

OAKTREE PRIMARY SCHOOL

An Athena Education School

CURRICULUM DESIGN, ADAPTATION AND MODIFICATION POLICY

British National Curriculum & UAE Ministry of Education Curriculum

Policy Title	Curriculum Design, Adaptation and Modification Policy
Institution	Oaktree Primary School
Operator	Athena Education
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School Leader Signature	

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1. Policy Statement

Oaktree Primary School, as part of Athena Education, provides a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that is rooted in the English National Curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), thoughtfully adapted to our context in Dubai, and fully inclusive of the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Education (MoE) mandatory subjects and national priorities.

We believe that every child is entitled to a high-quality curriculum that builds strong knowledge and skills, reflects and celebrates the culture, values and heritage of the UAE, and is designed and modified so that all learners can access it and succeed. This policy sets out how the School designs its curriculum, how it adapts it to the UAE context and the requirements of the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) and the MoE, and how it modifies it to meet the needs of every pupil.

2. Purpose and Aims

Through this policy, the School aims to:

- Provide a broad, balanced, ambitious and coherent curriculum based on the English National Curriculum and the EYFS;
- Fully meet the UAE MoE mandatory requirements and the expectations of the KHDA;
- Embed UAE national identity, culture, heritage and values throughout the curriculum;
- Adapt the curriculum so that it is relevant and meaningful in the Dubai context;
- Modify the curriculum so that all learners — including students of determination, those learning English or Arabic as an additional language, and the more able — can access it and achieve;
- Ensure clear progression, careful sequencing and high expectations for all;
- Evaluate the impact of the curriculum and improve it continuously.

3. Scope

This policy applies to the design, adaptation and modification of the curriculum across the Early Years and the primary phase, and to all subjects — including the English National Curriculum subjects and the UAE MoE mandatory subjects. It applies to all teaching staff and to curriculum, year group and subject leaders, and should be read alongside the School's related teaching, assessment and inclusion policies.

4. Curriculum Principles

The School's curriculum is guided by the following principles:

- Ambitious and inclusive — high expectations for every child, with a curriculum designed so all can access it;
- Broad and balanced — a full range of subjects, knowledge, skills and experiences;
- Coherent and well-sequenced — knowledge and skills build deliberately over time;
- Locally rooted and globally minded — celebrating UAE identity while developing thoughtful global citizens;
- Compliant — fully meeting MoE and KHDA mandatory requirements;
- Evidence-informed — designed, adapted and reviewed in the light of its impact on learning;

- Pupil-centred — modified to meet the needs of all learners.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Strategic Governance Advisory Board (SGAB)	Oversees curriculum quality and ensures statutory and regulatory compliance with MoE and KHDA requirements.
Principal	Holds overall accountability for the quality, breadth and compliance of the curriculum.
Vice Principal	Leads the design, coherence and quality of the Primary curriculum across the School.
Head of EYFS (HoEYFS)	Leads the design and delivery of the EYFS curriculum in the Early Years.
Head of MoE Subjects (HoMoE)	Leads the UAE mandatory subjects — Arabic A and B, Islamic Studies A and B, Moral Education A, MSCS B and Social Studies A — ensuring full alignment with MoE standards and KHDA requirements. Here, 'A' denotes first-language Arabic speakers and 'B' Arabic as an additional language.
Head of Inclusion	Leads the modification of the curriculum for students of determination and EAL learners; oversees the deployment of Teaching Assistants and ILSAs.
Teachers	Plan, adapt and modify the curriculum for the pupils in their classes, with high expectations for all.
Teaching Assistants (TAs)	Support teaching and learning across the class, including adapted and modified provision, under the direction of the teacher.
Individual Learning Support Assistants (ILSAs)	Provide dedicated 1:1 support for Tier 3 students of determination, helping them to access the curriculum.

6. Curriculum Design (English National Curriculum & EYFS)

The School's curriculum is built on the English National Curriculum and, in the Early Years, the EYFS framework. Curriculum design is shaped by a clear intent (what we want pupils to know and be able to do), a thoughtful implementation (how it is taught, sequenced and resourced) and a focus on impact (the difference it makes to pupils' learning).

Knowledge and skills are sequenced so that they build progressively and coherently, breadth and balance are maintained across all subjects, and the curriculum is ambitious for every learner. Reading and language are prioritised as the foundation of access to the whole curriculum. Curriculum maps ensure full coverage, clear progression and coherence across year groups and phases.

7. UAE Mandatory Subjects and National Identity

As a private school in Dubai, the School fully delivers the UAE MoE mandatory subjects in line with MoE curriculum standards and KHDA requirements, using the MoE-approved standards and textbooks where required and suitably qualified, designated teachers. These subjects are:

- Arabic — as a first language for Arab pupils, and as an additional language for non-Arab pupils;
- Islamic Education — for Muslim pupils (Arab and non-Arab);
- Moral, Social and Cultural Studies (MSC) / UAE Social Studies — developing moral values, social understanding and knowledge of UAE culture and heritage.

Across these subjects, the designation “A” refers to first-language Arabic speakers and “B” to pupils studying Arabic as an additional language.

The School follows the most recent MoE curriculum standards and the strengthened time allocations for these subjects, including standalone Social Studies/MSC lessons, and keeps its provision under review as requirements are updated by the MoE and the KHDA. UAE national identity, values, heritage and the celebration of national occasions are woven through the wider curriculum and the daily life of the School.

Mandatory provision

The School ensures full coverage of the MoE curriculum for all mandatory subjects, assigns responsibility for pupils’ outcomes to designated teachers, and makes explicit links to MoE standards within its curriculum documents, in line with KHDA’s mandatory curriculum requirements for private schools in Dubai.

8. Curriculum Adaptation (the UAE and Dubai Context)

The School adapts the English National Curriculum and the EYFS so that they are relevant and meaningful within the UAE and Dubai context. This includes drawing on local culture, environment, geography, history and examples; reflecting the multicultural community the School serves; and aligning with KHDA priorities and UAE national agendas, such as innovation, sustainability, moral values and wellbeing.

Adaptation ensures that the curriculum is both internationally benchmarked and locally rooted, without reducing its breadth, balance or ambition. It also reflects the School’s vision and the particular needs and interests of its community, so that learning is engaging, purposeful and connected to pupils’ lives in the UAE.

9. Curriculum Modification for Inclusion

The School modifies the curriculum so that all learners can access it and succeed, making reasonable adjustments and personalising provision while maintaining high expectations. Modification changes how pupils access learning, not the ambition the School holds for them.

- Students of determination (SEND) — scaffolding, adapted resources and tasks, targeted support and individual plans, in line with the SEND and Inclusion Policy;
- EAL and Arabic-as-an-additional-language learners — language support, scaffolding and visual aids so that language is not a barrier to learning;
- More able and higher-attaining pupils — enrichment, greater depth and appropriate challenge.

To support modified provision, Teaching Assistants (TAs) work across the class under the direction of the teacher, and Individual Learning Support Assistants (ILSAs) provide dedicated 1:1 support for Tier 3 students of determination so that they can access the curriculum. Appendix A provides a template to support teachers in planning adaptations and modifications for a unit of work.

10. Curriculum Coherence, Planning and Documentation

The English National Curriculum, the EYFS and the UAE mandatory subjects are brought together coherently, with meaningful cross-curricular links where they strengthen learning, while protecting the integrity and the required teaching time of each subject. Planning operates at long-term (curriculum maps), medium-term (units of work) and short-term (lessons) levels. Curriculum documents show coverage, sequencing and progression, and make explicit links to MoE standards for the mandatory subjects, with designated teachers responsible for outcomes.

11. Assessment, Monitoring and Impact

Assessment is aligned to the curriculum and used to check understanding, inform teaching and measure progress. Curriculum, year group and subject leaders monitor the implementation of the curriculum and evaluate its impact on pupils' learning — through means such as work scrutiny, learning walks, pupil voice and outcomes — rather than focusing on coverage alone. What is learned from this monitoring is used to refine and strengthen the curriculum.

12. Review and Quality Assurance

The curriculum is kept under regular review to ensure that it remains broad, balanced, ambitious, compliant and effective. This policy is reviewed at least annually, or sooner in response to changes in the English National Curriculum, MoE or KHDA requirements, the UAE inspection framework, the standards of Athena Education, or learning from practice and inspection.

13. Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies and documents:

- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) / Inclusion Policy
- English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy
- Arabic, Islamic Education and MSC subject policies
- Assessment Policy and More Able / Higher Attainers Policy
- EdTech Integration and Digital Skills policies

Appendix A: Curriculum Adaptation & Modification Template

Use this template when planning a unit of work, to record how the curriculum is adapted to the UAE context and modified so that all learners can access and succeed in it.

1. Unit / topic and year group:
2. Core learning objectives (English National Curriculum / EYFS):
3. UAE & local context adaptations:
4. Links to UAE mandatory subjects / national identity:
5. Modifications for students of determination (SEND):
6. Support for EAL / Arabic-as-an-additional-language learners:
7. Challenge for more able / higher attainers:
8. Resources and assessment:

Appendix B: UAE Mandatory Subjects Overview

This overview summarises the UAE MoE mandatory subjects delivered alongside the English National Curriculum. Provision follows the most recent MoE standards and KHDA requirements, which should be checked for current details and time allocations.

Subject	Applies To	Curriculum Reference	Notes
Arabic (First Language)	Arab pupils	MoE Arabic (first language) standards	Taught to MoE standards with approved resources; strengthened time allocations.
Arabic (Additional Language)	Non-Arab pupils	MoE Arabic as an additional language framework	Required weekly lessons; encouraged from the Early Years.
Islamic Education	Muslim pupils (Arab & non-Arab)	MoE Islamic Education standards	For non-Arabs, taught in the school's language of instruction.
Moral, Social & Cultural Studies (MSC) / UAE Social Studies	All pupils	MoE MSC / Social Studies standards & approved textbooks	Standalone lessons; designated teacher; develops UAE values and identity.
UAE National Identity & Values	All pupils	KHDA / UAE national priorities	Woven through the curriculum and school life; national occasions celebrated.