

**RAHA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
GARDENS CAMPUS**

POLICIES

Policy title	Cultural Sensitivity Policy
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Prepared by	Name
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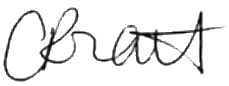
Approving Committee	Name	Signature
Vice Principal	Carol Michelle Pratt	

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Rationale

At Raha International School, we are committed to fostering an inclusive and culturally sensitive environment that respects and embraces the diversity of our student body, staff, and community. As a school operating in the United Arab Emirates, we recognise we thrive within an Islamic society and therefore cultural norms hold significant importance. This Cultural Sensitivity Policy serves as a guideline to ensure that everyone associated with our school community understands and respects the specific cultural norms and practices linked to the UAE. By adhering to this policy, we aim to promote understanding, tolerance, and harmony among all members of our school community.

Respect for Islamic Values and Traditions:

- a. We recognize and respect the Islamic faith as the predominant religion in the United Arab Emirates. All members of our school community should be aware of the Islamic values, traditions, and principles that form an integral part of the local culture.
- b. It is essential to respect the holy month of Ramadan and its significance to Muslims. During Ramadan, students, staff, and parents are expected to be mindful of fasting practices and refrain from eating, drinking, or smoking in public areas during fasting hours. We adhere to ADEK guidelines regarding acceptable timings for lessons, and an hiatus of extra-curricular activities and trips.
- c. The school will schedule classes and activities in a manner that respects and accommodates prayer times. Prayer rooms will be provided on campus to allow students and staff to observe their daily prayers.
- d. Modesty in dress is highly valued in the UAE. All members of our school community, including students, staff, and visitors, are expected to adhere to appropriate dress codes that align with cultural norms.

Language and Communication:

- a. English is the primary language of instruction in our school, but we acknowledge the importance of Arabic as the official language of the United Arab Emirates. We encourage students and staff to appreciate and learn Arabic as a means of embracing local culture and fostering communication with the wider community.
- b. While English is the primary language of communication, it is essential to be aware of cultural nuances in both verbal and non-verbal communication. Respectful and polite communication is emphasized, and offensive language, gestures, or behavior will not be tolerated.

Cultural Celebrations and Events:

- a. Our school recognises and celebrates the diversity of our student body. Cultural celebrations and events will be organised to promote an understanding and appreciation of different cultures, including Islamic festivals such as Eid al-Adha, and the Ramadan Community Iftar.
- b. Sensitivity will be exercised when planning events, ensuring they do not conflict with religious observances or cultural sensitivities. Activities will be inclusive and respectful of the religious and cultural backgrounds of all students and staff.

Curriculum and Teaching:

- a. Our curriculum will reflect an inclusive approach that recognises and respects the cultural heritage and contributions of the UAE and the wider Islamic world.
- b. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate Islamic values, traditions, and contributions into their lessons, where appropriate, to foster cultural understanding and appreciation among students.

Professional Development and Training:

- a. Staff members will receive ongoing professional development and training to enhance their cultural sensitivity and awareness of the UAE's norms and values.
- b. We will provide resources and support to staff members to deepen their understanding of the UAE culture, enabling them to create an inclusive learning environment for all students.

Conflict Resolution and Grievances:

- a. Any conflicts or grievances arising due to cultural differences will be addressed promptly and sensitively through established conflict resolution processes. Mediation and dialogue will be encouraged to ensure mutual understanding and respect.

Specific Guidance:

ADEK has issued the following guidelines for schools to abide by with regards to cultural awareness and sensitivity in the UAE:

1. It is against UAE educational law to mention Israel as a country.
2. There is no mention of Judaism as a religion, or anything mentioning the words Jew or Jewish.
3. 6 pointed stars are not be used or displayed.

4. World War II topics dealing with Hitler and the Holocaust are not mentioned unless special permission has been given by ADEK for inclusion in an internationally-established curriculum.
5. Erroneous information (or defamation) about Islam or the Prophet Mohamed (PBUH) must not be shared or seen.
6. There can be no drawings or pictures depicting any Islamic prophet, Allah or Angels.
7. The resource must not be strongly negative or emotional.
8. There must be no pictures or drawings which violate public manners.
9. There is nothing that promotes negative habits such as drug abuse, mixing of men and women, promiscuity, drinking alcohol, smoking, and so on.
10. There are no alcohol, love scenes, non-Muslim worshipping, or entertainment places (night clubs etc.) in any resource or presentation.
11. There are no sensitive images of abuse (e.g. child abuse, fetal alcohol syndrome).
12. It is not permitted to falsely demonstrate historical fact.
13. There must be no erroneous information (or defamation) of the government, history, heritage or society of the UAE.
14. There must be no pictures, drawings or mention of pigs, pork or pork products.
15. There must be no mention or illustration of magic in any of its forms.
16. Evolution must not be presented as a factual account of Man's development.
17. There must be no detailed references to family celebrations and commemorations such as births, marriages and funerals.
18. Communism as a political movement must not be mentioned unless an exemption is provided from ADEK as it relates to a required international teaching curriculum.
19. There must be no customs that contradict the teaching of Islam.
20. There must be no instances of swearing, tribalism, and defamation of Islam, sexual language, racism or disrespectful language.
21. Rainbows must only be present as a scientific phenomenon following the colours (ROYGBIV) in that specific order, and only in the context as its existence in meteorological phenomena.

Revision Log

Date	Changes	Reviewed By
May 2023	New policy	Carol Pratt
Aug 2024	Full Policy Review	Carol Pratt