

FOOD & NUTRITION POLICY

(Revised in Jan 2026)



Islamiya English School Abu Dhabi LLC



FOOD AND NUTRITION POLICY

Introduction

A safe and healthy diet is essential for physical and mental health, making it a key contributor to maintaining overall wellbeing. In fostering the wellbeing of the school community, IES has a duty to create a safe and healthy food environment and to actively promote and encourage healthy food choices. Beyond promoting health, IES also has a responsibility to ensure that their food provision supports their efforts to improve the environmental sustainability of their operations. By adopting sustainable food practices, IES can help reduce their environmental impact and model responsible behavior for students. This policy sets out the basic requirements for IES in providing healthy and sustainable food environments

Purpose

- Ensure that the IES eating environment and food services comply with the *Abu Dhabi Guideline for Unified School Nutrition and Food Safety (QCC, 2025)*, and any other relevant guidelines by concerned authority, in relation to the healthy and safe provision of food services.
- Enhance the IES community's nutritional awareness and meal practices by promoting a deeper understanding of healthy, sustainable eating habits and creating supportive environments with high nutritional standards.

Policy

1. School Food and Nutrition Policy

IES has developed and implemented a Food and Nutrition Policy, in line with the ADG2 requirements.

- IES has created a culture of healthy eating, food safety, and sustainability, including:
 - a. Measures to foster an environment conducive to healthy eating (Promotion of Healthy Eating.)
 - b. Measures to improve the sustainability of food consumption practices, in line with the school's sustainability strategy (Sustainability).
- Adhering to the hygiene and food safety standards prescribed in the ADG2 requirements in relation to food preparation, packaging, transportation, and handling.
- Set measures for large-scale events that are open to the larger school community (e.g., international day) to ensure that any food prepared meets the ADG2 requirements, and reinforcing the prohibition of “Red List” items (e.g., alcohol, carbonated drinks, pork, allergens; as outlined in Appendix A. Restricted Foods and Beverages on the Red List as per ADG2 Requirements).
- IES is authorized to commit to further stringent measures for shared events, to ensure stricter healthy eating guidelines and/or sustainable practices.
- Set measures taken by IES to promote the inclusion of minority groups and the safety of students with allergies and food intolerances (Special Considerations).
- Published on the IES website and made accessible to staff, students, vendors, and parents.

2. Promotion of Healthy Eating

- **Healthy Eating Promotion:** IES has created a healthy food culture that encourages a healthy eating environment of nutrition-rich foods for all members of the school community, in line with the ADG2 requirements.
 1. ADG2 requirements are applicable to school canteens, cafes, kiosks, vending machines and food brought from home. This includes any food served during the school day (e.g., in class) in addition to school-sponsored activities and events as per Section 7. (Scope) in the ADG2 requirements.
- **Active Supervision:** IES has measures in place for staff to actively supervise students during snack/mealtimes, including:
 1. Conducting visual compliance spot checks (Enforcing Lunchbox Compliance)
 2. Ensuring that all students have access to a meal every day (unless fasting). A food service, a meal shall be provided to the student, with parents being notified through supportive IES communication and reminded that they will be charged for the provision.
 3. Being vigilant about concerning food-related behavior (eating disorders, food-related bullying/misconduct, etc.) and having a school-based system to report incidents/observations to parents (e.g., through the nurse, school counselors, teachers, or other staff concerned with student wellbeing).
 4. Modeling good eating habits by encouraging staff to eat together with students (School Staff Participation) in the ADG2 requirements and obligating all students to clean up after themselves.
 - a. For KG and Cycle 1, staff on duty (any staff member who has breakfast/lunch duty as determined by the school) shall sit with and supervise groups students during their meals.
 - b. Staff shall be encouraged to eat with the students, and a portion of this time shall be occasionally dedicated to educational purposes, preferably through play (e.g., teaching proper utensil usage, table manners, identifying food groups, encouraging students to try new foods, cleaning up after oneself, repacking all wrappings in one's lunch box to practice "zero-waste" habits).
- **Balanced Meals:** IES shall ensure that only balanced meals that meet the ADG2 "My Plate" requirements (Composition of a Balanced School Meal) are served/consumed at lunch time, in line with the quantities recommended (Nutritional Requirements for Meals) in the ADG2 requirements.
 1. IES is authorized (and are highly encouraged) to introduce further measures to promote balanced meals, such as not permitting students to purchase individual food items at lunch time that do not meet the requirements of a balanced meal. In such cases:
 - a. Individual items may be regrouped/combined into meal options (e.g., option 1: a chicken sandwich with a side of vegetables and fruit OR option 2: a mixed chicken and vegetable sandwich with a side of fruit).
 - b. IES may authorize students to purchase individual items at break time to complete a balanced meal only if they have brought other complementary items (e.g., a student has brought a serving of vegetables and/or fruits from home. In this case, the student is authorized to purchase a sandwich on its own, without purchasing the full meal).
 - c. However, IES shall practice discretion in addressing financial constraints

and practice sensitivity and leniency in such cases, working with parents to actively encourage the packing of balanced meals.

2. Sweets and desserts without excess sugar/fat that meet the ADG2 requirements may only be served at breakfast (if applicable) or during snack times (not during lunch) and shall be limited to a single portion per student per break period. All snacks shall meet the standards of Section 11.4 (Nutritional Requirements for Snacks) in the ADG2 requirements.
 3. Home-packed meals shall be prepared as per Section 11.8.1 (Guidelines for Home-Packed Lunchboxes) in the ADG2 requirements.
- **ADG2 “Red List”:** IES shall ensure adherence to the banning of “Red List” food for any food consumed by students on school premises (whether provided at school or brought from home).
 1. Exceptionally, IES is authorized to permit non-Muslim students to bring non-halal meat options from home for personal snacks and meals. However, students shall adhere to a strict no-sharing policy of such items, subject to disciplinary actions for level 2 offenses in case of violation, as per the *ADEK School Student Behavior Policy*.
 2. IES is equally authorized to institute a full ban on non-halal meat options.
 3. In either case, staff, parents, and students shall abide by the school’s policy on this matter, and ADEK nor the school shall not be held responsible for any incidents.
 - **Hydration:** School shall regularly remind students (through water breaks, posters, etc.) to stay hydrated by drinking water, which shall be the “default beverage served during school meals and special events” (QCC, 2025). This is particularly important before, during, and after physical activity as per the *ADEK School Physical Education and School Sports Policy*. Water shall be available throughout the school and at critical times and events (Hydration and Beverage Requirements) in the ADG2 requirements.
 - **Sharing of Food:** IES have the discretion to ban the sharing of food in class and during the regular school day. While not recommended in order to prevent any food-related incidents (e.g., food allergies, potential foodborne illnesses due to improper handling/storage, to respect individual cultural or dietary considerations), the sharing of food is authorized under the following conditions:
 1. Food sharing is only authorized for students who have parental consent to consume food that is not provided by the school’s licensed food services, in line with any individual dietary restrictions.
 2. Shared food shall meet the ADG2 requirements (strictly excluding prohibited “Red List” items)
 3. Food is handled properly and stored in appropriate containers and settings to maintain optimal temperatures.
 4. IES encourages in-class celebrations (e.g. birthdays, lesson completions, etc.) using alternative means (e.g. small gifts, party favors) in line with ADG2 requirements to “use non-food-based rewards such as school-wide recognition (e.g., announcements, noticeboards, letters to parents) or tangible items (e.g., stationery, games, sports equipment)” (QCC, 2025).
 5. For larger school-wide events (e.g., fairs, international day), all food shall be properly identified with labels where appropriate) to respect individual dietary restrictions.

6. Schools shall inform parents of the requirements around the sharing of food, but shall not be held responsible for any food-related incidents stemming from these occasions.
- **Microwaves:** Microwaves shall not be placed in visible areas nor be authorized for usage by students in order prevent any incidents (e.g., potential burns from uneven heating, risk of explosions caused by improper food container materials, hygiene concerns, possible degradation of food quality caused by incorrect usage).
 - **Enforcing Lunchbox Compliance:** IES shall ensure home-packed lunchboxes are aligned with (Key Regulatory Shifts) and (Guidelines for Home-Packed Lunchboxes) in the ADG2 requirements:
 1. IES shall conduct daily visual spot checks on a sample of lunchboxes to ensure compliance with the school's nutritional standards. This shall be done in a non-invasive, respectful, and non-judgmental manner, with parents being notified of non-compliance on the same day.
 2. IES is authorized to confiscate or ask students to put away non-compliant food items to be returned home under the following conditions:
 - a. **Schools with Food Services:** Following 3 non-compliance notifications sent to parents, a healthier alternative shall be offered from the school's food services, with parents being notified that they will be charged for the alternative provision.
 - b. **Schools without Food Services:** IES are only authorized to confiscate/ask students to put away non-compliant snacks and beverages if the student has something to eat for their meal (e.g., a main dish/sandwich, even if not compliant). Parents shall be notified supportively with reminders to avoid packing non-compliant items.
 - c. Confiscation is only authorized if schools have a system in place to donate non-compliant items. The disposal of food otherwise is not authorized to prevent the promotion of wastefulness.
 - d. Students are not authorized to eat confiscated/returned non-compliant foods on the school premises, including on the bus, and both students and parents shall be reminded of this rule regularly.
 3. IES is authorized to charge parents for alternative food provision offered to students from their own food services in the above cases, or if a student did not bring food to school for any reason. This provision shall be explicitly stated in the parent-school agreement and in each of the 3 non-compliance notifications sent prior to replacing student meals with healthier alternatives from the school's food services.
 4. In the case of repeated non-compliance, IES shall further engage with parents through appropriate parties (e.g., school counselor, nurse, wellbeing lead, dean of students, child protection officer, etc.)

- **Personal Hygiene:** IES ensures that all students follow basic personal hygiene practices by:
 1. Washing/disinfect their hands before eating.
 2. IES displays hand washing/sanitization signage in eating areas.
 3. Staff shall be mindful of younger children and assist them with any hygiene issues (e.g., make sure they do not have food on their person after eating).
- **Nutrition Education:** IES delivers nutrition education to students through the formal curriculum and other engagement strategies (e.g., competitions, cooking classes, workshops) in line with Section 11.10 (Nutrition and Food Literacy Promotion) in the ADG2 requirements. Schools shall ensure that the curriculum covers the following topics, at a minimum:
 1. Healthy and balanced eating.
 2. Reading of food labels.
 3. Sustainable meal practices.
 4. Impact of food marketing on dietary choices.
- **Staff Awareness:** IES ensures teachers and canteen staff attend training conducted by the Abu Dhabi Public Health Center (ADPHC) and other relevant entities in relation to healthy eating, allergen identification and emergency response, to enable them to promote healthy eating and guarantee the safety of students, when supervising, participating, and/or interacting with students.
 1. IES ensures that staff use positive and supportive language about healthy eating that is focused on wellbeing rather than appearance, and avoid the use of negative language concerning body image and perception of food (e.g., “fat”, “skinny”, or “junk”).
 2. **Modelling Good Food Behavior:** IES ensures that teachers and staff consistently model good food behavior, recognizing their influential role in shaping students’ attitudes toward nutrition and healthy eating (e.g., demonstrating balanced food choices, avoiding the promotion or consumption of unhealthy foods in front of students, encouraging respectful mealtime habits) as per ADG2 requirements, which prohibits the display, sale, or advertisement of food that do not meet the nutritional requirements on school premises.
 3. Staff actively support the promotion of a positive food environment by reinforcing positive messages and fostering a safe “environment where students feel comfortable discussing food, health and body image openly”.
- **Parent Engagement:**
 1. IES has shared guidelines with parents regarding healthy and balanced eating practices at the beginning of the academic year (and to new students upon admission). These guidelines shall include a copy of the restricted foods that appear on the ADG2 “Red List” that could lead to long-term health issues such as obesity, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, etc. Schools shall make a reference to the guidelines and its own Food and Nutrition Policy in the school-parent agreement and the parent handbook, as per the *ADEK School Parent Engagement Policy*.

2. IES shall distribute to parents any relevant guidelines shared by ADEK, Abu Dhabi Public Health Center (ADPHC), QCC, Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority (ADAFSA), or the Department of Health (DoH) in relation to children's health, nutrition, and allergies.
 3. IES shall organize nutrition education sessions (at least once per term) to assist parents with lunchbox planning and ideating healthier alternatives for children's favorite food items as per Section 1.1.8.4 (Communication with Parents) in the ADG2 requirements.
 4. All communication must be "clear, non-blaming, and responsive to cultural and individual dietary needs" and IES shall partner with parents "to reinforce consistent, supportive nutrition and body image messages at home" as per Section 1.1.8.4 (Communication with Parents) in the ADG2 requirements.
 5. For events where food sharing/sales has been authorized by ADEK, IES shall communicate to parents that any food brought in shall adhere to the ADG2 requirements.
 6. IES shall communicate all food-related concerns to parents on the same day as the concern was noticed.
- **Records of Food-Related Complaints:** IES shall keep records of all food-related complaints and establish response procedures to address these complaints, in line with the *ADEK School Records Policy*.
 - **Continuous Improvement and Engagement:** IES shall actively engage parents, staff, students, and food service providers in feedback mechanisms (e.g., food tasting sessions, suggestions for new menu items, age-appropriate surveys) to develop a healthy eating culture at the school and ensure ongoing quality enhancement.
 - **Food Services**
 1. **Quality Control and Compliance:** IES shall adhere to the ADG2 requirements and Federal Law No. (10) of 2015 on Food Safety in the provision of food services (including canteen meals, vending machines, and food kiosks), and obtain and maintain valid licenses and inspection records/notices.
 2. IES shall ensure that contracts with food service providers explicitly require compliance with the ADG2 and ADPHC requirements. Food services may be provided by:
 1. SEHHI-certified and approved suppliers, or
 2. New suppliers, provided that they are formally registered and operate under the condition of obtaining SEHHI certification prior to continuing service.
 3. **Reporting of Non-Compliance by Food Services:** IES shall report noncompliance by food services to ADAFSA.
 4. **Food Delivery Services:** IES shall not permit students to use external food delivery services (e.g., Talabat, Careem, Noon, Deliveroo, and Instashop) during school hours. Staff using these services shall use discretionary measures to avoid the unintentional promotion of unhealthy food items (e.g., picking up a fast-food delivery in a tote bag, ordering healthier alternatives on days when they are assigned mealtime supervision), in line with the ADG2 requirements on limiting student exposure to the marketing of non-nutritious food.

- **Special Considerations**

1. **Consideration for Minority Groups:** IES shall take into consideration the religious, cultural, and ethical needs of minority groups, and shall involve these groups in decision-making related to food services and the use of food labels.
2. **Consideration for Students with Food Allergies and Intolerances:**
 1. IES shall undertake the following measures to support students with allergies, in line with the ADG2 requirements:
 - a. Maintaining records of students' food allergies and intolerances and keeping a copy of the records in the school canteen.
 - b. Ensuring that food labels provide warnings regarding allergens in food provided through the school's food services.
 2. Additionally, IES shall:
 - a. Consider students' allergies and intolerances when planning school activities and meals/snacks to ensure the basic food offering suits as many students as possible as it is or with minor modifications.
 - b. Require parents to notify the school immediately if their child develops an allergy and provide the relevant medicines to the school.
 - c. Share food allergy records of students with relevant staff members and respective parents and students to minimize the risk of accidental exposure to allergenic food substances.
 - d. Conduct risk assessments related to student allergies and implement appropriate risk mitigation measures.
 - e. Have procedures to effectively manage allergic reactions of students, including clear procedures to deal with severe allergic reactions, in line with the *ADEK School Health and Safety Policy*.
 - f. Appropriately label and store medicines required to manage student allergies.
3. For students with special dietary requirements (alternative quantities, restrictions, or meal timings for high performance athletes, those with medical conditions, etc.), parents shall submit written requests (with justification) for accommodations, and IES shall collaborate with approved suppliers to provide inclusive menus that meet diverse dietary needs in line with ADG2 requirements.

- **Sustainability**

1. **Sustainable Meal Practices:** IES shall develop and implement a strategy to improve the sustainability of their food services and promote sustainable meal practices, in line with the *ADEK School Sustainability Policy*. This may include initiatives in relation to the following:
 1. Sustainable practices in the delivery of food services:
 - a. Provision of sustainable meals/snacks and food products (e.g., plant-based meals, locally produced and low carbon footprint products).
 - b. Waste reduction and management (e.g., prevention of overstocking, portion control, waste recycling), including reduction and management of packaging.
 2. Promotion of sustainable practices amongst staff, students, and parents (e.g.,

reduction of food waste, recycling, avoidance of single-use containers).

2. **Consumption of School Produce:** All school-produced food items (for schools who have onsite gardens or farms) shall be handled and prepared following strict food safety and hygiene standards, as per ADAFSA and ADG2 requirements, to ensure the health and safety of all students. The school shall take into account students' allergies, dietary restrictions, or cultural preferences related to consuming school-produced food.

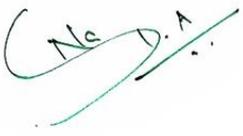
- **Food Marketing**

1. **Promotion:** IES shall employ marketing strategies to promote and encourage healthy and safe eating practices, including verifying that food service providers are engaged in promotional marketing in compliance with the ADG2 requirements.
2. **Prohibition:** IES shall prohibit the display, sale, and advertisement of non-compliant food (and related brands) on its premises and any school-sponsored events. (Marketing and Advertisement Rules) in the ADG2 requirements. This includes, but is not limited to:
 1. Events where food is provided or sold, such as sport days, national/international celebrations, school breakfast/lunch programs, fundraisers, and classroom activities.
 2. Unintentional marketing by staff when carrying food delivery bags displaying restaurant logos or eating non-compliant items from home in front of students.
 3. Marketing techniques that “may be used to influence food and beverage purchasing, including sports sponsorships, promotions and deals, and gifts, toys and prizes”.
 4. Select “appropriate sponsorship from a wide range of commercial entities, if sponsorship of school events is required”

POLICY REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed and checked annually by the SLT.

This policy is also approved by the governing bodies

Draft Date:	05/01/26
Approved By Board of Governors:	Approved
Principal Approval:	
Review Date:	22/08/26

The End.