



AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL

OF ABU DHABI *SINCE 1972*

CODE OF CONDUCT

The American Community School of Abu Dhabi is committed to the safety, protection, and wellbeing of children including providing a safe environment for all in our community. All adults (faculty, staff, coaches, substitutes, volunteers, contractors, etc.) who interact with ACS students in a direct or indirect capacity will maintain professional and caring relationships that are free from religious, racial, or sexual harassment and violence. Adults will respect the rights, dignity, and privacy of each student and must place the well-being and safety of each student above all other considerations.

ACS adults maintain a responsibility to support a safer community through their public and private conduct. Adults must have an awareness of their own and other persons' vulnerabilities, especially when working alone with children and youth. Faculty, staff, coaches, substitutes, and volunteers are responsible for maintaining appropriate physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries. Adults have an obligation to understand and recognize the inherent power dynamic in an adult/child relationship, whether the student is a child or teen. This power position should never be used to impact children in a negative manner; using speech, gestures, or behavior that exploit, threaten, use violence, or harass others is forbidden.

It is important to consider the appropriateness of any form of physical touch and how that act may be received and/or perceived. It is expected that adults refrain from doing anything of a personal nature that students can do for themselves. All physical contact should only occur in a public setting. Physical or corporal punishment or disciplinary action of any kind is strictly prohibited at ACS.

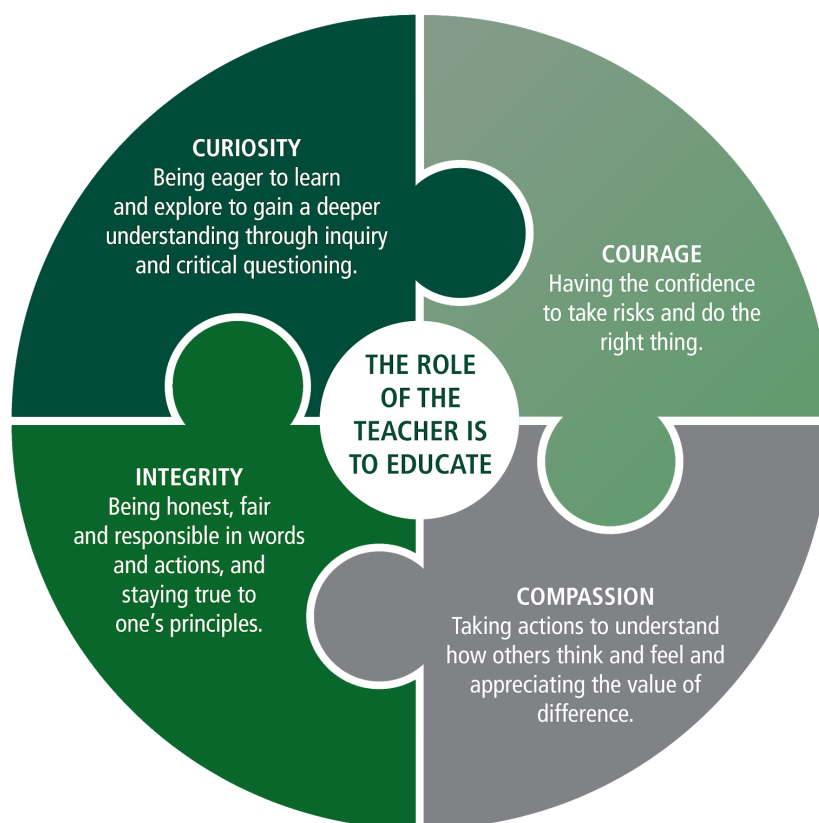
Crossing boundaries with student relationships can be a sign of grooming for later abuse. Maintaining a professional relationship on and off campus with students is mandatory. One-on-one meetings with students are best held in a public area, in a room where the interaction can be observed, and/or in a room with the door left open and windows uncovered. When available, adults should only use bathrooms designated for adult use and not student bathrooms. On school trips, adults should never be alone in a private space with a student and students should never be in any room other than which they are assigned.

Adults affiliated with ACS may not possess and/or use illegal drugs or alcohol at any times when working with students, nor may they use tobacco products in front of students. Adults may not supply alcohol, drugs, tobacco, videos or inappropriate reading material to students, nor should they share inappropriate material on the internet or social media. Adults should not give or receive gifts from students without the knowledge of the student's parent/guardian. Likewise, ACS employees should not provide car transportation to students without the consent of the student's parent or guardian.

Communication with children should be governed by the key safety concept of transparency. The

lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the digital world. By virtue of identifying yourself as an ACS employee online, you are now connected to colleagues, students, parents and the school community. You should ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your work at ACS. The following will reduce the risk of inappropriate or misconstrued communication between adults and students:

- Professional boundaries in communication with all students must be maintained.
- Email exchanges should always occur using the school email address.
- All digital communication that takes place over the ACS network or platforms may be subject to monitoring.
 - Distance teaching should be conducted on the ACS chosen platforms only.
 - All online one-on-one sessions or office hours between teachers and students should be recorded.
- Avoid non-school related digital contact with students including sending or responding to private text or other messages, 'friending' or 'following' students' non-school related digital media sites or accepting the same from students.
 - When necessary, adults are encouraged to send and receive messages to the entire working group, class, team, or club when communicating with students via personal messages.
 - These groups should be discontinued after the school business is complete; for example when the MESAC sport trip is finished, that Whatsapp group should be discontinued.



If anyone feels uncomfortable with a situation involving a student, employee, or ACS community member, they must consult with a school administrator or the school psychologist.

Further reporting procedures and advice are located in the [ACS Student Safeguarding Manual](#).

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

As an employee of the American Community School of Abu Dhabi, you may have access to confidential information. These materials include, but are not limited to student-related data; employee-related data; information related to future, current, or previously administered performance analysis documents; classifications and salary documents, data, and reports; personnel files; and personally identifiable information regarding students or employees. This agreement also applies to both email and other electronic accessible mediums.

Each member of school staff is personally responsible for maintaining the confidential nature of these materials by carefully observing the procedures listed herein. As a part of ACS standard procedures, all staff will be required to sign the confidentiality agreement which will be sent in a digital format for ease of data collection.

The following are the specific responsibilities and agreements with regard to confidential information. If you take exception to any of these items, please see any member of the Senior Leadership Team.

1. Permit no other persons to have access to confidential information or materials, and do not discuss any aspect of the data/information or other confidential matters with any other persons unless they are:
 - a. members of the admin staff who need the information to perform their work
 - b. directly involved in the student or personnel-related matters and need the information to perform their work
 - c. authorized by your supervisor or another appropriate member of the senior leadership team
2. Lock up or secure all confidential materials when you are not directly working with them.
3. Do not retain any copies or make personal file copies of confidential materials unless necessary. Any extra copies of confidential materials should be destroyed when they are no longer necessary.
4. Do not access or seek confidential information for which you have no legitimate need to know.
5. If you have any questions about the confidentiality of any of the information to which you have access, you should assume the information is confidential and handle it as such until a school administrator informs you otherwise.