist input that may be required. The school will consider whether these can be arranged within the applicable regulatory framework and the school's actual provision. Where specialist advice is needed, the school will discuss this with the family and seek consent before sharing information.

Stage 6 – Admission decision and communication. The Principal or authorised admissions decision-maker will consider the application, the learner's needs, the proposed support arrangements and applicable admission requirements. The outcome and next steps will be communicated to the family in a clear and respectful manner. Any decision not to offer a place must be individualised, properly documented, based on lawful and relevant grounds, and consistent with SPEA requirements. A diagnosis or disability alone must not be used as an automatic ground for refusal.

Stage 7 – Enrolment and transition. Once a place is accepted, the SENCO will coordinate a transition plan with the family and relevant staff. This may include a familiarisation visit, sharing key information with relevant teachers, preparing classroom adjustments, agreeing communication arrangements, and identifying any immediate health, safety or wellbeing measures.

6. Assessment, Identification and Referral

The school uses information from parents, previous educational settings, classroom observations, work samples, screening or baseline activities and professional reports to build an understanding of the learner. School-based screening or observation is educational in purpose and does not replace a clinical diagnosis or specialist assessment.

Where further assessment or specialist advice may help clarify provision, the SENCO will discuss the concern with parents or guardians, explain the reason for referral and obtain the necessary consent before sharing records. The school may recommend that the family consult an appropriately qualified external professional or relevant support service. The school will continue to consider appropriate educational support while awaiting external advice, where feasible and appropriate.

Information will be reviewed over time. Support should respond to the learner's current needs and progress, rather than relying solely on a diagnostic label.

7. Admission Decision-Making and Placement

Admission and placement decisions will take account of the learner's age and year group, prior learning, strengths, support needs, views of the family, available evidence, accessibility, health and safety planning, and the educational provision that can appropriately be arranged.

The school will consider whether barriers can be reduced through reasonable adjustments, adaptations to teaching and assessment, assistive resources, staff guidance, environmental changes or a coordinated support plan. Decisions will not be based on assumptions about a diagnosis or disability.

Where the school identifies a specific concern about whether a proposed arrangement can meet a learner's needs, it will discuss the concern with the family, consider possible adjustments and alternatives, seek advice where appropriate, and record the options considered. Any decision must comply with applicable law and SPEA requirements. The school will not use this policy to create blanket exclusions for particular diagnoses or categories of need.

Where admission is agreed, the school will identify the initial class placement and support arrangements, which may be reviewed in light of the learner's progress and changing needs. Any change to placement or provision will involve consultation with parents and relevant staff.

8. Individual Education Plan and Support Planning

Where an IEP is appropriate, it will be developed collaboratively by the SENCO, relevant teachers, parents or guardians and, where suitable, the learner and relevant specialists. The IEP will normally include:

- Learner profile: strengths, interests, preferred ways of learning and relevant background.
- Baseline: current attainment, developmental or functional information relevant to learning access.
- Priority needs and barriers to participation.
- A small number of specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) targets.
- Teaching strategies, classroom adjustments, assessment arrangements and resources.
- Any agreed support from specialist or support staff, including frequency or context where known.
- Responsibilities of the SENCO, class or subject teachers, support staff and parents.
- Methods for monitoring progress and the date of the next review.

Targets and provision will be realistic and reviewed regularly. The IEP is a working document and should be shared only with staff and professionals who need the information to support the learner, and with parents or guardians as appropriate.

9. Transition and First-Term Monitoring

Before the learner starts, the SENCO will coordinate an appropriate transition plan. Depending on individual need, this may include a pre-entry meeting, a school tour, photographs or a visual timetable, a gradual familiarisation visit, a transition booklet, a handover from the previous school, a peer buddy, staff briefing and preparation of learning resources.

During the initial weeks, the SENCO and class or subject teachers will monitor the learner's attendance, settling-in, participation, access to learning, wellbeing and effectiveness of agreed adjustments. The school will arrange a follow-up discussion with parents or guardians and update the support plan where needed. Any urgent safeguarding, medical or safety concerns will be addressed through the relevant school procedures without delay.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

Principal: provides strategic oversight, ensures that admission decisions follow applicable requirements, approves the policy and ensures that appropriate procedures and resources are considered.

Vice Principal / Senior Leadership Team: supports implementation, coordinates relevant staff and ensures that agreed arrangements are communicated and monitored.

SENCO / Inclusion Lead: coordinates the SEN admission review, gathers and analyses information, consults families, advises on provision, supports IEP development, briefs relevant staff and monitors implementation.

Admissions Office: provides application information, receives documents securely and refers disclosed or identified support needs to the SENCO in a timely manner.

Class and subject teachers: contribute information about learning and participation, implement agreed classroom strategies and adjustments, monitor progress and communicate concerns to the SENCO.

School nurse, counsellor, wellbeing staff and support assistants: contribute within their professional roles and agreed responsibilities, including relevant health, wellbeing, communication, personal-care or access arrangements.

Parents or guardians: share relevant information, participate in meetings and planning, communicate changes that may affect school support, and work collaboratively with the school.

Learner: is encouraged, where appropriate, to share views, preferences and aspirations and to participate in decisions affecting their learning.

11. Parent Partnership and Communication

The school recognises parents and guardians as important partners. Communication will be respectful, timely and accessible. The school will explain the purpose of assessments, the proposed support, the roles of staff and the process for reviewing arrangements. Meetings and significant decisions should be recorded, including agreed actions and responsibilities.

Parents or guardians may raise concerns with the SENCO in the first instance. If a concern is not resolved, it may be referred to the Vice Principal or Principal through the school's published complaints procedure. This does not limit any right to contact SPEA or another competent authority.

12. Confidentiality, Records and Data Protection

Information about a learner's disability, learning needs, health, family circumstances and assessments is confidential personal information. It will be collected only for legitimate educational, safeguarding, health and administrative purposes; stored securely; and accessed only by staff who need it to fulfil their responsibilities.

The school will explain why information is requested and how it will be used. Information will not be shared with external professionals or agencies without appropriate parental consent unless sharing is required or permitted by law or necessary to safeguard a child. Records will be retained, transferred and disposed of in accordance with applicable UAE requirements and the school's data protection and records-management procedures.

The SENCO will maintain an appropriately secure admission and support record, including application information, parent meeting notes, relevant reports, assessment or observation records, admission review, decision record, transition plan, IEP or support plan and review notes.

13. Monitoring, Review and Complaints

The Principal and SENCO will monitor implementation through a periodic review of admission records, parent feedback, transition outcomes, the timeliness of support planning and whether agreed adjustments are being implemented. Monitoring should inform improvements to staff practice and school provision.

This policy will be reviewed annually and earlier if there are changes to UAE legislation, SPEA requirements, Ministry of Education guidance or school procedures. The current version will be made available to relevant staff and parents.

Concerns about the application of this policy should be raised through the school's complaints procedure. The school will record, investigate and respond to concerns fairly and within its published timescales.

14. Related Forms and Evidence

The following records should be available to demonstrate implementation of this policy. They may be maintained as separate forms or secure electronic records:

- SEN / SoD admission information and parent declaration form.
- Parent meeting and consultation record.
- Previous school information and relevant professional reports, where available.
- SENCO initial review and observation / baseline record.
- Reasonable adjustments and provision planning record.
- Admission decision and communication record.
- Transition plan and staff briefing record.
- IEP or individual support plan and review records.
- Parent communication and meeting records.
- Relevant consent and information-sharing records.

These records should be completed only where relevant to the individual learner and retained securely.

15. Policy Approval and Document Control

Policy owner: Principal and SENCO / Inclusion Lead.

Applies to: Admissions staff, senior leaders, SENCO, teachers and relevant support staff.

Academic session: 2026–2027.

Policy review date: November 2026 (draft for school approval).

Next scheduled review: November 2027, or earlier if required by a change in law or SPEA direction.

Approval status: Draft for review and approval by the Principal / Senior Leadership Team. This document should not be represented as formally approved until the school has completed its internal approval process.

REFERENCES AND OFFICIAL GUIDANCE

- UAE Ministry of Education. Resolution No. (647) of 2020 on the Policy of Inclusive Education. https://moe.gov.ae/en/about-us/legislations/Pages/inclusive-education-policy-ministerial-resolution-647-2020-uae.aspx
- UAE Ministry of Education. Inclusive Education in the United Arab Emirates. https://www.moe.gov.ae/en/pages/determinationinclusiveeducation.aspx
- UAE Government Portal. Education for people of determination. https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/education/education-for-people-with-special-needs
- Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA). Guidelines and policies, including Policy on Admission of Learners to Private Schools. https://spea.shj.ae/en/sources/guideline/
- UAE Federal Law No. 29 of 2006 concerning the Rights of People with Special Needs, as amended.

APPROVAL RECORD

Role	Name / Signature	Date
Principal	Mr Bakht Biland	
SENCO / Inclusion Lead	Mr Asif Bilal	