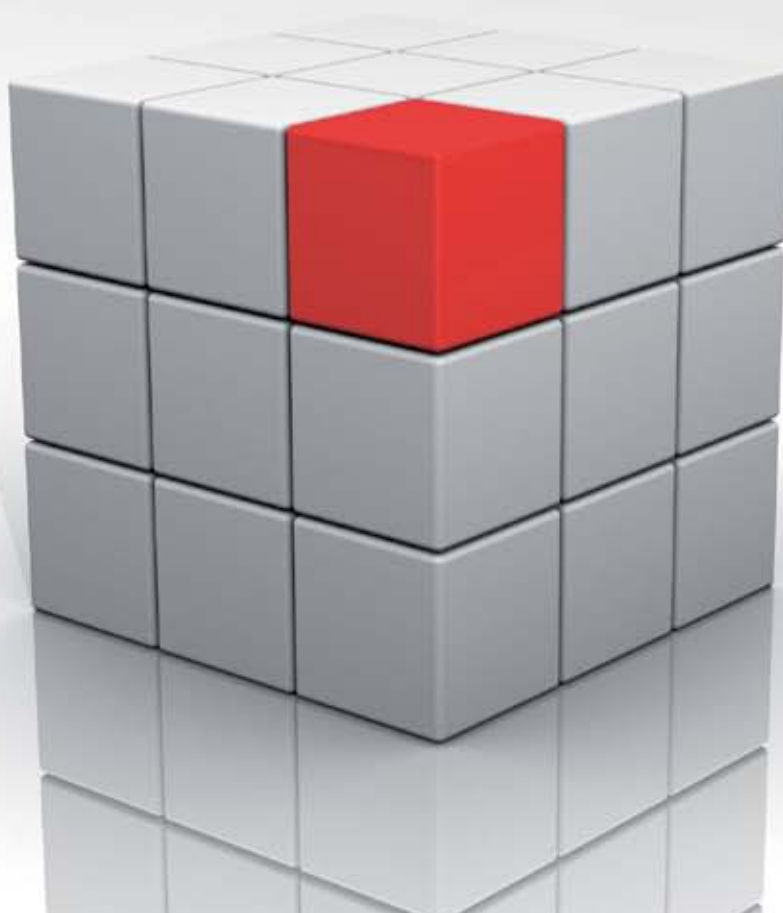




مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم
Abu Dhabi Education Council
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SCHOOL LEADERSHIP HANDBOOK

**Abu Dhabi Education Council
New School Model
School Leadership Handbook**

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Dear Colleagues,

It is with great pride that I share with you the contents of the Abu Dhabi Education Council School Model Handbook, especially designed to help guide School Leaders in preparing the young learners of Abu Dhabi in becoming future leaders.

The emirate of Abu Dhabi is undergoing a significant transformation as it is quickly becoming a major global economic player. The Abu Dhabi vision is to produce a society that is confident in its growing role as the world's economic center. The root of turning this vision into a reality lies at the heart of quality education.

Education is at the core of creating an intellectual, fruitful and productive society. As school leaders, you have a very important and considerable role to carry out as we all work together to build a knowledge-based society. You play a vital role in implementing the new educational model that has been developed in order to enhance the academic experience and educational quality of our schools.

You are not just part of the change, but you are the movers of Abu Dhabi's academic reformation. Allow this handbook to be your resource in executing the strategies that will put Abu Dhabi on the map as the innovative, intellectual, economic capital of the world.

This handbook will help you understand the key beliefs, values and guiding principles of the new Comprehensive School Model. Some fundamental differences include the approach to effective schooling, staffing structure, curriculum, infrastructure, assessment, evaluation, family involvement and teaching models. It is your job as school leaders to ensure that there is support for teachers and that they are properly implementing these changes. The pedagogical approach of the new school model is child-centered and realizes the student as a learner.

Our unified goal is to instill a passion for learning in the youth of Abu Dhabi. As the nation transforms, we also help transform the student from a dependent child to an independent, well-educated and morally-obliged citizen of the world. A citizen that will act as a proud and honorable representative of Abu Dhabi.

We look forward to working together in collaboration to reach our objectives and add value to each student that we have the privilege of influencing for the better; to each teacher that looks to us for support and guidance; and to build the Next Generation.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr Mugheer Al-Khaili
Director General

2. What is the ADEC New School Model?

The Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) is very excited to introduce a new approach to teaching and learning – the New School Model. This key initiative of the ADEC P-12 Education Strategic Plan will be the way forward for all government schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, launching in September 2010 for students in KG1, KG2, Grades 1, 2, and 3. Additional grades will be included in subsequent years.

The goal of this new approach is to improve student learning experiences and to raise the academic outcomes of Abu Dhabi students to an internationally competitive level necessary to achieve The Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030. Students will be at the center of an active teaching and learning environment supported by schools, families and the community. Key priorities will focus on student health and safety, well-being and individualized learning. Improvements will develop strong Arabic and English literacy and numeracy, critical thinking, problem solving and creativity, and will also continue to emphasize cultural and national identity among Abu Dhabi students.

As leaders in schools, principals and vice principals perform an essential role in enacting ADEC's vision of providing Abu Dhabi students with a world class education. Your role in leading teachers, other school staff and – most importantly – students and their families through ongoing educational improvements is necessary to achieve this vision. Educational change requires a deep commitment by principals, vice principals, and teachers to engage in continuous self-reflection and growth through ongoing and meaningful professional development.

Together, we embrace this exciting challenge and the journey to prepare students to become Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow.

3. Key differences in the New School Model:

Key changes in kindergarten and grades 1-3

1. Effective school organization and guiding principles	<p>All ADEC government schools will have consistent school organization structures, job descriptions, and hiring practices</p> <p>All government schools and private schools will be governed by consistent policies that guide the design and implementation of programs and initiatives</p> <p>The school day will be designed around different learning activities</p>
2. Staffing Structure	<p>Highly qualified teachers will meet established standards</p> <p>Highly qualified principals and vice principals will serve as instructional leaders</p> <p>Continuous, meaningful professional development will be provided</p> <p>Focus on a “classroom-teacher” model</p>
3. Students as Learners	<p>Differentiated instruction will meet the individual instructional needs of children</p> <p>Early identification of students with special learning needs</p> <p>Application of consistent behavior and discipline policies in all schools</p> <p>Application of research-based promotion and retention policies and procedures</p> <p>Consistently applied attendance expectations</p>
4. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	<p>Consistent implementation of Arabic/English instruction with educational outcomes focused on literacy and numeracy</p> <p>Integrated curriculum with best practice models of instructional delivery</p> <p>Continuous assessment of children and use of assessment results to inform teaching</p>
5. Child-Centered Learning Environment and Resources	<p>World-class school facilities that are educationally effective, sustainable, and community-centered</p> <p>Learning centers in classrooms that engage children in exploration and learning</p> <p>Technology-rich learning environments and introduction of multi-sensory educational resources</p> <p>Proactive approach to ensuring health, safety, and well-being of all students</p>
6. Family and Community Involvement	<p>Close partnerships between schools and families leading to improved learning outcomes</p> <p>Ongoing and effective communication between home and school</p>
7. Evaluation of School Programs	<p>Participation of all schools in an inspection/monitoring /accreditation process</p> <p>Development of annual School Improvement Plans</p> <p>Use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</p>

4. Leadership in the New School Model:

Understanding of Teaching and Learning

The question:

As a leader in the New School Model, what will be my understandings about teaching and learning? What key understandings will I need to hold in order to be a powerful and effective leader?

The answer is:

- A. All children are capable of learning.
- B. Teachers are responsible for student learning.
- C. School leaders are responsible for building a culture that is aligned with these beliefs and supporting teachers in putting them into practice.

Leadership in the New School Model: Key Beliefs About Learning

As an educational leader, the following beliefs about learning are necessary:

1. Learning is safe and secure when students feel encouraged to challenge themselves.
2. Learning is lifelike and not isolated from the real world.
3. Learning is active, purposeful and responsive, not passive and inflexible.
4. Learning occurs best through meaningful, open dialogue, not through one-way, closed teacher direction.
5. Learning follows a student, not a textbook recipe.
6. Learning environments and resources are an invitation to learn, not a decoration.
7. Learning is a process, not just a place nor a product.
8. Learning is informed by assessment, not driven by it.
9. Learning occurs best when there is an alignment between curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.

Leadership in the New School Model: Guiding Principles for School leaders

As my school's educational leader in the New School Model, I will do my best to:

- Create a safe, encouraging environment in which students can learn
- Provide regular professional development for teachers and staff
- Ensure that Arabic- and English-speaking teachers partner together to plan unit content and materials
- Develop a positive professional teaching partnership between Arabic-speaking teachers and English-speaking teachers
- Work with teachers to improve the quality of instruction in every classroom
- Be a proponent of the New School Model
- Work with ADEC staff to provide feedback on the New School Model over time
- Engage with parents to ensure their support in the education of their children
- Incorporate the wider community, including universities and businesses, in the education process

5. Working in the New School Model: Staffing and School Organization

The New School Model will feature the following changes in staffing to allow school leaders to achieve the instructional vision:

1. Arabic- and English-medium teachers

- Students will be taught by Arabic-speaking and English-speaking teachers

Kindergarten:

Arabic- and English-speaking teachers co-teach classes (there will be two teachers in the classroom at the same time)

Arabic-medium teachers will take responsibility for Arabic and Islamic Studies, while English-medium teachers will lead English-focused lessons

Grades 1 to 3:

The English-medium teacher will be responsible for teaching English, Math, and Science

Arabic-medium teachers will be responsible for teaching Arabic, Islamic Studies and Social/Civic Studies

- Wherever possible, school leaders are encouraged to facilitate the Arabic-medium teacher teaching multiple subjects (e.g., Arabic and Social/Civic Studies)
- Arabic-medium specialist teachers will teach Art, Music, ICT and Physical Education & Health

2. Faculty Heads

- Each school will have an Arabic and an English Faculty Head who will work together and be responsible for:

Directing, managing and providing professional leadership to teachers allocated to the Faculty

Coordinating the implementation of ADEC's curriculum for the subjects that are allocated to the Faculty

Guiding teachers in the implementation of appropriate assessment tools and techniques to monitor and inform student learning

Liaising with the Principal and school administration to support School Improvement initiatives

Working in the New School Model: School Leadership Support for Teachers

School leaders are responsible for building a culture in which all teachers possess and reinforce these principles:

- 1. Each child is a unique individual capable of learning.**
This is evident when:

 - the teacher knows and values each student
 - the teacher is supportive of individual needs
 - children experience success in their learning
 - children are encouraged to take supported risks in their learning
- 2. The nature of the learning environment is enabling and supportive.**
This is evident when:

 - the physical space and routines act as a support for students, promoting independence
 - the physical space acts as an invitation to engage with materials
 - the teacher is actively involved in observation and guided practice
 - teacher questioning is open and responsive to students' thoughts and ideas
- 3. The nature of the learning opportunities is meaningful and encourages active involvement.**
This is evident when:

 - the teacher establishes a meaningful context for learning
 - children are encouraged to explore their learning actively through creativity and problem solving
 - the teacher provides sequenced learning opportunities in response to student needs
 - children are encouraged to reflect on their learning
- 4. Relationships are positive and respectful.**
This is evident when:

 - the teacher encourages collaboration
 - the teacher values the home language, culture, and identity of the students
 - parents are seen as partners in their child's education

Working in the New School Model: Supporting Effective Teacher Partnerships School Leadership

As a school leader, it is essential that you understand and ask the following questions to ensure effective teaching partnerships:

1. How will teachers plan and collaborate?
2. How will teachers develop a consistent approach to behaviour management?
3. How will teachers share the learning space?
4. How will teachers organize and use the resources?
5. How will teachers communicate with parents?
6. How will teachers ensure that the needs of all students are met?
7. How will teachers share the observations of students?
8. How will teachers assess and describe the student's progress together?
9. How will teachers share accountability for the learning?

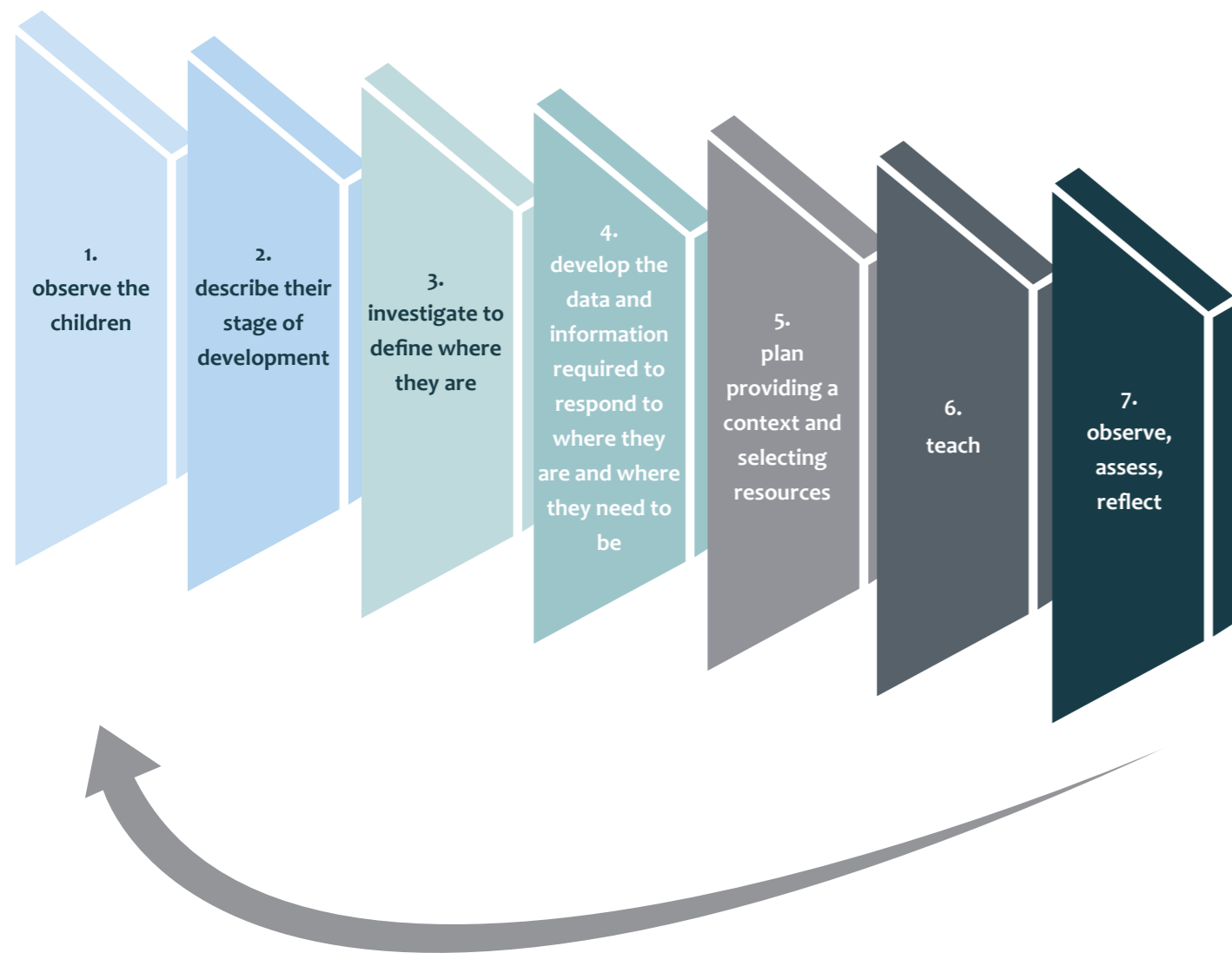
Working in the New School Model: Desired Student Outcomes

School leaders are responsible for supporting students in developing lifelong learning skills within the New School Model:

1. **Communication**
Developing a child as a communicator: literate in Arabic and English
2. **Thinking**
Developing a child as a thinker and problem solver
3. **Culture**
Developing a child to appreciate UAE heritage, traditions, customs, and culture
4. **Community**
Developing a child as a person able to develop positive relationships
5. **Health and Well Being**
Developing a child as a confident, healthy person
6. **Creativity**
Developing a child as a creative and imaginative person

Working in the New School Model: Teaching Support

School leaders in the New School Model should work with all teachers and staff to follow the process below in planning and delivering instruction:



Working in the New School Model: Gradual Release Pedagogical Approach

Just as you would not allow a child to enter the water without knowing how to swim, you would not expect a child to know how to read without providing the necessary support.

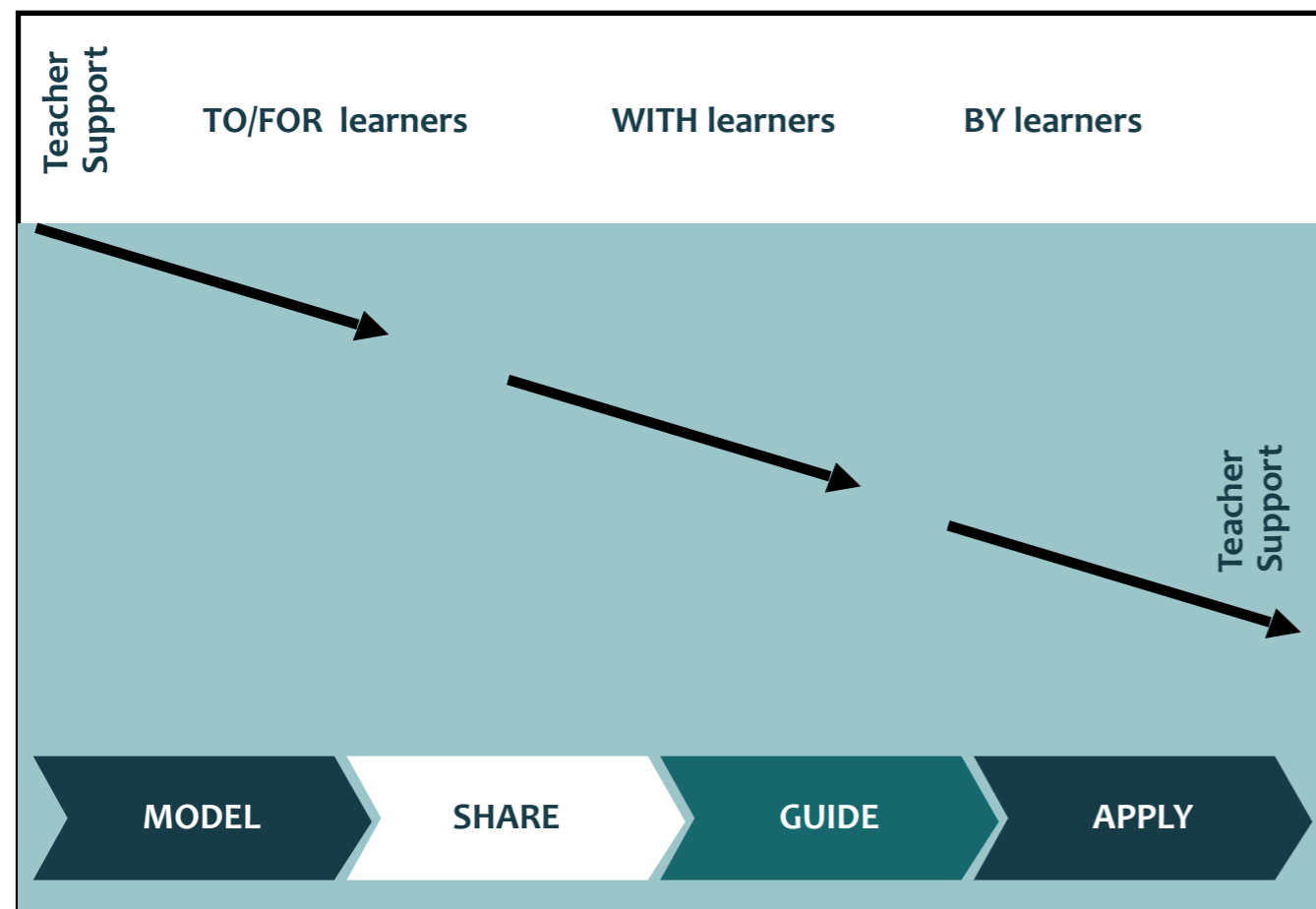
Each new skill is best learned step by step. The teacher's responsibility is to support students in this endeavor. The new ADEC curriculum and learning outcome frameworks describe stages of learning that will help teachers effectively guide students using a "gradual release approach."

Working in the New School Model: Gradual Release Pedagogical Approach

Question: How do I support children as they learn?

Answer: I use the Gradual Release of Responsibility Approach

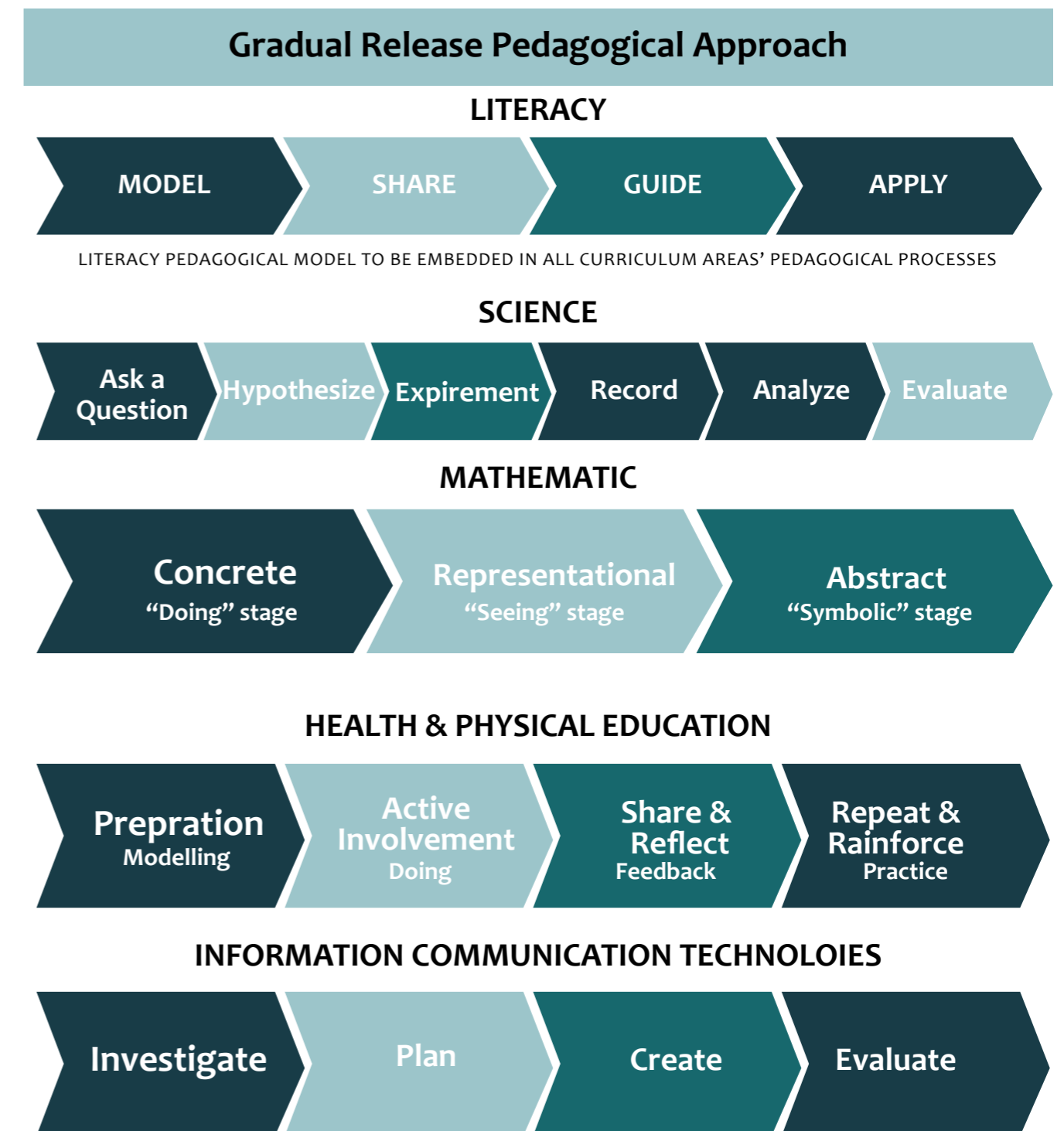
This is a pedagogical approach that seeks to *move students from a state of dependence* to one of *independent practice and skills application*, and for teachers to support learning according to the individual instructional needs of students.



This new approach expects the teacher to make careful observations and professional judgments, based on the needs of each student in order to plan learning opportunities.

Working in the New School Model: Gradual Release Pedagogical Approach

Teachers will use a teaching process that gradually releases independence to the student:



Working in the New School Model:

What You Should See In The Classroom

The goal of the New School Model is for students to develop lifelong learning skills. To achieve this, teachers support students in a variety of ways that include, but are not limited to:

	The teacher may be:	What you may see teacher doing:
Communication	Modeling reading and highlighting a literacy strategy by thinking aloud	Have the children sitting on the mat while the teacher reads a big book
	Finding out what skills and understandings the child knows and what they need to learn next	Asking the children questions
	Assessing the individual reading level of the child	Listening to a child while the rest of the class is working at their desk
Thinking	Reinforcing children practicing their number skills	Have the children playing games outside
	Using manipulatives to ensure a concrete understanding of abstract concepts	Have the children using pop sticks and plastic counters
	Having the children independently record and interpret data	Have the children working individually at their desk
Community	Having the children observe and explain their science to their friends	Have the children in groups making things
	Encouraging the class to work collaboratively and develop a respect for the resources and each other	Have the children sharing a book while they are reading
	Getting the children to work well with their friends	Have the children speak to each other
Creativity	Teaching children English vocabulary	Singing songs with the children
	Encouraging children to take risks and create writing in a non-threatening way	Have the children using paints and crayons
	Encouraging a curiosity for the world around	Walking with the children outside collecting rocks, sand, seeds

Working in the New School Model:

Changing How Assessment Is Used

Learning is informed by assessment, not driven by it:

Assessment is used to inform teaching and learning, rather than only to determine a child’s assessment result. Teachers will use assessment information to determine a student’s stage of development and then will plan unit and lesson content accordingly.

Assessment may take many forms, such as:

- **Continuous assessment** to map children’s progress in each learning area against learning outcome frameworks. Continuous assessment may include, but is not limited to:
 - o Recording notes about each child’s literacy development, mathematical knowledge, and science skills
 - o Having children draw about a book they read
 - o Having children explain their writing
 - o Having children explain methods they used to solve a math problem
 - o Having children cut and paste pictures in sequence
 - o Having the children complete a test
- **Diagnostic assessment**, such as PIPS, to analyze students’ early literacy and numeracy skills (in KG1 to grade 2) in a standardized manner
- **EMSA exams** (grade 3 and above) to track students’ progress against grade-level standards

Working in the New School Model: Professional Development

The New School Model includes many changes for which teachers and school leaders will require additional support. A key component of the New School Model is regular after-school time for teachers to understand and incorporate the NSM and make changes in their teaching.

Principals are responsible for scheduling regular time during the school day for professional development activities. The content may be developed with the assistance of the Arabic and English Faculty Heads, Cluster Managers, PPP operators, and other ADEC School Operations and P-12 Policy staff. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Student-centered learning techniques
- Joint planning and coordinated teaching between Arabic-medium and English-medium teachers
- Creating unit plans that respond to learning outcome frameworks
- Tracking and understanding student achievement
- Using assessment to inform teaching and learning
- Setting expectations for student academic performance
- Setting expectations of mutual respect within the learning community

Working in the New School Model: Measuring Success

As a school leader, how do I know if I am implementing the New School Model?

<p>End of First Week</p>	<p>Arabic-medium and English-medium teachers are knowledgeable about and respect each others' culture, educational expertise, and experiences</p> <p>Arabic-medium teachers and English-medium teachers communicate with each other and discuss unit plans</p> <p>Teachers understand the purpose of classroom materials and resources</p> <p>Students understand that they have more than one teacher and that both Arabic and English are important in their education</p>
<p>End of First Month</p>	<p>Arabic-medium teachers and English-medium teachers plan units together and develop plans that match individual student needs</p> <p>Teachers define where students are against the learning outcome frameworks and use this information for unit planning</p> <p>Teachers use the instructional materials/resources to support their planning and in-classroom instruction</p> <p>Students equally respect the Arabic-medium and English-medium teachers</p>
<p>End of First Semester</p>	<p>The relationship between all teachers is one of mutual respect</p> <p>Arabic-medium and English-medium teachers plan units together</p> <p>Teachers define where students are against the learning outcome frameworks and use this information for unit planning, with guidance from Faculty Heads</p> <p>Teachers encourage active student participation and responses throughout their lessons</p> <p>Teachers manage student behavior effectively</p> <p>Students are engaged in learning and are more confident in their use of Arabic and English</p> <p>Teachers are able to articulate student success (in accordance with learning outcome frameworks)</p>
<p>End of First Year</p>	<p>Arabic-medium and English-medium teachers instinctively plan units together</p> <p>Teachers confidently define where students are against the learning outcome frameworks and use this information for unit planning, with guidance from Faculty Heads</p> <p>Teachers engage with students in a differentiated way</p> <p>Students actively participate in learning and are developing independence in the completion of learning tasks</p> <p>Students collaborate with others and observe other perspectives</p> <p>Throughout the year, assessment has been used to inform instruction</p> <p>Teachers are able to professionally discuss student difficulties and problems (with parents and school administration where appropriate) and design solutions</p>