



**مدرسة الاتحاد الوطنية - أبوظبي**

**Al Ittihad National Private School-Abu Dhabi**

**Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy**

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# *Contents*

- **Statement of Intent**
- **SEN Department Philosophy and Objectives**
- **Special Educational Needs Definition**
- **Provision**
- **Individual education plan**
- **Roles and Responsibilities**
- **Student Support committee**
- **Special needs coordinator (SENCO)**
- **SEN teacher**
- **Teaching staff**
- **Parents**
- **Staff development**
- **External agencies**
- **Admission**
- **Gifted & Talented**
  - **Philosophy and Objectives for Gifted and Talented**
  - **Gifted and Talented Definition**
  - **Identification**
  - **Provision for the Gifted and Talented Students**

- **Monitoring and evaluation**
- **Advanced Learning Plan**
- **Roles and Responsibilities**
- **Review of Policy**

## **Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy**

### **Statement of Intent**

Ittihad National Private School is committed to inclusive education. We intend to meet the academic and the affective needs of all students who are admitted to Ittihad National Private School, including those identified as gifted or talented and those with special educational needs.

### **SEN Department Philosophy and Objectives**

Ittihad National Private School believes that our children, including those identified as having Special Educational Needs have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum. We are committed to meeting the educational needs of students with mild to moderate Special Educational Needs in the least restricted environment. We aim to:

- Foster a positive and accepting inclusive culture throughout the school which values individual differences.
- Promote positive perceptions of students with SEN and value any achievements whether they are social, emotional, cognitive or physical.
- Build confidence and raise self- esteem to enable students reach their full academic and personal potential.
- Ensure that there is a consistent, whole-school approach to the identification, support, and teaching of students with SEN throughout the school
- Use our best endeavors to remove barriers to learning by providing high quality differentiated instruction.
- Empower teachers to make appropriate provision for all their students through appropriate support, information, and advice.
- Provide and encourage continuous staff professional development as well as sharing of good practice in relation to SEN.
- Develop a partnership with parents and involve them in the formulation and the review of their child's Individual Education Plan.
- Seek the views of the child and take them into account, where appropriate.

## **Special Educational Needs**

“The term Special Educational Needs is the overall description for any disability, disorder, difficulty, impairment, exceptionality or other additional need that affects a student’s access to learning and their educational performance. These students require additional provision beyond that provided in general classrooms in order to achieve greatest benefit from the curriculum.”

*ADEC, Special Education Policy and Procedures Handbook (2012)*

### **Provision**

SEN is a whole school responsibility; every member of staff should contribute to the education of SEN students. The essence of effective SEN provision is teamwork and cooperation amongst team members. The team consists of everyone involved with the education and well being of the students: Academic advisor, section principal, coordinators, teachers, social counsellor, SEN teacher, SENCO, and the nurse.

Students with SEN are the responsibility of all teachers and differentiation is the key to making the curriculum accessible. Some students may require additional support inside or outside the classroom; individually or in a small group situation, depending on their individual needs.

### **Procedure:**

Ittihad national Private school recognizes the importance of early identification and intervention. The school undertakes a graduated approach to the identification, assessment and support of students with SEN. This is carried out through 3 stages. The nature of the learning difficulty is initially identified by the class teacher. Evidence can also come from parents or other teachers.

*(SEN referral and identification is detailed in a flow chart)*

### **Stage 1. Differentiation**

- The educational needs of the majority of students will be met in the classroom. The teacher designs instruction to meet the student’s individual needs.
- The teacher plans activities at the appropriate level to enable progress to be achieved.
- The teacher may differentiate the content, the process, the product, and the learning environment.

- The teacher takes into consideration the students' learning styles and concentrates on students' strengths to compensate for their weaknesses.

## **Stage 2. Learning Support Program/ Intervention**

- Learning Support/ intervention is initiated to students who are still experiencing difficulties despite differentiated instructions.
- Students are supported in small groups or through in class provision for a limited period of 6 to 8 weeks. The intervention plan is based on scientific based research and is customized for the needs of the students. It also provides strategies for teachers, parents, and students to use.
- The class teacher remains responsible for working with the students on a day-to-day basis. She/he will retain responsibility even where the interventions may involve group or one-to one teaching away from the classroom. She/he will work closely with the SENCo to evaluate the impact of intervention.
- After the period of 6-8 weeks, an evaluation will be held to determine next actions.
- If the student reaches the expected level, a meeting with the parents will then be arranged to share suggestions for supporting and maintaining the expected levels at home.
- Teachers and members of the student support committee will continue to monitor the student's progress.

## **Stage 3. SEN Support**

Where the student does not make adequate progress, despite the support provided by the school, then parents are advised to seek a comprehensive assessment by external support agencies.

- The parents should ensure that the assessment takes place as soon as possible, so that the school can best meet the student's need.
- The resulting diagnosis will be supported by an IEP, written by the SENCo in consultation with the parents, SEN teacher, the social counselor, the student's teachers and, where appropriate, the student. (Refer to Process of Developing IEP)
- The school will provide the student with specialized intervention by the SEN teacher.

- Members of the student support committee will review the progress on a termly basis.

### **Individual Education Plan**

An Individual Education Plan is developed for students who have formal documentation of a diagnosis from an Educational psychologist or other specialists and therapists. The IEP will be communicated to teachers, parents, and other professionals. When appropriate, students will be encouraged to participate in their own IEP process. The IEP will be reviewed at least twice a year.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The Principal**

- Encourages and supports the integration of pupils with SEN in the school community.
- The principal decides the school's general policy and approach to meet the needs of SEN students.
- Ensures that the best possible provision is made for all pupils with SEN.
- Monitors the effectiveness of the school's SEN policy and provision.
- Ensures that teachers are delivering high quality differentiated instruction through the performance appraisal process.
- Insists that objectives for Senior Leadership Team and the school development plan include SEN.

### **Student Support Committee**

The Student Support Committee consists of the Academic Advisor, Section Principal, SENCo, ELL coordinator, Social counselor, Guidance counselor, and the Nurse. The mission of the Student Support Committee is to support the academic, social, emotional and physical growth of students in a safe and healthy environment. A collaborative approach is key to consider the child as a whole and to help identify the most effective ways to ensure his/her success.

The Student Support Committee will formally meet twice a year. The first formal meeting will take place at the beginning of the first term, and the second formal meeting will be at the end of the second term.

Members of the student support committee will informally meet once the SEN Department receives a referral for any student, before developing IEPs or ALPs, and whenever it is deemed necessary.

### **Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO)**

- The SENCO oversees the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy and procedures.
- Helps with the process of organizing a whole school approach to improve on the quality of response to every student who has Special Educational Needs.
- Ensures the early identification and intervention of students with SEN.
- Contributes to the in-service training of all staff in relation to working with students with SEN.
- Models and supports teachers with effective teaching strategies.
- Co-ordinates the provision to meet the individual needs of all students with SEN.
- Maintains records and reviews Individual Education Plans that are shared with parents and teachers.
- Collaborates closely with parents, teachers, coordinators, head of sections, and the administration to achieve optimum learning opportunities for students.
- Liaises with external agencies and specialists including medical and health services

### **SEN Teacher**

- Works closely with teachers and advises on appropriate strategies and resources to implement with SEN students in the classroom.
- Provides support to students with mild to moderate learning needs through withdrawal individually or in a small group, or through in class assistance.
- Collaborates with the SENCO to plan, implement, and regularly review the students' Individual Education Plans (IEPs) as well as Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs).

- Monitors closely the progress of SEN students against identified targets.

### **Teaching Staff**

- Meet all students' needs within the classroom through differentiated instruction.
- Identify students who present with concerns and shares information with section principal and SENCO.
- Take into consideration the individual plans and targets of SEN when planning lessons.
- Devise strategies and identify appropriate methods of access to the curriculum.
- Draw on the SENCO and SEN teacher for advice on assessment and strategies to support inclusion of learners with SEN.

### **Parents**

Parents are key partners in the education of their child. Parents are encouraged to exercise their parental responsibilities with respect to their child's needs. The school actively seeks to work with parents and values the contribution they make. Parents must inform the school if their child is diagnosed with Special Educational Needs.

### **Staff Development**

The school is committed to developing the expertise of all staff in relation to SEN to enable them to meet the students' needs.

### **External Agencies**

The school seeks to build strong working relationships and links with external support services in order to fully support SEN students and aid school inclusion.

### **Admission**

Children with special educational needs will be considered for admission on an equal basis with all other children provided that there are good prospects of meeting their needs. As per ADEC and our admission policy, we are able to meet the needs of students with mild to moderate learning needs.

Parents are encouraged to disclose any difficulty, disability, or additional need that their child is facing in order to determine if the school has the necessary services, resources, and facilities to ensure that every child feels happy, secure, and reaches his/her maximum potential.

## Concern for Student's Learning

Teacher closely observes the student, discusses concerns with other teachers, and collects data (formative and summative assessments, work samples, attendance, health, and behavior)

Teacher raises concern with the section principal and provides evidence of implementing differentiated strategies to meet the student's learning needs.

Teacher fills classroom observation checklist as well as a referral form provided by the SEN department.

Section principal contacts parents and inform them about the referral. Parents are encouraged to provide the school with additional information about the student.

SENCO carries in class observations during different subjects and writes a report that includes some recommendations

The Students' Support Committee meets to examine the referral form as well as all collected information.

Learning Support/ intervention or strategies are initiated to students for a limited period of 6 to 8 weeks.

An evaluation will be held after the period of 6-8 weeks to check the progress and determine if further actions are needed.

If the student does not show progress, parents are advised to carry a formal outside assessment.

Based on the outside assessment report, additional interventions are implemented, teachers and parents are provided with new strategies, accommodations and / or an Individual Education Plan(IEP) is developed (if needed).

## Process of Developing the IEP

- After completion of the pre-referral, referral, evaluation, and eligibility steps of the IEP process, it is time to develop the actual individualized program plan.
- Once it is decided to develop an IEP, the SEN Department calls for IEP Meeting, which includes members of the Student Support Committee (the parents, the school administration, general education teachers, Special education teacher, social counsellor, SEN Consultant, SENCO, and the student (if appropriate) to take his/ her opinion into consideration).
- In the meeting, the team members report findings and review existing data.
- The team identifies strengths and priorities needed.
- The team writes prioritized goals that the student can achieve by the end of IEP (Annual goals and short objectives).
- The team determines the least restrictive environment for plan implementation.
- The team determines services and supports the student will need benefit from and make progress in the program.
- The team determines the **IEP components**:
  - Present level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
  - Measurable Goals and Objectives
  - Special education and related services

- Individual accommodations and modifications
- The projected date for the beginning and duration of the services
  
- The team discusses what data collection strategy will be used to measure the progress toward reaching these goals.
  
- ***Implementation of IEP:*** *Once the IEP is developed, the student's services and individualized program begin. We make sure that the information is shared with everyone involved in the plan implementation. Accommodations are also provided for both instructions and testing to support the child's educational program.*

## **Gifted and talented**

### **Philosophy and Objectives**

Ittihad National Private School recognizes that gifted and talented students have unique educational needs. The school is committed to ensuring that the needs of gifted and talented students are catered for in order for them to reach their full potential.

#### **We aim to:**

- Foster an achievement culture throughout the school which celebrates both effort and achievement in a wide range of areas
- Ensure that there is a consistent, whole-school approach to the identification, support and teaching of Gifted and Talented students
- Identify children achieving at a level beyond their peers, and to make appropriate provision which stretches them in areas of strength and develops them in areas of relative weakness
- Provide an appropriately challenging curriculum for more able and potentially more able children, through extension within the curriculum, and through enrichment/study support beyond it
- Empower teachers to make appropriate provision for all their students through appropriate support, information and advice.
- Encourage staff development and sharing of good practice
- Develop a partnership with parents and involve them in the formulation and the review of their child's Advanced Learning Plan
- Seek the views of the child and take them into account, where appropriate

### **Gifted and Talented Definition**

“These are students whose outstanding abilities make them capable of high performance. Their needs require specific consideration within mainstream educational programs. Their current attainment or perceived potential places them significantly in advance of the majority of their peers in one or more of the following areas:

- a) Intellectual ability

- b) Subject-specific aptitude (e.g in science or mathematics)
- c) Social maturity and leadership
- d) Mechanical/technical/technological ingenuity
- e) Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)
- f) Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)”

*ADEC, Special Education Policy and Procedures Handbook (2012)*

### **Identification**

Multiple criteria are used to identify Gifted and Talented Students. Information can be gathered from both qualitative and quantitative sources. The process of identification is ongoing and may be initiated by any staff member. Concerted efforts will be made to search out and address the needs of underachievers with latent high ability as well as learners with dual exceptionality. A range of evidence will be collected by teachers or any other staff members and this will include some of the following:

- Teacher’s nomination
- Teacher’s or any member of staff observation
- Anecdotal evidence
- Teacher’s checklists
- Formative and summative assessments
- Standardized assessment tests (e.g. Map tests)
- Creativity tests
- Information provided by external agencies
- Reports from previous schools
- Any other relevant information

All of the above will be cross referenced to determine a cohort of 5 to 10% of the whole school population. If agreed that the criteria are met, the child's name is entered in the G&T register and

parents will be invited to the school to discuss ways in which the child's needs can be met and how they can be supported.

## **Provision**

### **Provision within the curriculum**

All teachers will have high expectations of their students and provide them with appropriate work and opportunities for development. Opportunities for extension work will be identified within the lesson planning. We aim to provide gifted and talented students with more access to independent extension activities.

### **Out of class activities**

Extra-curricular activities are offered on a regular basis and, although these benefit all students, they are particularly apt for ensuring that students who have potential in these areas are given opportunities to practice and extend their skill.

- Extra-curricular activities and clubs
- Opportunities for artistic, dramatic and sporting development
- Visits and field trips
- Competitions

### **Provision through outside agencies**

Parents should inform the school if their child is engaged with any gifted and talented program outside the school. The SEN coordinator will provide the parents with information about external agencies that could assist their child to develop his area of strength.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

The performance of identified students is consistently monitored with a variety of strategies including:

- In-class assessment results

- Collegial discussions about the progress of individual students and the effectiveness of teacher programs
- Anecdotal records and observations
- Interviews with parents and students
- Standardised tests
- Work samples
- School counsellor recommendations

### **Advanced Learning Plan**

“An Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) will determine how the special needs of gifted and talented students, capable of high performance in one or more areas, will be met”. *ADEC*

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The Principal**

- The principal decides the school’s general policy and approach to meet the needs of Gifted and Talented students.
- The principal monitors the effectiveness of the school’s Gifted and Talented policy and provision.
- Through the performance management process, the principal will ensure that objectives for Senior Leadership Team and the school development plan include Gifted and talented.

#### **Gifted and Talented Coordinator**

- The SENCO oversees the day-to-day operation of the school’s Gifted and Talented policy and procedures.
- Assists staff with differentiated planning
- Collects examples of exceptional work
- Monitors the provision of Gifted and Talented students
- Liaises with external agencies and experts
- Plan, implement, and regularly review the students’ Advanced Learning Plan
- Monitor closely the progress of Gifted and Talented students against identified targets.

## Teaching Staff

- Meet all students' needs within the classroom through differentiated instruction
- Identify students who are more able in their class
- Take into consideration the Advanced Learning Plan of Gifted and Talented students when planning lessons
- Devise strategies and use appropriate resources to challenge the more able
- Monitor the performance of the more able

## Parents

Parents are key partners in the education of their child. Parents are encouraged to exercise their parental responsibilities with respect to their child's needs. The school actively seeks to work with parents and values the contribution they make.

## Staff Development

The school is committed to developing the expertise of all staff in meeting the needs of Gifted and Talented students

## External Agencies

The school seeks to build strong working relationships and links with external support services in order to fully support Gifted and Talented students and aid school inclusion.

## Review of Policy

The Gifted and Talented policy is monitored by the Senior Leadership in INPS and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator, and reviewed on annual basis.

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