

GEMS Cambridge International Private School Sharjah

Inclusion Policy

Last Amendment: August 2023

Policy Review Date: August 2024

1 Purpose

The UAE has made tangible efforts to include people of determination in mainstream education. These efforts are reflected in the “*Ministerial Resolution No. 647 for the year 2020 on the policy of inclusive education*”.

The purpose of this policy describes the way we at GEMS Cambridge International Private School Sharjah (GCS) meet the needs of the students of determination, who experience barriers to their learning, which may relate to sensory or physical impairment, learning difficulties or emotional/ social development, or may relate to factors in their environment, including the learning environment they experience in school.

2 Introduction

At GEMS Cambridge International Private School Sharjah (GCS), we are committed to giving all our students every opportunity to achieve the highest standards. This policy is intended to ensure that this happens for all students in our school regardless of their age, gender, attainment or background. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Admissions, Assessment, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, E-Safety, Gifted and Talented, Teaching and Learning and Well-being policies.

As per MOE, Sharjah Inclusive Education means that “*all students have the right to be educated to the extent possible with their age-appropriate peers who do not necessarily have disabilities in the general education setting of their neighbourhood school with support provided*”.

The UAE School Inspection Framework (p.117) defines a special education need, as ‘*Educational needs which are different from those of the majority of students, and which arise from the impact of a disability or recognized disorder*’. A student requires special education provision if they have needs arising from the impact of a disability or recognized disorder which requires the school to make specific modifications or provide specific

supports to prevent, remove or reduce any potential barriers to ensure a student can access education on an equitable basis within the common learning environment with same-aged peers. A disability is a *"physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities"*. The definition of 'day to day activities' includes mobility, manual dexterity, lifting, hearing, eyesight, speech, memory, and the ability to concentrate, learn or understand. The UAE Federal Law 29 (2006) defines discrimination as any segregation, exclusion or restriction due to special needs leading to the damage or denial of recognition of any rights granted by the prevailing legislation in the country or enjoyment on an equal footing.

GCS provides a broad and balanced British curriculum for all students.

We believe that our students, including those identified as having *'additional needs'* have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic and personal, social development and that they should be fully included in all aspects of school life.

We pay particular attention to the provision for and the achievement of different groups of students including:

- Emirati Students
- English as an Additional Language Students (EAL)
- Gifted and Talented
- Students with *'special needs'*
- More Able Students

GCS admits students irrespective of their gender, race, ability or special educational needs, provided that the school is able to meet the needs of the student, without unduly prejudicing the education and welfare of other students.

GCS will identify any student with additional learning needs (*if not identified at admission*) through thorough screening strategies and on referral from school staff.

The Head of Inclusion will play a direct role in coordinating such assessments and screenings.

Where students are identified, GCS will amend and enhance the learning programme to support the learning needs of these students with appropriate strategies that will enable them to make progress and achieve success.

3 Aims and objectives

3.1 GCS is an inclusive school and develops an environment where all students can flourish and feel safe.

We recognise that students learn at different rates and that there are many factors affecting achievement, including ability, emotional stage, age and maturity.

We identify these needs as they arise and provide teaching and learning contexts which enable every student to achieve by:

- Continually monitoring the progress of all students, to identify needs as early as possible and to provide support, while maintaining the balance of the mainstream class.
- Meetings with teachers to discuss the specific learning needs of students and how to best support and challenge these students.
- Promoting positive perceptions of students with additional needs within the school community, so that inclusive provision is positively valued and accessed by peers, staff and parents/carers.
- Enabling students to move on from us as well equipped as possible in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and social independence to meet the demands of life and learning.
- Forming strong partnerships between all stakeholders so that the students' learning and emotional well-being are optimally supported.
- Giving the students where possible a voice in planning and in decisions that affect them.
- Having an open-door policy in support of staff and parents.
- Sharing information on additional needs available to staff and parents.
- Enabling students to be independent and self-reliant.
- Holding regular meetings with parents.

This means that equality of opportunity is a reality for our students. We make this a reality through the attention we pay to the different groups of students and each and every student within our school.

3.2 The National Curriculum and Early Years Development Matters documents are our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of students. We do this through:

- Responding to students' diverse learning needs.
- Setting suitable learning challenges.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students
- Providing opportunities to meet the needs of individuals or groups of students.
- Providing a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which may be modified to meet the needs of all groups of students.
- Develop a close partnership with the whole school community.
- Providing a healthy, safe and happy environment with celebrations, support, guidance and work opportunities.

- Allowing language exemption in cases where students can benefit from additional learning time for subjects of interest or ability.

3.3 We achieve educational inclusion by continually reviewing what we do.

At GCS, we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our students, whatever their ability or needs. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation.

All stakeholders are responsible for the implementation of the Inclusion policy and for using the guidelines provided to ensure that every member of the school community is aware of their responsibilities to ensure that the learning needs of all registered students are met.

School staff are responsible for ensuring the Inclusion policy and procedures are followed in the school in so far as they must ensure that they plan to meet the needs of the students they teach. This may involve working with other adults and support agencies.

3.4 Students with physical disabilities

Some students at GCS have disabilities and consequently need additional resources. The school is committed to providing an environment that allows these students full access to all areas of learning. *(Please refer to our Health and Safety Policy for further information).*

Teachers will modify learning to ensure it is appropriate for these students.

In planning, teachers ensure that they give students with disabilities the opportunity to develop skills in practical aspects of the curriculum. *(See Teaching and Learning Policy)*

3.5 Partnerships with Parents

GCS works closely with parents in the support of those students of determination. The school encourage an active partnership through an ongoing dialogue with parents.

Parents have much to contribute to our support for students of determination. Parents play a vital role in supporting their child's education. At GCS, we ensure that parents are involved in regular follow-up with the school regarding the identified needs of their child and the progress they are making.

We send weekly reports to the Wave 3 parents that outline progress in relation to targets. We meet termly to share this progress and the parents receive a termly report that encapsulates the whole term's progress.

3.6 Student Participation

We encourage students to take responsibility for their learning journey and to make decisions.

This is part of the culture of the school. The important work of the foundation stage recognises the importance of students developing social as well as educational skills.

Where possible students are encouraged to contribute to the setting of targets which they will work towards and to make judgements about their own performance against their targets where possible.

3.7 Monitoring & Review

The Head of Inclusion with the Senior Management Team monitors the progress, attainment and provision in place for students with additional needs in our school. Management and staff are provided with regular feedback on the impact of the policy on the practice of the school.

The LAB Inclusion Lead work with the Principal and Head of Inclusion to determine the strategic development of the Inclusion policy and provision in the school, monitor the quality of Inclusion provision within the school and update the LAB on this.

The Inclusion staff are instrumental in supporting teachers involved in drawing up and carrying out the different plans of the students.

4 Learning and Teaching styles

4.1 We aim to give all our students the opportunity to maximise their potential to achieve and succeed. When planning their work, teachers consider the abilities of all students. Teachers use internal assessment data and International Benchmark assessment data to support their planning using identified strengths, areas to develop and recommended strategies. (See *Teaching and Learning Policy*)

4.2 When the attainment of a student is significantly below the expected level, teachers enable the student to succeed by planning work that is in line with that student's individual needs and provide appropriate challenges.

4.3 Where the attainment of a student significantly exceeds the expected level of attainment, teachers extend the breadth of work within the area or areas for which the student demonstrates a particular aptitude.

4.4 Teachers and staff ensure that students:

- Feel secure and know that their contributions are valued.
- Appreciate and value the differences they see in others.
- Take responsibility for their own actions.
- Are taught in groupings that allow them all to experience success.
- Have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles.
- Have challenging targets that enable them to succeed.
- Are encouraged to participate fully, regardless of disabilities or medical needs.
- Manage their behaviour and emotions to take part in learning effectively and safely.

- Have appropriate support in all their learning and experiences.
- Know what steps to take to make progress in their learning.

5 Inclusion Provision

Senior and Middle Leaders alongside the Inclusion Team with Staff across the whole school promote inclusion for all students through:

- Emirati Student Support (*Emirati Learner Profiles*) ELP
- Gifted and/or Talented – Gifted & Talented Learner Profile
- Shadow Teachers (Learning Support Assistants) for Wave 3 students
- More Able Group – challenge and independent learning opportunities by respective class/subject teacher
- Students needing additional support - Target Group (*Subject intervention group-supported by respective subject teacher*)
- Wave 2 Special Needs Students - (*Individual Accommodation Plan*) IAP (*Intervention groups - supported by Inclusion Team*)
- Wave 3 Special Needs Students - (*Individual Education Plan*) IEP (*1:1 intervention - supported by shadow teacher. Some students might be included in Intervention groups - supported by Inclusion Team*)

6 Identification and Assessment arrangements

6.1 Admission Policy

At GCS, we are in line with Federal Law 29 (2006) and Law no 2 (2014) regarding the education and outcomes of individuals with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

It is mandatory for prospective parents to share the full details of any special educational needs, individual education plans (IEPs) and any Educational Psychologist, Paediatric, and/or other specialist reports (e.g., *Speech and Language or Occupational Therapy*) if completed of their child when applying for admission at GCS. Sharing the educational history of the child with GCS prior to a place being offered is essential so that staff can ensure an appropriate assessment of educational need, educational plan and resourcing is in place.

At GCS we ensure:

- All applicants have the right to sit the admission screening tests.
- That provisions are made to ensure barriers are reduced or removed during the assessment for applicants experiencing special needs. Access arrangements will be made based on the student's usual way of working.
- If the admission application is successful, collaboration between the parents and the previous schools is integral to ensure a successful transition.

- If an admission application is successful, students with special needs will be provided with appropriate waves of support, accommodations and curricular modifications in order to access the same educational opportunities as their peers.

The Admissions Team seeks the support and advice of the Inclusion Team to conduct assessments and determine educational needs for new joiners experiencing special needs or barriers to learning. The Inclusion Team will use the information gained from the diagnostic testing or educational assessments provided to Admissions by the parents at the time of application, together with assessment results, to determine if the school can meet the needs of the student and the type and wave of support appropriate for each student.

6.2 The school's system for regular observing, assessing and recording the progress of all students is used to identify students who are not progressing satisfactorily and who may have additional/advanced learning/language needs.

The schools' system includes references to:

- Baseline assessment
- Progress measured against development matters and the Early Learning Goals where appropriate
- Progress measures against the objectives with the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies
- International Benchmark, Assessments-Base, Progress Tests, CAT4, NGRT, PASS
- Progress measured against National Curriculum descriptors at the end of a key stage
- Progress measured against teacher assessment data
- Observations of behavioural, emotional and social development
- Standardised screening and assessment tools
- Assessments by a specialist service, such as educational psychology, to identify additional needs
- Another school or educational organisation which has identified or has provided additional needs

7. Referral Procedures:

Staff can refer to the "***Inclusive Classroom, A guide to including all students using the 5 Cs***" (classroom, clarity, content, check and completion of task).

At GCS we follow the "***The Graduated Approach***" as illustrated in the "***Pathway for Concerned Students Flowchart***". Select goals from the "***Pathway for Concerned Students***" and track the goals on the "***Class Provision for Concerned Student/s***" document.

Five Step Plan for SEN Referrals:

Step 1: Quality First Teaching. Reasonable adjustments are made for the students' needs.

Step 2: Interventions as per the pathway for concerned students following “**The Graduated Approach**” a cycle of **Assess, Plan, Do, Review**. Staff follow the above steps before they consider referring the student to the HOI. When they have tried at least 5 of the strategies for at least two weeks then move to step 3.

Step 3: Refer to Head of Inclusion with proof of strategies tried. Book a meeting with the Head of Inclusion for advice with evidence and sample of learning and any observations. Evidence is very important in any dealings with students. The Inclusion department will do an observation, may suggest more strategies or meet with parents for a referral.

Step 4: +- 2–6-week implementation of the Inclusion department recommendations and review at Inclusion Office. During this period Class Teacher, in collaboration with the Inclusion Team, might carry out necessary observations and check lists to gather more evidence of the student’s needs. Based on observation of behavioural, emotional and social development and/or assessment data, a meeting might be scheduled involving the Class Teacher, parent/s, Head of Year and Inclusion department to discuss the needs upon which the student may be recorded as needing more support.

Step 5: Complete the MS Form (*shared with staff after Step 4 meeting by HOI*). The Head of Inclusion and Team will meet with Class Teacher (*maybe HOY, specialist staff etc.*) and Parents. The Head of Inclusion might make a referral for external assessment if needed.

Once a referral is made, the Inclusion department will meet to decide at this point if the student needs intervention, support in class or whether staff need guidance to support the student.

Emergency Referrals: There will be times when the disciplinary panel needs to meet urgently, due to the nature of the referral, particularly if the student is at risk.

8. The Graduated Approach

All teachers are teachers of students with Special Educational Needs and as such they continue to remain responsible for the teaching and learning for their students. All teachers are responsible for identifying students who are experiencing challenges with learning, and in collaboration with the Inclusion team, will ensure that those students requiring different or additional support are identified at an early stage.

The Graduated Approach is a model of action and intervention in schools to help students who have special educational needs. The approach recognises that there is a continuum of special educational needs and that, where necessary, increasing specialist expertise should be used to remove or mitigate barriers to learning that a student may be experiencing.

Waves are determined by the level of provision required to meet those needs.

Graduated Approach Wave 1

This wave describes the support that is available to all students, including those with and without SEN. Within the Graduated Approach, at the first Wave, needs are met through Quality First Teaching.

Support for students at wave one is tailored to the needs of the individual student, this is seen as differentiated teaching and learning. This can be provided by the class teacher and some examples could be, the use of; reasonable adjustments or changes to the lesson and curriculum content, assistive technology, individual or small group teaching, or in-class support.

Most students with SEN will have their needs met though additional support within the classroom environment provided by the class teacher.

Graduated Approach Wave 2

This wave describes the support that is available in addition to the support at Wave 1 and goes beyond the usual differentiated curriculum. Students at this wave require personalised support and/or curriculum modifications that are specific and time-limited, these can be small group activities or short-term programmes of support. It is expected that a minority of students will require access to this level of support service.

Students on wave two each has an Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP). Students at wave two may include those who require Exam Access Arrangement accommodations (e.g.: *extra time*).

Wave 2 interventions are often targeted at a group of students with similar needs.

Graduated Approach Wave 3

This wave describes the support that is available in addition to the support at Wave 2 and involves individualised and specialised provision. Students at this wave require individualised and specialised provision, which is '*additional to*' and '*different from*' that provided to most other students. This includes a full-time support by a learning support assistant (*shadow teacher*) and the student will have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) that is reviewed with staff, parents and carers at least termly.

Students at wave three may include those who require Exam Access Arrangement modifications (*where possible and/or applicable*).

It is expected that only few students will require access to wave 3 support service.

9. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually or as needed. Within school, the Head

of Inclusion will report regularly to- the Senior Leadership Team, Inclusion Support Team and LAB Inclusion Lead concerning the effectiveness of the policy.