



FOUNDATIONAL LITERACY POLICY

1. Introduction

Universal Private School is committed to ensuring that students in KG1 to Grade 3 develop secure foundations in English and Arabic literacy.

The school will use early identification, structured instruction, targeted intervention and regular progress monitoring to improve reading, language and comprehension outcomes.

Although UPS appears to meet the ADEK exemption conditions for some formal requirements because of its fee band and low Emirati enrolment, the school will still implement the main literacy practices as part of its commitment to student achievement and school improvement.

2. Purpose

This policy aims to:

1. establish consistent foundational literacy provision from KG1 to Grade 3;
2. identify reading needs at an early stage;
3. improve English and Arabic reading proficiency;
4. provide timely Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions;
5. monitor student progress regularly;
6. support multilingual learners and students with additional learning needs;
7. strengthen teacher knowledge of evidence based literacy instruction; and
8. use assessment evidence to improve teaching and planning.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- students from KG1 to Grade 3;
- English and Arabic literacy;
- class teachers;
- Arabic teachers;
- literacy specialists;
- teaching assistants;
- inclusion staff;
- school leaders; and
- parents supporting literacy development at home.

4. Foundational Literacy Programme

UPS will implement an evidence based foundational literacy programme for English from KG1 to Grade 3.

The programme will include:



- phonological and phonemic awareness;
- systematic phonics;
- word recognition;
- decoding;
- oral reading fluency;
- vocabulary;
- oral language;
- reading comprehension;
- listening comprehension; and
- early writing development.

Relevant practices from the English literacy programme will also be adapted for Arabic literacy instruction.

Implementation will begin by 31 August 2026, with results reviewed and shared internally at the end of each term.

5. Screening and Assessment

UPS will screen Grade 1 students in English and Arabic to identify reading strengths and gaps.

English screening should cover, at a minimum:

- phonological or phonemic awareness;
- phonics and word recognition; and
- oral reading fluency.

The ADEK draft policy lists MAP Reading Fluency, DIBELS and YARC as approved English options. It also states that NGRT should not be used alone because it does not assess all mandatory foundational domains.

Arabic screening will use the ADEK Grade 1 Arabic assessment when provided, or another assessment approved by ADEK.

Where UPS uses an alternative screening assessment, approval should be sought by 15 September 2026.

6. Screening Timeline

UPS will:

Action	Timeline
Begin implementation of the foundational literacy programme	31 August 2026
Seek ADEK approval for any alternative screening assessment	15 September 2026
Complete Grade 1 English and Arabic baseline screening	16 October 2026
Review progress and intervention data	End of each term



Prepare for progress screening	Term 3
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The ADEK draft policy also expects Grade 1 screening by the end of Term 1 and again in Term 3.

7. Tiered Model of Support

UPS will use a three level model of support.

Tier 1: Core Literacy Instruction

All students will receive high quality daily literacy instruction through the regular classroom programme.

Tier 2: Targeted Intervention

Students at risk of falling behind will receive additional small group intervention alongside normal classroom teaching.

Tier 2 support will normally:

- take place daily where possible;
- continue for at least six instructional weeks;
- focus on specific identified gaps; and
- include progress monitoring every two weeks.

Tier 3: Intensive Intervention

Students with significant reading difficulties will receive intensive small group or individual support delivered by trained staff.

Progress will be monitored weekly.

Support may be increased, reduced or discontinued according to evidence of student response.

8. Inclusion and Referral

Students with persistent literacy difficulties will be supported through the school's inclusion and referral procedures.

The school will:

- consider the needs of multilingual learners when interpreting screening results;
- identify barriers to reading and language development;
- involve the Head of Inclusion where appropriate;
- align interventions with any Documented Learning Plan;
- communicate concerns with parents at an early stage; and
- refer students for further assessment where progress remains limited despite documented intervention.



Literacy support will complement, not replace, the provision identified in a student's learning plan.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

School Leadership

School leaders will ensure that suitable programmes, assessments, staffing, training and intervention arrangements are in place.

Literacy and Subject Leaders

They will:

- coordinate programme implementation;
- review screening and intervention data;
- support teachers;
- monitor consistency; and
- report progress to senior leaders.

Teachers and Teaching Assistants

They will:

- deliver structured literacy instruction;
- identify students needing support;
- implement intervention strategies;
- monitor progress; and
- maintain accurate records.

Head of Inclusion

The Head of Inclusion will support identification, referral and planning for students with additional learning needs.

Parents

Parents will be encouraged to support reading, oral language, vocabulary and regular literacy practice at home.

10. Staff Training

UPS will ensure that relevant KG1 to Grade 3 teachers, literacy specialists and teaching assistants receive training in:

- the Science of Reading;
- phonemic awareness;
- phonics;
- fluency;
- vocabulary;
- comprehension;



- structured literacy;
- assessment;
- intervention; and
- progress monitoring.

The AY 2026/27 target is for relevant staff to complete required training by the end of Term 1.

11. Monitoring and Record Keeping

UPS will maintain records of:

- screening results;
- students receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 support;
- intervention plans;
- intervention attendance;
- progress monitoring;
- parent communication;
- staff training; and
- review decisions.

Leaders will review data regularly to determine:

- which students are on track;
- which students require intervention;
- whether interventions are effective;
- whether teaching needs adjustment; and
- whether additional staffing or resources are required.

Where more than 30% of students fail to demonstrate reading proficiency, the ADEK draft policy requires a Literacy Intervention Plan to be integrated into the School Development Plan and a Literacy Leadership Team to be established.

12. Parent Partnership

UPS will communicate clearly with parents about:

- screening outcomes;
- identified literacy needs;
- intervention arrangements;
- student progress;
- reading strategies for home;
- recommended books and resources; and
- the importance of regular reading in English and Arabic.

Parent guidance should be practical, age appropriate and accessible in a language families can understand where possible.



13. Expected Outcomes

UPS expects this policy to lead to:

1. improved reading attainment in English and Arabic;
2. earlier identification of literacy difficulties;
3. stronger phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension;
4. more consistent literacy teaching;
5. effective targeted intervention;
6. improved progress for multilingual learners and students with additional learning needs;
7. stronger teacher knowledge; and
8. better use of literacy assessment information.

14. AY 2026/27 Priority Actions

Priority Action	Deadline
Begin English foundational literacy programme and align Arabic practices	31 August 2026
Seek ADEK approval for alternative screening assessments, where applicable	15 September 2026
Complete Grade 1 English and Arabic baseline screening	16 October 2026
Begin targeted Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions	End of Term 1
Complete relevant staff training in Science of Reading	End of Term 1

15. Policy Approval

Policy	Universal Private School Foundational Literacy Policy
Academic Year	2026/27
Approved by	Board of Trustees
Approval Date	07 July 2026
Effective Date	31 August 2026
Next Review	End of AY 2026/27 or following publication of the final ADEK policy
Version	1.0