



ST.JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, ABU DHABI

CULTURAL CONSIDERATION POLICY

(Adapted from ADEK policy on cultural consideration)

INTRODUCTION

St. Joseph's School ensures that members of the school community are aware of the culturally and nationally acceptable topics and practices in the educational context.

PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

- This policy serves as a guide for the entire school community to embrace cultural diversity while adhering to the laws of the UAE.
- In alignment with our school's vision and mission, and understanding the significance of cultural considerations in the UAE, St. Joseph's school practices will be adherence to the policy.
- The School will ensure that teaching and learning resources align with the UAE's cultural sensibilities.

POLICY

1. Adherence to UAE Legislation

Understanding and Respect:

- All members of our school community must understand, respect, and adhere to the requirements outlined in this policy.
- Adherence to the Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education (MoE, 2022) and other relevant circulars and legislation is mandatory.

Responsibility of the Principal

The principal shall ensure that school practices and the content of all teaching and learning resources align with and respect cultural consideration as regulated within the laws of the UAE in the following:

- a) "Respecting the constitution, laws, and orders issued by public authorities in implementation thereof, observance of public order and respect for public morals are a duty of all residents of the union"
- b) "Preserving the Islamic and Arab principles and values, public morals, and the values, traditions, and systems of the state"
- c) "Respect for national identity and sovereignty"

- d) To safeguard the integrity of our community by prohibiting the creation, importation, exportation, possession, acquisition, or transfer of any materials that contravene public morals.

2. Addressing Cultural Consideration in Schools

Implementation

1. *Induction and Refresher Training:* The School shall offer to arrange an orientation session focusing on cultural awareness for all new staff, parents, and students. Additionally, annual refresher training will be equally offered to returning staff, parents, and students to ensure the continuous upkeep of their understanding of cultural considerations within the UAE.
2. *Vetting Resources:* The School has developed protocols and methods for vetting, assessing, and choosing teaching and learning materials.
3. *Observation of UAE Cultural Practices:* St. Joseph's School shall always follow cultural customs such as singing the UAE national anthem daily, observing official public holidays and national celebrations, and adhering to protocols outlined in the Positions of their Highness' Pictures and Placements and Uses of Flags Manual regarding flags and portraits.
4. *Monitoring of School Communications:* The School will continuously oversee all official and unofficial communication channels pertaining to the school, including newsletters, social media platforms, and parent communication groups, to ensure that all stakeholders adhere to this policy.
5. *Response Mechanism for Non-Compliance:* The school has an effective processes and procedures for reporting and responding to any breaches of the cultural consideration policy within the school community.

Community Conduct: Members of the school community shall conduct themselves in ways that are mindful of cultural consideration, including the following:

1. Respecting the UAE's cultural and social norms, values, and traditions.
2. Refraining from (directly/indirectly) promoting inappropriate stereotypes, preconceptions, and assumptions about the UAE and the region.
3. Refraining from directly or indirectly encouraging any behavior, practice, or displays that are culturally inconsiderate, such as drug and alcohol use, smoking, violence, promoting alternative gender identity and sexual orientation, indoctrination, etc.
4. Refraining from using symbols, colors, or imagery associated with any movement/beliefs related to political, social, or extremist religious groups which are culturally inconsiderate, such as misrepresentations of prominent figures, images that are gratuitously violent or sexual in nature, representation of pride movement, extremist ideas, etc.).

5. Refraining from conducting any activities and/or using any content that leads to the indoctrination and promotion of religious/political extremism, racism, bullying, and all other forms of discrimination.

6. Refraining from holding rallies, demonstrations, and protests on school premises or while holding a school-related event offsite.

7. Ensuring that one's appearance is culturally considerate. Examples include but are not limited to:

a. Covering visible body tattoos and any type of piercings for men and women.

b. Appropriate clothing in line with the school's dress code.

8. Ensuring the appropriateness of all school-organized events and celebrations to UAE culture, in adherence with this policy.

9. Adhering to the laws of the UAE by conducting themselves accordingly.

Learning Resources and Activities:

School has established a **Resource Selection Committee** to ensure that all teaching and learning resources are vetted for cultural consideration.

| Name | Position | Responsibility |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Sr. Suranjana (Pristina Rocha) | Principal | Whole School |
| Sr. Minette | Vice-Principal | Primary |
| Mrs. Sameera | Subject Head -Moe | MOE subjects |
| Mrs. Ruchi | Activity Coordinator | Events |
| Mrs. Seena & Library committee | Librarian | Library Resources |
| Mrs. Gigy & Subject leaders | Head of Curriculum | Learning resources |
| Mr. John & IT committee | IT head | ICT |

Responsibilities

The committee members shall ensure the following while reviewing and selecting any teaching and learning resource:

1.The suitability and appropriateness of the teaching and learning resources intended for a certain age group.

2. The suitability and appropriateness of the materials (topic/ content/ images) to the UAE culture, values, and national identity

3.The suitability and appropriateness of political topics as per the approved UAE Social Studies curriculum.

4. The schools has a process, to vet or verify the suitability of all resources, which includes a final signing-of by the head librarian, the Resource Selection Committee, and the Principal.

Topics in the Approved Curriculum:

- St. Joseph’s school shall use respectful and culturally considerate approaches, limiting the use of figurative explanation and scientific images when covering topics like biological reproduction, human evolution, or sex education. The parents shall be informed in advance, specifying the topics covered and assessments involved, allowing parents to excuse their child from the lesson with a written exemption.
- The school, when covering topics like revolution, wars, or potential violent conflicts, shall discuss and present the required content in a formal educational context, maintaining objectivity to avoid offensive imagery. The use of figurative explanation and scientific images will be limited to a manner that is respectful and culturally considerate to address relevant learning outcomes.
- The school shall teach potentially controversial topics required for high-stakes exams after obtaining approval from ADEK.
- In cases where controversial topics arise outside approved curricula due to high-profile current events, schools shall follow UAE government guidance and comply with directives from relevant federal or local authorities.

3.Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers shall

- “Respect national identity and sovereignty”
- Conduct additional screening to ensure resources used and content presented to students are culturally appropriate.
- Prepare and vet all online resources in advance of all lessons to ensure they are free of any culturally inconsiderate content.
- Avoid indoctrination when discussing political or cultural matters in class.
- Immediately report any content discovered in resources that may violate this policy to senior leaders and the Principal.
- Ensure adherence to this policy, including data confidentiality requirements when posting school information on public forums, such as social media channels.

Senior leaders shall

- Review and approve lesson plans and resources developed by teachers.
- Ensure all resources and materials selected and/or developed are age- and culturally considerate and have been approved by the school’s vetting process.
- Supervise the use of resources and materials during lessons to ensure adherence to this policy.
- Continuously monitor the content of the approved digital resources to ensure compliance with the regulations, policies, guidelines, and circulars issued by ADEK.
- Immediately report any content discovered in resources that are non-compliant with this policy to the Principal.

Head librarians shall:

- Review, vet, and sign of all resources requested and ensure that they are compliant with relevant requirements and are age- and culturally appropriate.
- Submit the list of acceptable and non-acceptable resources to the Resource Selection Committee for review and approval.
- Continuously monitor digital and non-digital resources and textbooks including their usage to ensure compliance with the regulations, policies, guidelines, and circulars issued by ADEK.
- Immediately report any content discovered in resources that may violate this policy to the Principal and remove the resource from circulation.

Principal shall:

- Implement and document the school-level process for the selection of teaching and learning resources.
- Provide, upon request, the full set of documentation for the vetting process as indicated
- Communicate school-level processes and procedures to all staff.
- Ensure all resources and materials selected and/or developed at the school are age- and culturally appropriate.
- Ensure the delivery of cultural consideration awareness induction and
- refresher training.
- Report any content discovered in resources that are non-compliant with
- this policy to ADEK and ensure it is immediately removed from circulation.

Ensure relevant staff:

- 1) Entrusts parents to oversee their child's use of the internet at home to minimize their exposure to inappropriate content.
- 2) Expects parents to immediately report to both the school and ADEK Parent Hotline (800 2335) any content in school resources that is non-compliant with this policy and always exercise caution when posting school information on public forums and social media channels.

Compliance to the Policy

ADEK will actively monitor compliance with this policy and investigate any reported violations. Sanctions for non-compliance, subject to ADEK Chairman's approval, may include revocation of appointment letters, warning letters to the school and investors, and fines ranging from 50,000 AED to 350,000 AED. Continued non-compliance may result in legal action and penalties as per ADEK regulations, policies, and Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021. ADEK retains the right to intervene if the school fails to meet its obligations.

Prestina Rocha

Principal
St. Joseph's School



Date: 31 March 2024

Next review Date: 30 March 2025