

# **INCLUSION POLICY FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

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# **Introduction**

Inclusion means that all students are entitled to equal opportunities in the school setting. Islanders Education promotes inclusion as a practice and provides support to children with special needs in the regular classroom.

We accept children with special needs at the preschool and primary levels. Assessments are conducted to help identify the level of functioning of the child and decide the least restrictive environment for that child. Level of functioning is the most important factor in the process of inclusion. It is essential to identify students' intellectual level and current educational level of functioning (i.e., basal, and terminal age in the areas of reading, comprehension, numerical ability etc.) to determine the best environment and help students succeed in that environment.

DPS Monarch accepts both students who can cope in the mainstream classroom under our standard curriculum and students who partially need placement (Pull out sessions) in a specialized SEN classroom. Placement in both settings is subject to seat and school resource availability. SEN resources and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are currently provided up until grade 5. After grade 5, schools will review if children are able to succeed in the board exams offered (CBSE) with the board provided concessions.

Students with special needs (i.e., developmental delay, attention deficit hyperactive disorder, learning disability, Autism, Down Syndrome, etc) are assessed and an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed to support them as the promote higher grades. At the end of the academic year, student progress is assessed, and a recommendation is provided to parents regarding the child's educational path.

This inclusion policy is available and provided to all parents at DPS Monarch International Schools.

# Identifying Special Needs, determining placement, and providing services

There are two stages in the identification and provision of special needs and services at DPS Monarch.

First, the identification of special needs can occur either at a child's enrolment at school or through classroom observation during the school year. Second, after a need has been identified and placement determined, services are provided, and the child's progress is monitored to determine if the services are successfully meeting the child's educational needs.

## Stage 1: Determining Placement and Need for SEN Services

### **Determining Placement at Enrolment**

Application: The application will be thoroughly studied by school admission. If special needs are mentioned in the admission form, they will be referred to SEN Educator and school counsellor.

Required documents: Admission application that has been received by SEN educator need to garner complete history (i.e., case history, psychological and medical assessment reports, previous academic records, remedial training session report, if any, etc).

Screening: The application will be then reviewed by SEN Educator and school counsellor. (i.e., admission form and supporting documents). In case the need arises; a detailed psychological, speech & language, and academic evaluation will be done (if admission is granted only).

Meeting: A meeting will be arranged with the parents and SEN Educator and school counsellor.

Decision: After careful evaluation and discussion, the decision will be reflected by the parents (i.e., whether the child should be placed in a general education classroom or special education classroom and if the child requires an IEP or not). In case of positive reflection, the parents will have to abide by certain procedures. On approval of the admission, the photocopy of the supporting documents will be preserved at the school.

### **Determining Placement through Observation**

When a child is identified by a teacher or by SEN Educator and school counsellor as potentially in need of SEN services the following procedures and guidelines will be used. The process of determining the need for SEN services has three steps:

### **Step 1: Observation**

**Teacher observation:** In stage 1 the teacher would observe the child for a month from the beginning of the year. If she feels that the child needs to support a checklist would be filled out and forwarded to IISE.

**SEN educator/ Counsellor Observation:** Once the child is referred to the SEN team by the teacher then the coordinator would observe the concerned child. If it were felt that there is some need for supporting a meeting with the parents would be arranged.

### **Step 2: Initial intervention**

Intervention would be designed with the help of the teacher and the parents. The progress would be monitored twice every term.

### **Step 3: Analysis and decision**

By 1<sup>st</sup> Parent-Teacher Meeting if the child is still unable to cope an assessment would be done in conjunction with the coordinator, teacher, parents, and the psychologist/ special educator with reference to the assessment reports to decide whether the child requires Behaviour Modification or Remediation.

## **Stage 2: Provision of services and Setting Guidelines**

### **Part A: Mainstream Classroom Placement Services**

For students whose least restrictive environment is the mainstream classroom, the school will use the following procedures and guidelines:

#### **Special needs and abilities**

- Special needs of the students and the areas that need assistance are identified and communicated with the classroom teacher.
- Strength and weaknesses of the students identified.
- Provide required adjustments/accommodations/ modifications (related to the environment, study materials, assessments, and the need for a special teacher).
- IEP/ICP/ITP is developed (if applicable).

#### **Guidelines for Mainstream class intake**

- Should be academically at the same level as other children in the classroom or a maximum of one grade level below.
- The child should display only mild-moderate behavioural issues
- The child should be able to follow instructions.
- Each mainstream classroom can have a maximum of one SEN student per class.

### Progress Monitoring & Levels of Intervention

- Progress will be monitored and documented (daily/fortnightly/monthly)
- Semester assessments will be in accordance with the adjustments/accommodations/modifications provided.

IEP progress report will be created to assess the student's progression and would be forwarded twice a term (if applicable). If a student who is placed in the mainstream classroom is failing with accommodations, the following three levels of intervention will be pursued.

#### 1. *Short period of time:*

- This option will be given to children who have mild to moderate behavioural issues.
- This option will be given only if the needs of the child can be managed with the student-teacher ratio currently present.
- During this period, the teacher will work to create an inclusive environment in the class where other children accept, respect, and celebrate diversity.
- The school will closely monitor changes in the child's behaviour and development over time and bring necessary changes, i.e., to increase or decrease the session times.
- If this intervention does not bring expected changes/improvement for the child, then the school will request that the parent hire a shadow teacher.

#### 2. *Shadow Teacher:*

- This option will be given to children who have moderate to severe behavioural issues or developmental delays.
- This option will be given for children who cannot be given individual assistance with the present student-teacher ratio in the class.
- A shadow teacher is an educational assistant who will work directly with a single, special needs child in a regular classroom setting.
- The shadow teacher might follow an Individual Education Plan (IEP) exclusively designed for the child.
- The student will participate in all the school activities, like any other child in class, with accommodations if necessary
- The parent can get regular feedback from the shadow teacher either when they come to drop or pick the child.
- Meetings with the shadow teacher can be held only in the presence of the main class teacher.
- For general information and communication regarding the child or school, the parent must contact the Main Class teacher.

### 3. *Removal of Placement*

- This option will be pursued when the child will not benefit or is not showing signs of improvement in a regular classroom setting, even when accompanied by a shadow teacher.
- This option will be pursued when the child's behaviour is disruptive to the class, harmful to his/herself, or harmful to others.

## **Part B: SEN Classroom Setting (Pull out sessions)**

For students whose least restrictive environment is an SEN classroom, the school will use the following procedures and guidelines:

Children who are unable to cope with the curriculum and need an IEP to be formulated will be placed in the special education setting. A special education teacher will oversee teaching students in the special education classroom. Depending on the level of the child, adjustments and modifications will be brought to the curriculum and assessment. Students in the special education setting will be merged with general education classrooms of their age level during special days, music, physical education, computer studies, and library periods. They can be facilitated in our system only up to Grade 5, after which the case will be reviewed to determine the best interests of the child.

### **Guidelines for pull-out session**

- Should be academically at least 2 levels below.
- The teacher-student ratio per class should be 1:4.
- Children have moderate to severe behavioural problems

### **Individualized Education Plan (IEP)**

- The child's behaviour and needs will be studied carefully.
- Academic team will develop and finalise an IEP in accordance with the curriculum, as per the student's needs and abilities.
- IEP will then be discussed with the class teacher(s)/special education teacher and parent.

### **Progress:**

- Progress will be monitored and documented (i.e., daily/fortnightly/monthly).
- Semester assessment will be in accordance with the IEP.
- Progress report based on IEP will be created to assess the student's progression and would be forwarded twice a term.

### **Behaviour Modification- Individualized Therapeutic/Counselling Plan (ITP/ICP)**

**Counselling/Therapy:** If the conclusion is that the child would require therapy the psychologist/counsellor would refer the child for professional therapy outside the school setting. Parent must take the responsibility for the same.

**Additional teacher:** If it is felt that the teacher in the class is unable to support the child's needs to help develop positive development then an additional teacher/shadow teacher would be appointed by parent. However, the class teacher would develop a plan of action after a discussion with the psychologist/counsellor.

### **Academic Modification-Individualized Education Plan (IEP)**

- The child's behaviour and needs will be studied carefully.
- Pre-assessments will be conducted, to know the current functioning level of the child.
- The plan of action will then be discussed and finalized by the class teacher, special teacher, the special educator and the counsellor/psychologist, and parent.

#### **Progress:**

Progress will be monitored and documented (i.e. weekly, fortnight, monthly).

A progress report of the IEP will be created to assess the student's progression and would be forwarded twice a term.

**Remedial:** If a need for remedial is felt then a remedial programme would be developed and depending on the intensity of support required the programme would be in the form of an after-school programme. After school programme would be implemented by the main teacher/ the special education teacher/special educator.

**Special Teacher:** if the support need is intensive and it is felt that the child is unable to cope with the curriculum a special teacher will be allocated.

In both cases, a plan of action would be developed.

### **INDIVIDUALISED EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)**

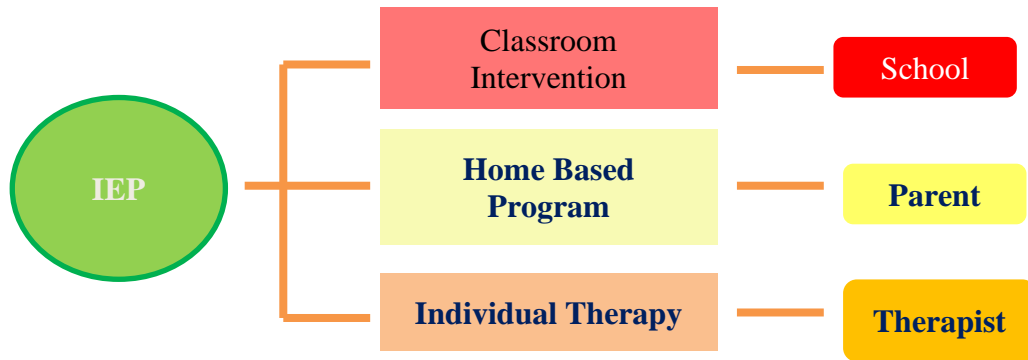
IEP will be developed by the special educator, with the information gathered during formal psychosocial, speech and language and academic assessment gathered from respective personnel (psychologist, special educator, special education teacher/main teacher, speech therapist etc).

The information gathered will be studied carefully and prioritised during the consultation meeting with the parent, teacher and IISE. IEP will be developed in accordance with the curriculum, as per the student's needs and abilities. The IEP will then be discussed and finalised by the class teacher, special teacher, special educator, and the counsellor/psychologist.

IEP will cover the following areas: academic, social, behavioural, speech and language, motor, self-help skills, sensory and extra-curricular. And academic component is further divided into English, Math, Dhivehi, Islam, Quran, Social Science and Art & Craft depending on the individual child's abilities and needs.

Implementation of the IEP will occur at three levels.

- **Level 1: Classroom Intervention-** will be implemented by the class-teacher/special education teacher.
- **Level 2: Home-Based Intervention-** will be implemented by parents/caregiver.
- **Level 3: Individual Therapy-** will be implemented by psychologist and/or speech therapist during individual session.



### **Progress monitoring and recording**

Progress will be monitored and documented at three levels

#### **Level 1: Classroom Intervention**

- Main teacher/ special education class teacher should keep a daily record of individual children who are supported by an IEP/ICP/ITP.
- The coordinator should monitor programme implementation and ensure that students' daily records are maintained well by the teachers. It is the responsibility of the coordinator to forward student's daily record file to the special educator at the end of the week. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to submit the file to the coordinator at the end of the session and take it back before the next session begins.
- Monthly classroom intervention review meeting will be conducted to discuss each individual student's progress. Meeting will be arranged by the coordinator. Meeting should be held on the last week of every month.
- Twice a term the progress of the IEP will be discussed in the IEP review meeting. The main teacher, lead teacher, special educator, psychologist, speech therapist and parent will be present in this meeting.

#### **Level 2: Home-Based Intervention**

- A home-based guideline will be given to the parents/caregiver by the therapist.
- In necessary cases a Home-Based Intervention plan will be provided.
- Monthly HBI meeting will be conducted to monitor the implementation and progress of the child.



- Twice a term the progress of the HBI will be discussed in the IEP review meeting. The main teacher, lead teacher, special educator, psychologist, speech therapist and parent will be present in this meeting.

**Level 3: Individual Therapy**

**Must be conducted outside the school setting by parent.**

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONNEL INVOLVED**

### **SEN Educator**

- Part of admission process (i.e. refer to inclusion policy).
- Identification of children with special needs at the school through screening and assessment of psychological and educational needs of referred students.
- Advise and refer specific assessment (e.g. medical, hearing/vision) in area of need to the parent, if required.
- Review and decide on next stage based on diagnosis of the assessment report (i.e. therapy or remedial).
- Formulate and implement Individualised Counselling Plan/ Individualised Therapy Plan (ICP/ ITP) for students who need counselling/psychosocial therapy.
- Maintain session records and monitor progress of ICP/ITP.
- Prepare guidelines for parents/teachers/special educator when needed.
- Discuss the intervention and progress of each child and maintain records of progress.
- Conduct classroom observations when required.
- Work in collaboration with the special educator in formulating the IEP (if applicable).
- Work in collaboration with the speech therapist (if required).
- Attend meetings regarding children with special needs (if applicable), i.e. IEP meetings, behaviour review meetings etc.
- Conducting a series of individual sessions with the child - normally lasting between 45 minutes to an hour, one or more times per week.
- Keeping abreast of developments in theory and research
- Networking within the health professional community, and other potential business areas, to maintain continuity of work and client base
- Evaluating therapy outcomes and writing reports
- Maintain and respect confidentiality of student and school personnel information, while maintaining the safety and welfare for all students and staff members. Assess, evaluate, and identify the academic level/special needs of students having learning difficulties.
- Focal point in the school about students with SEN.
- Conduct classroom observations of children with special needs when required.
- Discuss cases and develop IEP in collaboration with the psychologist, speech therapist, main teacher/special education teacher and parent.
- Support, guide, coach and mentor special education teachers/ teachers regarding curriculum modification and differentiation of instructional strategies, teaching aides and resources for students with SEN.
- Ensure appropriate delivery of both special education instruction and related services for students with SEN.
- Oversee implementation of classroom interventions/IEP of students with SEN.

- Arrange meeting with parents of the children with special needs.
- Attend meetings regarding children with special needs (i.e. IEP meetings, behaviour review meetings etc, where applicable).
- Conduct meetings with the special education teacher(s) and main teacher of classes where a student with SEN is included (i.e. weekly/ fortnight etc).
- Confer with main teacher/special education teacher, coordinator, psychologist, speech therapist and parent to ensure follow-up records of students with SEN are maintained.
- Coordinate with special education team (main teacher/ special education teacher, psychologist, speech therapist) and ensure that quarterly IEP progress report of all students with SEN are completed and effectively communicated with parents.
- Coordinate and monitor remedial sessions of students with SEN.
- Maintain and respect confidentiality of student and school personnel information, while maintaining the safety and welfare for all students and staff members.
- Involve in IEP meetings and behavioural management planning (i.e. ICP where applicable).
- Employ special educational strategies and techniques during instruction to improve the development of sensory- and perceptual-motor skills, language, cognition, and memory of students with SEN.
- Prepare students for later grades (keeping in mind full inclusion as the main target for students with average cognitive ability) by encouraging them to explore learning opportunities and to persevere with challenging tasks.
- Modify the general education curriculum in relation to the abilities and needs of individual students with SEN in the class, based upon a variety of instructional techniques and technologies.
- Implement the formulated IEP appropriately.
- Observe, monitor, and evaluate students' academic performance, behaviour, social development, and physical health.
- Meet with other professionals to discuss individual students' needs and progress (record and report if any area in the IEP needs to be revised/new goals or targets needs to be included etc).
- Monitor and record evidence of children's learning and progress, prepare quarterly IEP progress reports for parents.
- Effectively communicate with parents to discuss their children's progress, and to determine their priorities for their children and their resource needs.
- Keep the special educator updated regarding classroom issues, and specific issues related to individual students in the SEN class (this includes parental concerns/issues as well).
- Confer with special educator/psychologist/parent to resolve students' behavioural and academic problems.
- Maintain daily record of students and keep student files up to date.
- Assist, guide and monitor teacher assistant(s) to ensure they use appropriate instructional strategies and resources and adhere to special education programme (IEP's) requirements.

## **Shadow Teacher Guideline**

- The shadow teacher is an educational assistant who will work directly with a single, special needs child in a regular classroom setting to provide necessary individual support.
- The role of the shadow teacher is to guide the student to become as independent as possible and integrate into their environment.
- The shadow teacher is like a coach, intervening only when necessary. They are trained to identify opportunities for the student to learn to adapt to and face the challenges of his/her environment – while conscious of situations that require their assistance.
- Shadow teachers are advocates for the student. They also work with the student to develop social skills. This includes developing awareness of students' peers and environment. It also includes learning to adapt to new social situations and maintain friendships.
- Shadow teachers work to enable a student to function independently in the classroom. Eventually, the goal is for a student to function inside the classroom without a shadow teacher's assistance.
- Other responsibilities of a shadow teacher include:
  - To help the student display appropriate classroom behaviour
  - To provide guidance in completing classroom activities when necessary
  - To help the student achieve the goals outlined in their Individual Educational Plan (IEP)
  - To regularly collect data for the IEP team as well as regularly update the team on student performance and activities.

## **GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHER (OF STUDENTS WITH SEN)**

- Involve in IEP meetings and behavioural management planning (if applicable).
- Employ special educational strategies and techniques during instruction to improve the development of sensory- and perceptual-motor skills, language, cognition, and memory of students with SEN.
- Prepare students for later grades by encouraging them to explore learning opportunities and to persevere with challenging tasks.
- Modify the general education curriculum in relation to the abilities and needs of individual students with SEN in the class, based upon a variety of instructional techniques and technologies (for students supported by an IEP only).
- Implement the formulated IEP appropriately (if applicable).
- Observe, monitor, and evaluate students' academic performance, behaviour, social development, and physical health.
- Meet with other professionals to discuss individual students' needs and progress (record and report if any area in the IEP needs to be revised/new goals or targets needs to be set/included etc).
- Monitor and record evidence of children's learning and progress, prepare quarterly IEP progress reports for parents (for students supported by an IEP only).

- Effectively communicate with parents to discuss their children's progress, and to determine their priorities for their children and their resource needs.
- Maintain daily record of students and keep student files up to date. Ensure that the file is forwarded to the LT (KK)/ Coordinator (BHIS) daily.
- Keep the leading teacher (KK) coordinator (BHIS) updated regarding classroom issues, and specific issues related to individual students with SEN (this includes parental concerns/issues as well). Such issues must be recorded in the individual student's daily record file which is forwarded to the LT (KK)/coordinator at the end of the day.
- Confer with special educator/psychologist/parent to resolve students' behavioural and academic problems.
- Assist, guide and monitor teacher assistant(s) to ensure they use appropriate instructional strategies and resources and adhere to special education programme (IEP's) requirements.

### **Academic Coordinator**

- Ensure general education teachers maintain daily records of students with SEN.
- Check record files of students with SEN in the general education classrooms.
- Forward records file of students with SEN (in general education classrooms) to the special educator at the end of each week (if an issue needs to be urgently dealt with/ or need immediate intervention, fill the referral form, and forward it to SEN team).
- Provide appropriate professional support for teachers regarding academic and behavioural issues of students with SEN in the general education classroom.
- Keep the special educator, psychologists updated regarding changes in academic/activity calendar.
- Carefully monitor the implementation of the IEP/ICP of students with SEN in general education classrooms.
- When a special education teacher calls in sick/is on leave, ensure that a substitute teacher is allocated to the SEN class to fill in the gap.

## **GUIDELINES FOR DOCUMENTATION FORMATS**

### **REFERRAL**

#### **[Form 1]**

- This form needs to be filled by the teacher with inputs from the coordinator. The coordinator passes this format to SEN educator.
- It is a means of documenting the cases where the direct involvement of the SEN Department is being requested.

**Observation Checklist (Pre-primary, Primary, Middle School)/ Developmental checklist (18-24 months, 24 to 36 months, 36-48 months, 48-60 months) – [Form a/ Form b]**

- This checklist is to be filled after teacher/coordinator guidance for a particular child has been taken, and a referral has been suggested.
- It is filled in after keeping the child under observation for a month.
- This checklist is then attached to the referral form for the IISE.

**Observation Record (General)-[Form 2]**

- To be used for classroom observations (by psychologist/special educator).
- This is to be used in the place of an informal diary observation listing.
- The form can also be used for classroom observation (in this case the name is not filled in).

**Parent Meeting Records [Form 3]**

- Each special needs personnel (main teacher/ special education teacher, special educator, psychologist, speech therapist) needs to keep a record of the month wise meetings with parents.

**Case Proforma- [Form 4]**

- To be filled preferably by psychologist and /or speech therapist
- This form gives a database to the IISE to understand the case better.

**Parent Consent Form [Form 5]**

- To be filled by the parent.
- Serves as a record of approval by the parent to conduct a psychological assessment and evaluation of the child by the school psychologist.

**Psychological Assessments records and report**

- The following standardized diagnostic tools will be used to conduct the psychological assessments of referred students (where applicable):
  - Adaptive Development of the child – Vineland II
  - Intellectual Assessment – WISC-IV, SFB, WPPSI-IV, Colour Progressive Matrices
  - Autism- Childhood Autism Rating Scale
  - ADHD – Conner’s, Preschool ADHD Rating Scale (parent & teacher), Vanderbilt ADHD Rating Scale (Teacher & Parent)
  - Learning Disability – Woodcock-Johnson Test of Achievement, Prep & Cogent
  - Psychological – Child Apperception Test
- These assessments will be done and documented by psychologist.

- Psychological evaluation report will be prepared by the psychologist after the assessments are conducted. This report will include the child's personal details, background information, relevant family history, prenatal and postnatal history, developmental milestones, the test administered and its result. In addition, the impression and recommendation as per the results will be highlighted in the report.

### **POST REFERRAL**

#### **IEP (Individualised Education Plan)- [Form 6]**

- This form is to be filled by the special educator (in collaboration with the main teacher/special education teacher, psychologist, speech therapist and parent).
- It consists of 2 evaluations (1) formative and (2) summative.
- The short-term goals sheet is to be added as per requirement.
- Two IEP's are to be formulated in a year per child.

#### **Assessment Modifications provided-[Form 6.a]**

- This is an briefly understanding of the assessment modifications for a child diagnosed with special needs.
- A copy of the same should be mailed to the CO at the end of the year.

#### **Modifications provided- [Form 6.b]**

- This is a list of modifications that are provided in the classroom and other wise, on a day-to-day basis, to a child diagnosed with special needs.
- A copy of the same should be mailed to the CO at the end of the year.

#### **ICP/ITP (Individualised Counselling Plan/ Individualised Therapy Plan)- [Form 7]**

- This form is to be filled by the counsellor/psychologist.
- It is applicable for any child in the classroom situation (not just to special children).
- Whenever an ICP is formulated its follow-up and evaluation becomes mandatory.

#### **Student session record-[Form 7.a]**

- This record is to be filled by the special needs personnel when taking a remedial/therapy session with the children.
- This session form can also be used as a group session form.

#### **ICP/ITP follow-up record- [Form 7.b]**

- The number of follow-up sessions will be decided depending on the intensity of the child's problem.
- Attach this record with the ICP form.
- The time intervals at which follow-up is to be done should be decided based on the intensity of the student's need.

#### **ICP/ITP evaluation form- [Form 7.c]**

- This form is applicable only if the suggested interventions have been implemented for a month.
- The form is to be filled by the special needs personnel in consultation with the class teacher, coordinator and the special teacher involved with the child.
- Attach this record with the ICP form.

### **Additional Support**

#### **Academically or Intellectually Gifted Student**

Academically or intellectually gifted (AIG) students perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experiences, or environment. Academically or intellectually gifted students exhibit high performance capability in intellectual areas, specific academic fields, or in both the intellectual areas and specific academic fields. Academically or intellectually gifted students require differentiated educational services beyond those ordinarily provided by the regular educational program because lack of academic or intellectual challenge leads to disengagement.

Therefore, the following accommodations should be provided to the students identified as academically/intellectually gifted to prevent misbehaviour and wastage of time on materials these students have already mastered.

- **Enrichment activities**

Enrichment typically means adding something to the curriculum that offers more depth or complexity. For example, providing advanced worksheets when the child completes the work allocated for the day, assigning advanced books to read or individual projects.