



SCHOOL POLICY ON COEDUCATION

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Introduction

Sunrise English Private School (SEPS) operates within the cultural, social, and regulatory framework of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Traditionally, schools in Abu Dhabi followed single-gender education models; however, with the growth of international education systems, coeducation has become an accepted and widely practiced approach.

In line with the ADEK School Cultural Consideration Policy, SEPS recognizes the importance of maintaining a balance between educational best practices and respect for local cultural values. Certain situations require clear guidelines regarding coeducation and the gender of staff assigned to specific roles or responsibilities within the school.

This policy outlines the school's approach to coeducation, defines the basic requirements related to student grouping and staff gender considerations, and ensures compliance with ADEK regulations while promoting a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment for all students.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the requirements for SEPS regarding coeducation and gender-related considerations within the school environment. Specifically, this policy aims to:

- Establish clear guidelines on the sharing and separation of school spaces based on gender, in accordance with cultural norms, student age, and regulatory requirements.
- Define requirements related to the gender of staff assigned to specific roles, duties, or learning environments, based on the school type and student grade levels.

This policy ensures that SEPS maintains compliance with ADEK regulations while fostering a safe, respectful, and culturally appropriate educational setting for all students.





Definition

Coeducational	Having students of both genders interacting in a defined space.
Cycle	A stage in the primary and secondary educational process and is classified in Abu Dhabi as the following: Kindergarten (Pre-KG/FS1-KG2/Y1), Cycle 1 (G1/Y2-G5/Y6), Cycle 2 (G6/Y7- G8/Y9), and Cycle 3 (G9/Y10-G12/Y13). Private schools teaching Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum may follow MoE cycles: KG, Cycle 1 (G1-G4), Cycle 2 (G5-G8), and Cycle 3 (G9-G12).
Gender Status	The classification of a school depending on its gender mixture, defined as coeducational, shared, or single-gendered.
Nudity	The state of not wearing any clothes.
Physical Education (PE)	The subject concerned with developing students' physical literacy and their ability to use their literacy to perform in a range of activities for the progressive development of their physical health. PE is planned, progressive learning (theory and practice) that takes place in a timetabled class with a documented curriculum that is delivered to all students by a qualified PE teacher. For the purpose of this policy, any reference to PE also includes other physical activity-based subjects where intentional physical contact between genders is possible (e.g., dance, yoga).
Section	An administrative grouping of students (e.g., by cycle, grade, class, bus, or any other dividing parameter). A section can have a different gender status than that of the school (e.g., a school may be coeducational in Cycle 1 but have single-gendered sections for Cycle 2 and above).
Shared	Having both boys and girls on a campus, but with completely separate sections for each gender. Students share common facilities (e.g., labs), but use them at different times to ensure that there is no interaction between genders.
Single-Gendered (SG)	Having students of only one gender in a defined space.
Toilet Block	A structure or designated area within the school or outdoor setting that contains multiple toilets and washbasins.





Policy

1. Gender Status

- 1.1 **Communication of School Gender Status:** SEPS clearly communicates its gender status on the official school website and on all student registration forms.
 - 1.1.1 Where different gender arrangements apply to specific grades or educational cycles, prior approval from ADEK is obtained, and the approved status is published on the school website for transparency to parents and stakeholders.
- 1.2 Coeducation in Kindergarten and Cycle 1: SEPS follows ADEK regulations permitting coeducation in Kindergarten and Cycle 1. Accordingly, all classes up to and including Grade 5 operate as coeducational, irrespective of the overall gender status of the school.
- 1.3 Permanent Gender Status Conversion: SEPS does not implement any change to its gender status, whether for the entire school or for a specific cycle or grade, without prior approval from ADEK.
 1. The school provides proof of consent from the majority (more than 50%) of parents of students enrolled in the whole school or in the specific cycle or grade being considered for conversion to a coeducational class.
 2. The school completes all required transitional arrangements at least one full academic year prior to the implementation of any gender status change for the whole school or a specific cycle or grade. These arrangements include timely communication with parents and necessary modifications to school facilities, such as ensuring adequate toilet facilities for both genders.





1.4 Temporary Gender Status Conversion (Single Class): SEPS allows the temporary conversion of a specific single-gender class to a coeducational class for a defined term or one academic year, in accordance with ADEK regulations and the conditions outlined below.

1. **Parent Communication:** Where SEPS operates single-gender or shared classes offering elective, optional, or advanced subject groupings under the CBSE curriculum, parents are informed at the beginning of each academic year about the possibility of temporary coeducational grouping. Such arrangements may be required due to factors such as low student enrollment or staff availability. All temporary conversions follow the requirements of this policy.
2. **Approval and Documentation:** Before implementing any temporary conversion, the school submits an official request to ADEK, supported by clear justification and relevant documentation.
 - a. **Majority Parent Consent:** The school obtains written consent from more than 75% of parents of students enrolled in the class identified for temporary conversion to a coeducational class.
 - b. **Class Location and Facilities:** The school selects an appropriate classroom location that maintains privacy, safety, and dignity for all students. This includes suitable arrangements for separate entry and exit and access to adequate toilet facilities for the guest gender.
 - c. **Student Accommodations:** The school provides appropriate accommodations for students whose parents do not consent to the temporary conversion. These





accommodations include, where feasible, physical separation within the classroom, use of screens or partitions, alternative seating arrangements, or supervised online learning options.

2. Gender Restrictions

2.1 KG (Cycle): Class teachers and all teaching support staff in KG are female only. There are no gender restrictions for teachers in other grades or cycles, except for cases specified in Section 2.2 (Physical Education).

2.2 PE (Physical Education):

2.2.1 Regardless of the school's gender status, SEPS follows the gender requirements for PE classes as outlined in **Table 1: Gender Restrictions for PE**.

Table 1. Gender Restrictions for PE

Class	Grades	Gender Status of School/ Section	Teacher/ Adult Gender
PE	Kindergarten (KG1 and KG2)	Coeducational	Male or Female
PE	Grade 1 – Grade 5	Coeducational	Male or Female
PE	Grade 6 – Grade 12	SG Male	Male
PE	Grade 6 – Grade 12	SG Female	Female

2.2.2 From Grade 6 onwards, students are organized into separate male and female sections for PE classes. In exceptional circumstances, SEPS **will request** approval from ADEK to conduct coeducational PE classes. For any coeducational physical activities, written consent **will be obtained** from parents. Alternative arrangements **will be provided** for students whose parents do not consent, such as land-based training, dry-land exercises, or the use of screens to maintain privacy and comfort.





2.3 Changing Rooms and Spaces

1. Changing rooms are separated by gender, or their use is staggered to ensure that only one gender occupies the space at any given time.
2. Bathrooms **are separated** by gender for all grades, except KG, in compliance with ADEK requirements.
3. Nudity is prohibited throughout the campus, and students **follow** modest changing practices in all designated changing areas.
4. Completely separated spaces **are provided** for any activity that requires students to change clothes to the level of undergarments or beyond (for example, costume changes during a performance).
5. Changing clothes to the level of undergarments or beyond **is not permitted** outside designated changing rooms or spaces for any activity on school premises.

2.4 Prayer Rooms:

1. The school provides separate male and female prayer rooms with ablution facilities for use by both staff and students.
2. For Cycle 1, where separate prayer rooms are not feasible, a single prayer room **can be shared**, with usage times staggered to ensure that only one gender uses the space at any given time.

2.5 Gender Restrictions for Other Staff:

1. The school follows gender requirements for bus supervisors, cleaners, and nurses as detailed in Tables 2-4.
2. When the school has both a male and a female nurse, the clinic provides two separate care spaces to accommodate each gender.
3. Male security guards are accompanied by an appointed female staff member when entering a female-only section during an emergency, to the greatest extent possible.





Table 2. Gender Restrictions for Bus Supervisors

Grades	Gender Status of School	Staff Gender
Grade 5 and below	Coeducational	Female
Grade 6 and above	SG Male	Male
Grade 6 and above	SG Female	Female

Table 3. Gender Restrictions for Cleaners*

Grades	Gender Status of School/ Section	Staff Gender
Grade 5 and below	Coeducational	Female
Grade 6 and above	SG Male	Male
Grade 6 and above	SG Female	Female

*Gender restrictions for cleaners apply during official working hours and when cleaning outside of working hours is in progress, clear visible signage/ notification is required indicating if there is a cleaner of the opposite gender tending to the concerned space.

Table 4. Gender Restrictions for Nurses*

Grades	Gender Status of School/ Section	Staff Gender
Kindergarten (KG1 & KG2)	Any	Female
Grade 1 – Grade 5	Coeducational	Female (as a minimum; but additional male nurses may be employed to cater to male students)
Grade 6 and above	SG Male	Male
Grade 6 and above	SG Female	Female

*While it is preferable for students in a coeducational school in grade 1 and above to be treated by a nurse of the same gender, if this is not possible due to an emergency, the student is entitled to request the presence of a third party adult of the same gender.





3 Policy Awareness:

1. Awareness sessions **are organized** to ensure that all members of the school community—including students, staff, parents, and visitors—are informed of this policy and understand how it applies within the school.

4. Compliance

This policy is effective at SEPS from the start of the Academic Year 2024/25 (Fall Term). SEPS ensures full compliance with the requirements of this policy by the beginning of the Academic Year 2025/26 (Fall Term).

Approved By:



Dr. Thakur S. Mulchandani
School Director/Principal