

CULTURAL CONSIDERATION POLICY

Introduction

At Al Adhwa Private School, we recognize the vital role we play in celebrating the cultural diversity of our community, the UAE, and the world. Our Cultural Consideration Policy aims to guide our school community in understanding and respecting the unique cultural norms and practices of the UAE. By implementing this policy, we will foster an environment of understanding and tolerance within our school.

Aims

- To support Al Adhwa Private School in raising awareness of culturally appropriate topics and practices within the UAE.
- To clearly outline expected practices at Al Adhwa Private School to ensure compliance with UAE legislation.
- To ensure all resources used at Al Adhwa Private School reflect the UAE's cultural sensibilities.

Definitions

These definitions are adapted from the ADEK Cultural Consideration Policy (2024).

Cultural Consideration	Knowledge, awareness, and understanding of appropriate topics and practices of a culture.
Culture	The set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions, and beliefs (UNESCO, 2001).
Indoctrination	Biased teaching to further a doctrine, principle, religion, or ideology.
Legislation	The set of legal documents (laws, bylaws, regulations, policies, directives, standards, rules, etc.) that govern and regulate practices in a specific area of jurisdiction.
Malicious Intent	Having a predetermined purpose to disregard cultural consideration and consequently cause cultural offense.
National Identity	A system of social and moral values associated with the lifestyle of the people in the past, present, and future (Ministry of Culture and Youth, as cited in Official Portal of the UAE Government, n.d.).
School Community	Staff, students, parents/families, alumni, and others, who share responsibility for one another, provide an environment for intellectual learning, and create a healthy social atmosphere where all the members of the community are supported.
Teaching and Learning Resources	Any written, audio-visual, and/or e-learning/ technological document, material, object, event, person, etc. that supports and enhances teaching and learning, directly or indirectly

Adherence to UAE Legislation

At Al Adhwa Private School, we are committed to ensuring that all members of our school community understand, respect, and adhere to the requirements outlined in this policy, as well as the relevant UAE legislation. This includes the Code of Conduct for Education Professionals in General Education (MoE, 2022), MoE Circular No. 1 of 2022 regarding private school compliance with national identity requirements, MoE Circular No. 1 of 2023 promoting a safe school environment, and all other applicable UAE laws.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that our school practices and all teaching and learning resources align with and respect cultural considerations as mandated by UAE law. Key points include:

1. Respect for UAE Constitution and Laws: All residents are duty-bound to respect the constitution, laws, and public morals (Article 44, Constitution of the UAE).
2. Preservation of Islamic and Arabic Principles: It is essential to uphold Islamic values and the traditions of the state (Clause 11, Article 11, Federal Decree Law No. 18 of 2020).
3. Respect for National Identity: Emphasizing respect for the UAE's national identity and sovereignty is paramount (Clause 12, Article 11, Federal Decree Law No. 18 of 2020).
4. Public Morality: Penalties apply for any actions that violate public morals, including the distribution of inappropriate materials (Article 416, Federal Decree Law No. 31 of 2021).

Addressing Cultural Consideration in Schools

To ensure that Al Adhwa Private School meets the requirements of the Cultural Consideration Policy, we commit to:

- Providing induction training on cultural consideration awareness for all new staff, parents, and students.
- Offering annual refresher training on UAE cultural considerations for returning staff, parents, and students.
- Establishing clear processes for vetting, reviewing, and selecting teaching and learning resources, in line with ADEK guidelines.
- Observing cultural practices such as singing the UAE national anthem daily, recognizing official public holidays and national celebrations, and adhering to protocols regarding flags and portraits.
- Monitoring all official and unofficial school communications (e.g., MS Teams post, email, social media) for compliance with the Cultural Consideration Policy.
- Creating systems for reporting and addressing any non-compliance with our school's and ADEK's Cultural Consideration Policy.

Language and Communication

At Al Adhwa Private School, while English is the primary language of instruction, we value Arabic as the official language of the UAE and the mother tongue of many families in our community. We support Arabic language learning for all students and staff to enhance communication within our school.

We will also provide training to raise awareness of cultural nuances, including verbal and nonverbal behaviors that are culturally sensitive. Careful planning of school events will ensure they do not conflict with religious observances or offend cultural sensibilities.

Community Conduct

Members of the Al Adhwa Private School community are expected to conduct themselves with

cultural mindfulness, including:

1. Respecting the UAE's cultural and social norms, values, and traditions.
2. Avoiding the promotion of inappropriate stereotypes and assumptions about the UAE.
3. Refraining from culturally inconsiderate behaviors, such as drug and alcohol use, smoking, and violence.
4. Avoiding symbols or imagery associated with extremist groups or movements that may be culturally insensitive.
5. Not engaging in activities that promote religious or political extremism, racism, or discrimination.
6. Maintaining a culturally appropriate appearance, including covering visible tattoos and following the school dress code.
7. Ensuring that all school-organized events align with UAE cultural expectations and laws.

Learning Resources and Activities

Al Adhwa Private School has established a Resource Selection Committee to ensure that all teaching and learning materials are vetted for cultural appropriateness. This includes:

- Assessing the suitability of resources for specific age groups.
- Ensuring that materials align with UAE culture, values, and national identity.
- Maintaining evidence of compliance with this policy and the vetting process, which will include final approval from the Head Librarian, the Resource Selection Committee, and the Principal.

Topics in the Approved Curriculum

When addressing potentially controversial topics, Al Adhwa Private School will ensure:

- Any lessons on biological reproduction, human evolution, or sex education are handled respectfully, with prior notification to parents.
- Discussions on revolutions, wars, or violent conflicts are presented objectively and in an educational context.
- Controversial topics outside the approved curriculum will be addressed in accordance with directives from UAE authorities.

By adhering to these guidelines, Al Adhwa Private School aims to create a culturally respectful and enriching environment for all members of our community.

Roles and Responsibilities

At Al Adhwa Private School, clear roles and responsibilities are essential for upholding our Cultural Consideration Policy. Below are the defined responsibilities for teachers, middle/senior leaders, head librarians, and the principal.

Teachers Shall:

- Develop lesson plans using resources that have undergone the school's vetting process.
- Conduct additional screenings to ensure all resources and content presented to students are culturally appropriate.
- Prepare and vet all online resources before lessons to ensure they are free of culturally inconsiderate content, including images, texts, and terminologies.
- Avoid indoctrination when discussing political or cultural matters in class.
- Immediately report any content found in resources that may violate this policy to the middle/senior leaders and the principal.
- Ensure compliance with this policy, including confidentiality requirements, when posting

school information on public forums and social media.

Middle/Senior Leaders Shall:

- Review and approve lesson plans and resources developed by teachers.
- Ensure that all selected or developed resources and materials are age-appropriate, culturally considerate, and have been approved through 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 approved digital resources to ensure compliance with ADEK regulations and guidelines.
- Immediately report any non-compliant content discovered in resources to the principal.

Librarians Shall:

- Review, vet, and approve all requested resources to ensure compliance with relevant requirements and cultural appropriateness.
- Submit a list of acceptable and non-acceptable resources to the Resource Selection Committee for review and approval.
- Continuously monitor both digital and non-digital resources, ensuring their usage complies with ADEK regulations and guidelines.
- Immediately report any content found in resources that may violate this policy to the principal and remove the resource from circulation.

Principal Shall:

- Form a Resource Selection Committee to review, vet, and approve all resources.
- Implement and document the school-level process for selecting teaching and learning resources as per policy guidelines.
- Provide the full set of documentation for the vetting process to ADEK upon request.
- Communicate school-level processes and procedures to all staff members.
- Ensure all resources and materials selected or developed are age- and culturally appropriate.
- Oversee the delivery of cultural consideration awareness induction and refresher training.
- Report any non-compliant content found in resources to ADEK and ensure its immediate removal from circulation.
- Engage parents in communicating the importance of overseeing their child's internet use at home to minimize exposure to inappropriate content, and encourage them to report any non-compliant content found in school resources to both the school and the Abu Dhabi Contact Centre (800-555).

By clearly defining these roles, Al Adhwa Private School aims to maintain a respectful and culturally sensitive educational environment for all students and staff.

Compliance

Al Adhwa Private School acknowledges that ADEK will actively monitor compliance with this Cultural Consideration Policy. Any violations will be thoroughly investigated, and if malicious intent is established, it may result in a determination of non-compliance. Such findings could lead to sanctions as deemed appropriate by ADEK.

We are committed to maintaining a culture of respect and understanding, and we will take all necessary steps to ensure adherence to this policy throughout our school community.

(Attached is the School's "Learning Resource Vetting Policy")

Ms. Amira Gafer Goraish
Al Adhwa Private School





AL ADHWA PRIVATE SCHOOL

APS Policy
January. 11,
2024

Learning Resources Vetting Policy

In Align with the Cultural Consideration Policy

Introduction:

Purpose: Ensure a secure and conducive learning atmosphere.

Focus: Alignment with Cultural Consideration Policy and school vision.

APS establishes a secure and conducive learning atmosphere for our students. In order to guarantee that the educational materials (Textbooks, digital resources, learning resources and library resources) align with the Cultural Consideration Policy and the school vision, the school has updated the vetting procedures regarding the above mentioned resources. The school now has a policy in place to comply with policy requirements, as outlined below:

Resource Selection Committee

The Resource Selection Committee plays a vital role in ensuring the appropriate selection and use of resources that align with our commitment to cultural consideration policy. This committee comprises Middle Leaders, the librarian, Academic Advisor and the Vice Principal (see attached file).

The vetting committee Operation:

Department Team Meetings:

- Teachers in department meetings discuss any concerns or issues related to teaching and learning resources.
- During these meetings, teachers can share their observations and raise any concerns regarding the cultural sensitivity, inclusivity, or appropriateness of resources that should not be used.
- The committee members collectively review and address these concerns and check all teaching resources, ensuring that the chosen resources align with the Cultural Consideration Policy.
- The SLT meets the resources committee including the librarian to review the committee works.
- The purpose of meetings is to review any concerns related to resources.
- The committee, visually inspects the books/resources / digital resources for any inappropriate materials.
- The committee members engage in discussions, evaluating the appropriateness and compliance of selected resources.
- The Committee members function collectively for accountability to uphold values of cultural understanding, inclusivity, and respect.



Through regular discussions and thorough reviews, we strive to create a safe learning environment, as per the **vetting process**:

1. Vetting of all teaching and learning resources:

- All textbooks and teaching materials are placed into secure storage until the full vetting process has been undertaken.
- **Members of staff select books/resources including digital resources with knowledge of culturally sensitive issues:**
 - The school staff is required to understand culturally sensitive topics and must choose books/resources / digital resources accordingly.
 - Stay updated with any available/the most recent list of banned books from the Ministry of Education (MOE) to ensure cultural appropriateness.
 - Banned Booklists, publishers and authors are submitted to the librarian and shared with the committee members, teachers and all staff members for content review. The librarian carefully examines the submitted booklists to check for any inappropriate content or materials.
- During the purchasing process, great care is taken to source books/resources/digital resources that are suitable for our students and meet our quality standards.
- If any books/resources /digital resources are found to contain inappropriate content, they are removed from all purchasing orders.
- All books/ resources / digital **resources undergo** vetting, ensuring that only approved books/resources / digital resources are made available to students.
- The librarian scans and records all vetted and appropriate books into the school system for easy access and organization.
- The librarian circulates the books/digital resources, placing them in age-appropriate zones within the library for students to enjoy.

Implementation of the vetting policy ensures students have access to safe, respectful, and ambitious resources, fostering an enriching and secure learning experience.

Administration





Breaching Report Form - Cultural Consideration Policy

Reporter's name	
Contact information	
Date	
Type of breaching	
Reported to	
Description of breaching	

Action taken by authorized staff